Nearly all social work professionals remember their field instructors. Etched in their minds are the agency-based social workers who volunteered their time to mentor them and to foster their early professional growth. Even decades later, social workers can be asked about their field placement sites and their field instructors, and rich narratives will emerge. Whether their experiences were positive, negative, or mixed, it is the environment that offers the best evidence about whether one has chosen the right profession. Thus, field instructors clearly play a critical role in social work education.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has long recognized the contribution of field instructors and the essential nature of the field practicum. Consequently, field has been designated as the signature pedagogy in social work education. In assigning this designation, Pierce (2008) asserted its importance in not only socializing aspiring social workers, but also by delineating the duty of field instructors to
“connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practice world of the practice setting” (p. 2).

Thus, field instructors have explicitly been given the responsibility to teach students how to bridge theories and practice. Yet this task can be daunting to some. Even the most competent practitioner can be flummoxed by how to effectively weave together the classroom content and the daily demands of professional practice in a practical and theoretical sense. To complicate matters, some field instructors may fail to see the importance of conceptualizing case information (Homonoff, 2008).

This chapter is for those field instructors who would like to broaden their repertoire of tools for helping students become more adept at integrating theory, models, and skills in a coherent manner. First, we will briefly review the literature, then identify barriers, and, finally, make recommendations about strategies for theory and practice integration.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Many academics involved in field education have described the integration of theory and practice as pivotal to the continuation of the profession (Bogo & Vayda, 1998; Mary & Herse, 1992; Munson, 1987; Risler, 1999). But for all its importance, social workers who are highly skilled in their interactions with clients can be ill-equipped to assist social work interns to identify and conceptualize cases using specific theories. Indeed, some have suggested that integrating theory and practice is one of the greatest challenges for field instructors (Murdock, Ward, Ligon, & Jindani, 2006). Numerous authors have enumerated the barriers to the transfer of classroom theory to the field practicum. They include: (1) the difficult and complex process of integration (Bogo & Vayda, 1998; Risler, 1999); (2) the disconnection students feel between the classroom and the practice setting, and students’ proclivity to simply imitate their field instructors in the absence of a connection (Vayda & Bogo, 1991); (3) the increasing pressures on field instructors, such as large caseloads, productivity quotas, and dwindling resources.
(Bocage, Homonoff, & Riley, 1995; Donner, 1996; Raskin & Blome, 1998); (4) more constraints facing the social work field faculty that result in less time being devoted to field instruction training (Bennett & Coe, 1998; Burke, Condon, & Wickell, 1999); and (5) a concern about the number of social work agencies willing to accept students (Skolnik, Wayne, & Raskin, 1999).

Indeed, field instructors are recruited by schools of social work for a myriad of reasons, and field instructors’ motivations vary widely. In recruitment, sometimes the agency is highly sought after and the field instructor’s qualifications are secondary. Optimally, the field instructor is a respected professional who is passionate and has the ability to energize and inspire students. However, in this age of declining resources, schools may be searching for a placement, any placement. If the field instructor is good at integration, this ability is a plus—but the field instructor’s acumen in integrating theory and practice is rarely the reason the field instructor is recruited or assigned field students.

From a field instructor’s viewpoint, motivation to mentor students can stem from a number of reasons. The field instructor may want to influence future professionals or feel a sense of professional duty (Bennett & Coe, 1998). Some practitioners desire a new challenge or want to teach (Globerman & Bogo, 2003), whereas others develop a sense of professional competence from the experience (Urdang, 1999). Agencies sometimes help motivate the social work practitioner to “volunteer,” as a competent student can provide additional help to the agency (Lacerte, Ray, & Irwin, 1989) in an era of declining agency resources. Then, an already-burdened field instructor may face a multitude of responsibilities with that student—for example, selecting appropriate cases, conceptualizing and structuring an appropriate supervisory format, and evaluating the student’s performance (Gitterman, 1987)—without accounting for pedagogical challenges related to theory and practice integration.

Whatever the motivation and demands, social work practitioners are as responsible for theory as field faculty (Fisher & Somerton, 2000). Short, Priddy, McChesney, Murdock, and Ward (2004) asserted that
field instructors are much like classroom teachers; thus, they are inherently responsible for helping students identify and strengthen the theoretical knowledge base that will guide their practice as social workers. Given this mandate, how confident are field instructors in their ability to assist a student to integrate theory and practice?

Dettlaff and Dietz (2008) found that even those field instructors strong in theory felt insecure in this area, and both new and experienced field instructors wanted training so they could more effectively help students connect theory and practice. Homonoff (2008) studied a group of social workers who were recognized nationally for their excellence in field instruction. Most in the sample, a sample that had a deep theoretical knowledge base, believed being able to conceptualize cases theoretically was paramount to effective practice. But several acknowledged the complexity and time-consuming burden of helping students integrate theory and practice (Homonoff, 2008). In fact, some of these respondents stated that they did not focus on theory, but rather focused on models of practice in their work with students.

One interesting caveat from this study (Homonoff, 2008) was the skepticism evidenced by two of the field instructor exemplars in this sample. They questioned the merits and relevance of the need to integrate theory and practice. Indeed, Forte and LaMade (2011) found that although field instructors could identify the basic and practice theories that characterized their work, they questioned their usefulness. The authors concluded that some field instructors believe that “technique can be taught independent of theory” (Forte & LaMade, 2011, p. 89). These authors suggest that although field instructors have received an explicit mandate from the CSWE and schools of social work, some field instructors may be involuntary participants in carrying out this mission of integration.

So, what do proponents of theory-driven practice say about the importance of case conceptualization based on theory? Fisher and Somerton (2000) argue that “there is no such thing as theory-less practice” (p. 388) and that the integration of “theory and practice is central to the exercise of professional judgment” (p. 388). As do many others,
they see critical reflection on one’s practice as the primary mechanism in developing best practice. Indeed, without theory, the assessment and treatment process becomes a rudderless vessel. How does one know which questions are relevant to ask, which hypotheses to formulate, or the most effective practice model to employ if not drawing from theory? It may be that practitioners cannot identify the theoretical orientations that they are using, but we might also conclude that it is the rare practitioner who can provide effective services to a broad array of clients over time without a sound theoretical knowledge base.

The theory–practice integration task is complicated by conflicting or unclear definitions of theory and models in the academic literature. For instance, is the strengths-based approach (Saleeby, 2012) a theory, model, or perspective? All three descriptors can be found in the social work literature. Likewise, Coady and Lehmann (2008) describe the conundrum with Carl Rogers’s client-centered approach, which has been labeled as a theory, a therapy, and a model of practice.

To add clarity for students and field instructors, some programs clearly delineate definitions of the terms theory and model (Boisen & Syers, 2004). Thus basic theory (sometimes referred to as grand, large, or human behavior and the social environment [HBSE] theory) can be understood as an organizing set of assumptions or propositions that can help explain human behavior (Coady & Lehmann, 2008; Forte & LaMade, 2011). Applied or practice theory infers a conceptualization that can produce behavioral change, and practice models are a framework, set of guidelines, or steps that direct the practitioner in helping to facilitate change (Coady & Lehmann, 2008). Those who support a theory-driven practice approach suggest that clarity of thought and coherent practice approaches are born from the ability of practitioners to conceptualize client issues from theory (Coady & Lehmann, 2008; Fisher & Somerton, 2000).

**STUDENT FEEDBACK RELATED TO INTEGRATION**

How do students view the integration of theory and practice? The literature suggests that students have appreciated the systematic integration
of theory and practice by field instructors. In one study, Choy, Leung, Tam, and Chu (1998) found that students rated field instructors highly when they provided examples of application of theory to real-life situations. Another study found that one of the most influential teaching activities with students included not only reviewing and analyzing cases, but also integrating theory and practice in this process (Knight, 2000). Additionally, students, especially concentration-year students, valued field instruction that included the conceptualization of theory and practice frameworks and activities (Bogo, 2006). In fact, learning activities that included feedback on process recordings, critiquing one’s own work, and the field instructor’s intentional connection of practice and theory were positively correlated to students’ positive perceptions of their field placements (Bogo, 2006).

FOSTERING INTEGRATION

Given the mounting evidence suggesting that students value integration, social work educators have used multiple strategies to help students with the integration process. Some social work programs have placed the primary responsibility of the integration process within the field seminar with the hope that field instructors will reinforce the field seminar teachings. Other programs depend almost exclusively on the field instructor’s ability to achieve this goal.

The literature about how to foster integration in field education has a different focus when comparing academic field faculty and agency-based field instructors. Academic field faculty literature is two-pronged: (1) based on learning theory, pedagogical models are described that delineate a framework with specific steps and (2) teaching strategies are described. The literature related to field instructors concentrates on teaching strategies almost exclusively.

Field Faculty Models and Strategies

Programs that place the onus of integration on the field seminar and academic field faculty may utilize models such as the Integration of
Theory and Practice (ITP) loop (Bogo & Vayda, 1989, 1998) and Integrated Case Analysis Model (ICAM; Boisen & Syers, 2004) to achieve this goal. Field faculty may also use various strategies (e.g., learning logs, “theory circles,” process recordings, journaling, case vignettes) to promote integration.

Notably, two of the models proposed in the field, the ITP and ICAM, require students to first theoretically conceptualize the case before moving to a discussion of interventions. Both models position theory at the forefront in the integrative theory–practice learning process. The ITP (Bogo & Vayda, 1989, 1998), for instance, adapted Kolb’s model (1984) specifically for field education. In Kolb’s (1984) model, students undergo a four-stage experiential learning process whereby they (1) experience and recall a practice situation, (2) examine the situation through reflection, (3) explain the situation by linking knowledge and theory, and (4) actively apply the feedback gained in the process to select a professional response. Similarly, Bogo and Vayda’s (1989, 1998) ITP loop prescribes this four-step iterative process to analyze practitioner–client transactions and interventions until the most appropriate intervention has been chosen.

Boisen and Syers (2004) developed a more linear approach, the ICAM, which encourages students to conceptualize their case situations from a theoretical perspective. Based on a case from a student’s practicum, students and faculty alike pose questions with the intent to understand the etiology of the presenting problem(s). The discussion draws upon grand theory to aid in building hypotheses and explaining relevant data, before selecting a practice theory or complementary practice model and discussing practice skills. Periodically, the theoretical underpinnings of the questions themselves are identified during the integrative discussion.

The literature also suggests several other teaching strategies for the field seminar. For instance, Gelfand (1990) presents a rationale for a learning log where student and field faculty exchange ideas and feedback throughout the practicum. The field faculty intentionally infuses theoretical conceptualization in his or her questions and feedback.
Another strategy is the “theory circle,” in which the class is divided into two groups: One group conceptualizes using grand theory while the other group conceptualizes using practice theory (Collingwood, Emond, & Woodward, 2008). A third strategy involves the use of process recordings and integrative journals (Lesser & Cooper, 2006). The integrative journal, which is discussed in small groups, delineates case material from the practicum, and students are expected to identify theory as it relates to the case. Finally, vignettes are used in case-based inquiry learning groups where students are asked to develop hypotheses (Cree, McCauley, & Loney, 1998). In all of these strategies, theory is at the crux of the students’ learning.

Field Instructor Strategies

The literature that pertains to how field instructors assist students with the integration of theory and practice is more focused on teaching strategies than models that offer a framework to accomplish the task. These creative strategies can be used independent of any pedagogical framework.

Some of these strategies intentionally infuse theoretical conceptualizations in the initial analysis. For instance, Hawthorne (1987) advises a “practice meets theory” dialogue between the intern and field instructor whereby students use their process recordings and relate the case information to relevant theories. Lesser and Cooper (2006) propose the use of the “clinical agenda” in the clinical supervision. In this document, students pay special heed to the emerging themes in their practice and offer the opportunity for the theoretical conceptualization to be examined.

A second set of strategies guides the field instructor through a re-examination process by the student once an issue has been identified. The “critical incident” approach is one such strategy (Fisher & Somerton, 2000; Thompson, 1995; Wright, 1989). In this approach, the field instructor or student identifies a significant incident. As the student describes the events, the field instructor infuses questions about
the theory base the student is applying and how the student’s understanding might change if viewed through another theoretical lens. Atkins and Murphy (1993) delineated a similar six-stage procedure whereby the student: (1) becomes aware of uncomfortable feelings or thoughts; (2) describes the situation, including thoughts and feelings; (3) analyzes knowledge and feelings related to the situation; (4) considers knowledge that was incomplete and/or helps explain or solve the issue; (5) identifies learning; and (6) implements a new action.

Finally, Clapton et al. (2008) suggested a more geographically collaborative approach between field instructors and the academic field faculty. They believe that theory and practice integration could be enhanced if the academic field faculty moved their classroom work into the field setting and widened their role to guest lecturer or on-site advisor (Clapton et al., 2008).

By this time, we are hoping that we have convinced even the most skeptical field instructor of the need to help students identify and apply theory to their practicum cases. As discussed earlier, models such as the ITP (Bogo & Vayda, 1989, 1998) and ICAM (Boisen & Syers, 2004) are pedagogical tools that underscore the importance of theory in academic settings. The wisdom of the field literature suggests that multiple teaching strategies (e.g., in-person case consultation, process recordings, critical incidents, etc.) are available to field instructors. Even with these suggested strategies and learning tools, field instructors may still feel challenged by this daunting task of integrating theory and practice.

In response, we outline a total of six recommendations to help focus field instructors’ efforts and/or approaches at integration. It is important to note that the first three suggestions are not context specific—any field instructor–intern dyad could implement these recommendations regardless of the practicum setting and/or resources available. The second set of recommendations may be context specific and/or resource based (e.g., funding, time, etc.). Note that these recommendations are not mutually exclusive and may be used in tandem. Case examples are provided following each recommendation.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Universally Applicable

1. **Focus on one or two theories or models:** The anecdotal advice of field faculty and field instructors suggests that field instructors focus on only one or two theories or models that resonate most with the field instructor and/or student. Often, these are theories or models that align with field instructors’ values and/or worldviews, or perhaps are those that they felt most comfortable with during their own social work training. Knowing a field instructor’s worldview and/or theoretical leanings at the outset of a placement may help inform this process. (Note: For field instructors who state their approach is atheoretical, encourage them to talk about their approach and interventions and work backward from there. Remember that we are all implicitly or explicitly working from a set of beliefs that help guide our understanding of human behavior.)

After identifying one or two theories and models at the outset, the field instructor can then focus on these one or two rather than span many different theories and models. No one is expected to be an expert in multiple theories and models. Sacrificing breadth for depth may promote student learning.

**Elena—Field Instructor Case Example:** Elena is a field instructor with a proclivity toward a strengths-based perspective, and a collaborative approach that focuses on the present would be a natural fit with the postmodern solution-focused practice model. At the outset of each student field placement, she shares these theoretical leanings with each student she supervises. Elena also inquires about preferred theories and models with each social work student. For students who struggle with this process, Elena will help them to identify important values and worldviews; she then helps students make connections to theories and practice models.

**Omar—Student Intern Case Example:** Omar is a foundation-year student who inherently believes that most clients’ presenting problems are best explained by the past. Although he knows little about
psychodynamic theory, he will likely draw from these theories (i.e., drive theory, self psychology, object relations, ego psychology). With the help of his field faculty and field supervisor, Omar will focus his learning on psychodynamic theory.

2. Let the context help define appropriate theories and/or models of focus: Typically, particular theories or practice models are most often demanded in a particular setting/practice context. For instance, school social work settings may invite ecological systems–based work. Because of the focus on containment in school-based settings, psychodynamic approaches may be less suitable. Domestic violence shelters may call for crisis intervention practice models that are theoretically based in both ego psychology and systems theory (Coady & Lehmann, 2008). At the beginning of the practicum, field instructors, field faculty, and interns might want to discuss the theoretical orientations and practice models that have traditionally been relevant in the setting. Thus, all can be prepared to highlight these theories and models as the student’s placement begins.

**Elena—Field Instructor Case Example:** Elena is a field instructor in an outpatient community-based health center. She selected this setting because her theoretical orientation was aligned with those of some of her colleagues at her nonprofit agency. In addition to a solution-focused model, she also sometimes uses a narrative practice model. Elena typically shares her preferred theoretical framework and practice models with social work interns who interview at her agency (prior to placement); she encourages students to inquire about theoretical and models preferences at post-MSW job interviews.

**Omar—Student Intern Case Example:** Omar has been placed in a homeless youth shelter. As a student, Omar has had to expand his knowledge of theoretical frameworks and practice models because the short-term work he does at his placement is not conducive to longer-term clinical work that may be informed by psychodynamic theories and models. Instead, Omar’s supervisor encourages students to be well versed in short-term (e.g., cognitive behavioral) and crisis intervention models. Additionally, Omar’s field instructor is
not very comfortable with psychodynamic theories and models, so he has encouraged Omar to keep this at the forefront of his post-MSW learning. Omar also uses his field seminar to learn from other students who draw from psychodynamic theory. For one assignment, Omar inquired about doing a case conceptualization (written assignment) with a current client using object relations and suggesting longer-term, more intensive work. His field seminar instructor was amenable to this suggestion and it has helped Omar expand his learning.

3. Identify the student intern’s learning style: As a field instructor, knowing your intern’s learning style may help facilitate the theory–practice integration process. Kolb’s (1981, 1984) learning theory may help assist field instructors in understanding different student learning styles. For instance, “accommodators” (Raschick, Maypole, & Day, 1998) may learn best by trying different theories and models (i.e., trial by error) in their field placement. These learners may best be described within a traditional framework of “learning by doing” in social work field education (Raschick et al., 1998).

“Divergers” (Raschick et al., 1998), who are intuitive learners, may have a harder time outlining explicit links between theory and practice models in their own social work practice. Field instructors working with these learners may assist them in their conceptualization—both verbal (e.g., in clinical supervision) and written (e.g., assessments).

“Assimilators” (Raschick et al., 1998), who lean toward abstract thinking and conceptualization, may benefit most from the use of process recordings—these will allow this type of learner to ground the theory–field integrative process in practice first (something that comes less naturally), and then later connect the practice experience to the theoretical conceptualization (a more innate skill). The use of process recordings in field education also promotes self-awareness and critical reflection, both of which are important in social work education and practice (Urdang, 2010). These types of learners may also be drawn to the ICAM model in field seminar because the model starts with first conceptualizing (i.e., formulating a hypothesis based on relevant data).
and then delving into what practitioners did and/or will actually do (regarding goals, interventions, evaluation, etc.).

Finally, “convergers” (Raschick et al., 1998) are strongest with respect to practical ideas/solutions and practice application. These learners may really thrive in the discussion of interventions during case presentations/conceptualizations (e.g., with the use of the ICAM model). They will also likely complement the more abstract learners (i.e., “assimilators”) in a field seminar and/or agency field setting.

Another learning distinction involves identifying circular versus linear learners. The former may best respond to “theory circles” and the ITP model, whereas the latter may respond best to the ICAM.

**Elena—Field Instructor Case Example:** As noted earlier, Elena is a field instructor in a community-based outpatient mental health setting. She tends to be practical and has a preferred “converger” learning style. She notes that this is consistent with her worldview, theoretical leaning, and preferred practice models. She frequently struggles with students who have a predilection toward abstract thinking and conceptualization. Elena has communicated with her field faculty liaison that she doesn’t feel qualified to assist students in building their theoretical knowledge base.

**Omar—Student Intern Case Example:** As discussed earlier, Omar has been placed in a homeless youth shelter. Omar’s preferred learning style is as a “diverger”—he describes himself as intuitive and drawing from his “sixth sense.” If Omar were working with Elena, their challenge would be to ground Omar’s clinical work in a conceptual framework. Some of the context-specific suggestions that follow may help them with this challenge.

**Context-Specific and/or Resource-Based Suggestions**

**4. Study groups:** Interns may participate in study groups to help facilitate the integrative process. Anecdotally, a college-affiliated field instructor was so successful in implementing study groups, her students continuously stood out among students as capable of
integrating theory and practice. Any of the field instructor strategies discussed earlier can be used in a study group format.

**Martha—Field Instructor Case Example:** Martha is a field instructor in a partial-day treatment program for young children, ages 3 to 8 years. The program accepts multiple interns who are assigned a specific classroom of children. There are no more than five to six children in each classroom. As part of the internship, the interns are expected to meet twice a month to discuss how they understand the development of the child’s identified problematic behaviors theoretically. Thus, interns identify and apply grand theories that explain the etiology of the child’s difficulties and strengths, and then delineate a coherent practice theory and model that are appropriate. Martha is available for consultation if needed, but the group is led and maintained by students.

**Carlos—Student Intern Case Example:** Carlos was seeing a 6-year-old child who had witnessed his older brother’s death by handgun. The child lived in an area of the city where parents worried about their children playing outside due to periodic, random gunshots. He lived with a single parent who struggled with substance abuse issues. The child presented with episodic aggressive behavior toward other children, dysregulation, and a desire to control his peers’ behaviors. During the intern meeting, Carlos identified various grand theories that he believed influenced and explained the child’s behavior (e.g., ecological, attachment, neurobiology). Carlos then drew upon cognitive behavioral theory, model, and strategies to describe his therapeutic approach.

5. **Integrative field seminars:** Structuring field seminars using an integrative model (e.g., ITP or ICAM) helps to facilitate students’ integrative process. As noted earlier, both models underscore the importance of theory. By identifying an intern’s learning style (see recommendation 3, earlier in the chapter), the appropriate model and/or strategies can be applied. By offering integration in the field seminar, students can take learning back to the field site and provide inspiration and teaching to field instructors. The next recommendation
encourages bidirectional learning and cross-fertilization among field faculty, field instructors, and students.

**Field Faculty, Field Instructor, Intern Case Example:** An intern was working in-home with a 30-year-old woman who had been held against her will by a man who physically and sexually abused her for several days 5 years prior. Due to this past trauma, the client did not leave her home. The client was hesitant to engage with the intern until they started talking about their pets; each had a dog. With the field instructor’s permission, the student began to bring her dog to in-home visits. The client, accompanied by the intern, became more comfortable going outside when the dogs would need to relieve themselves. Eventually, they could all walk down the street together. Progress was being made.

When the case was reviewed in the field seminar, several questions emerged from the classroom peers and field seminar instructor. Were there any liability issues related to the intern’s dog? Was the dog a certified therapy dog? What were the issues regarding use of self, and the boundary implications of using one’s personal pet in a therapeutic environment? Were there other ethical and liability considerations? How did this dog-companion practice fit with the theoretical conceptualization and the student’s choice of practice theory and model?

The student had not considered some of the issues that emerged and took the feedback to her field instructor the next week. This cross-fertilization method was effective for the field instructor, the intern, and the field faculty member as they wrestled with this unconventional approach to working with the client.

**6. Integrative practice workshops:** Periodically offering workshops that bring field faculty and field instructors together may help to both facilitate students’ learning in the field and support field instructors in the integrative process. Dettlaff and Dietz (2008) discussed the need for field instructors to be specifically trained in a number of areas, not just offered an orientation to the college or social work curriculum.
For new or inexperienced field instructors, Dettlaff and Dietz’s (2008) review of the literature suggested training in such areas as steps in structuring supervision, how to integrate adult learning theories and concepts, effective instructional methods, creating an appropriate learning environment, assessing student performance, working with challenging students, and termination (Abramson & Fortune, 1990; Bogo & Vayda, 1998; Glassman, 1995; Rogers & McDonald, 1992). For more experienced field instructors, the literature recommended training centered on topics such as enhancing students’ critical thinking, group work, and communication skills, as well as conflict resolution skills (Cohen & Garrett, 1995; Dettlaff & Dietz, 2008; Glassman & Kates, 1988; Power & Bogo, 2002; Rogers & McDonald, 1992).

In an effort to garner more updated training needs, Dettlaff and Dietz (2008) conducted focus groups with field instructors to identify content they deemed essential for effective field instruction. Participants identified three broad areas of importance: (1) the mission of field education, (2) knowledge of the specific field program, and (3) expectations of student learning (Dettlaff & Dietz, 2008). More specifically, field instructors recommended training content related to effective components of field instruction, possible supervision methods, maximization of teachable moments with students, and the integration of theory with practice (Dettlaff & Dietz, 2008). Of key importance to field instructors was the preference for experiential learning activities and an opportunity to share ideas with other field instructors during the training.

**Integrative Field Instructor Workshop Examples**: To assist field instructors in how different personality types may influence their field instruction style, their interaction with a particular field student, and their assessment of an intern, a training session might be offered whereby field instructors take a test such as the Myers–Briggs Type Inventory (Moore, Dettlaff, & Dietz, 2004). Field instructors would outline their personality tendencies and then discuss how they have related to the student interns who have had similar or different styles.
They would also reflect on how these similarities or differences have influenced their assessment of the students’ strengths and challenges.

To assist field instructors in reflecting on use of self, a workshop might focus on field instructors’ definitions of use of self, how it is manifested in the field placement by the field instructor and field student, the guidance given to students about use-of-self issues, and small-group discussions of field cases where use-of-self issues have created clinical, ethical, and/or boundary crossings. The host field faculty would provide a conceptualization of use of self and cases that would highlight clinical, ethical, and/or boundary issues.

**SUMMARY**

In this chapter, we have attempted to highlight the key role that field instructors play in facilitating the ability of students to integrate theory and practice in the field of social work. To effectively achieve this daunting task, we have delineated a number of teaching methods that can enhance the field instructor’s abilities in this area. Helping students to understand the integration of theory and practice is so challenging that the combined efforts of university field faculty and field instructors are a must.

**REFERENCES**


