

APPENDIX L.

GUIDELINES FOR PROCESS RECORDING

PROCESS RECORDING is one method by which you can record the content of an interview. It involves a written record of all communication both verbal and non-verbal (based on the worker's best recollections), and a record of the worker's feelings and reflection throughout the interview. [For the learning process, room should be left on the written record for the Field Instructor to make comments.] Audio or video recordings can also be used, but do not as easily afford an opportunity for the student to (a) identify his/her feelings during the interview, (b) assess client's feelings, or (c) present summary comments.

PROCESS RECORDINGS SERVE THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS:

- A. They are primarily useful as a teaching-learning tool. The process recording helps the student to recall the interview in an objective manner, and to see the interview in a different light. By providing an approximate text of the interview, the process recording allows the Field Instructor to follow the interview, see the steps taken by the student, and then either affirm the process or suggest alternative approaches for future reference. A Field Instructor may see problems or issues that a student may not pick up on, and thereby may alert the student to different directions for the future.
- B. Process recordings do give the pertinent information that assures appropriate follow-up in case the student is not available in a time of crisis.
- C. An important learning experience for students is learning about themselves, particularly in their relationships with other people. Through process recording, the student learns how he/she relates to other people. Space is reserved in the process recording format for the student to identify his/her feelings relating to interactions with clients (see col. 3 on sample). Through the use of the process recording, the Field Instructor can assist the student in understanding his/her feelings and behavior in interactions with clients.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE PROCESS RECORDING?

EVERYTHING! Everything that you can remember that was either said, or done during the interview should be included. You should also include setting, pertinent observations and descriptions, and intrusions such as ringing phones, etc. When including descriptions, be sure to give significant "evidence" involved. i.e.: The client looked nervous and chain smoked throughout the interview. (Remember that this recording includes the drawback of selective memory—but try to be objective.)

As indicated in the sample, each process recording is concluded with a summary. This summary contains the student's questions, reflections, and evaluations of the interview. In other words, the summary allows the student to assess his/her performance critically. It is also a means of helping the student plan for the next interview. (Some Field Instructors may suggest that this concluding section be termed "**Summary and Impressions.**")

A process recording should begin with at least the client's name, (disguised to assure confidentiality), the worker's name, and the date of the interview. The process recording should contain the entire content of the interview as described above. This content can be reported in one of two ways:

- 1) You may include the dialogue in a prose format. i.e.: I said to her, "How long have you been worried about this problem?" and she replied, "For a very long time ...ever since my son was born."
- 2) Your content and dialogue can also be reported in a drama-format (the way a play would be written).

Worker: "How long have you been worried about this problem?"

Client: "For a very long time...ever since my son was born."

Observation: She began to look hurriedly for her cigarettes...

Many professionals suggest a three or four column approach to process recording. Attached is the four column approach. Three column approaches leave out either the column for the **Field Instructor's Comments**, or the column for the **Student's Assessment of the Client's feelings**. This judgment regarding the number of columns will be determined by the ultimate purpose that the recording is serving at a given time (whether for class, or for the agency, or for your own purposes). The recording will look somewhat like the following example.

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- A. Process recordings should be done as soon as possible after the interview so that the recording will be as accurate and complete as possible.
- B. Process recording is a very time consuming task.
- C. Process recording should be shared and discussed with the Field Instructor before your next interview with the client, if at all possible, in order to help you help your clients.
- D. Lastly, process recordings do not become part of the permanent record of the client. (Wilson, p. 55, 1976 Ed.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dwyer, Margaret and Urbanowski, Martha. "Student Process Recording: A Plea for Structure." Social Casework 46, No. 5 (May 1965): 283.

Wilson, Suanna J. Recording: Guidelines for Social Workers. Coral Gables Printing Service, Inc., Florida, 1976. c.f. The Free Press: New York, 1980, pp. 18-109.

Example of Process Recording Format

Client's Name: Worker's Name: Date:			
Introduction: Identify the purpose of the interview (try to include the direction you wish the interview to take). Give the setting similar to a play and describe the room, lighting, seating arrangement, etc. (any helpful information that will set the stage for an outside reader like your Field Instructor).			
Field Instructor's Comments	Interview - Content	Student's Feelings	Student's Assessment of Client's Feelings
Space for the Field Instructor to affirm the process, or space to suggest alternative modes of approach or intervention.	This is where the word for word interview content goes. Include everything as indicated in the text above.	This is reserved for your feelings as each part of the interview occurred, and should be placed side by side with the appropriate segment of the interview dialogue.	Comment on the client's feelings or reactions as you perceive them. This should be professional-student judgement of the interaction.
SUMMARY COMMENTS: Write a paragraph including the following points and any other pertinent summary information. What was accomplished in the interview? (a) Did you accomplish what you had intended? If not, why not? What got in the way? Did you focus on something different, yet equally important? (b) Include any new insights you gained through this particular interview with the client, concerning his/her situation.			