



# Field Practicum Handbook

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### Preface

This handbook is a guide for students and should be considered as supplemental to the BSW and MSW student handbooks. It summarizes the curriculum requirements, the educational objectives, competency standards, policies, and procedures of the Division's graduate and undergraduate field practicum program. This is not a contract and does not supersede university and trustee regulations. The Division of Social Work Field Committee may change this handbook at any time. No handbook can cover all of the questions or situations that may arise. Students and Field Instructors are strongly encouraged to contact the Field Director with questions.

This handbook is available online at: [www.uwyo.edu/socialwork](http://www.uwyo.edu/socialwork)

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## Division of Social Work Vision Statement

The Division of Social Work envisions a global community in which our graduates serve as ethical social work leaders who promote social, economic and environmental justice, human rights, and health and well-being for individuals, families, organizations, and communities.

## **Division of Social Work Mission Statement**

Guided by the ethics, values, scholarly inquiry, and practice principles of the social work profession, the mission of the University of Wyoming's Division of Social Work is to educate and prepare students to become effective, ethical, and competent generalist social workers by providing quality learning opportunities for leadership in promotion of social, economic and environmental justice for diverse populations in the state of Wyoming, nationally, and internationally.

## **The Social Work Profession**

Social work is committed to advocating for and serving vulnerable populations and promoting social, economic, racial, and environmental justice. Social workers assist individuals, families, groups, communities, organizations, and institutions. They may intervene at more than one juncture and respond to the needs as viewed by the individual, rather than some social imperative.

The social work profession engages in advocacy for the development of conditions for optimal well-being and prevention and treatment of social problems. Beginning practitioners in Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain West, a frontier rural and sparsely populated region, must internalize social work values and ethics, develop a sense of professional self, develop a variety of professional skills, and expand knowledge and theoretical base appropriate for social work practice at all levels.

Social workers spend a great deal of their professional time locating and creating resources that needed to ameliorate social needs. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>) guides professional social work practice.

## **Standards for Professional Practice Education**

Every social work student is obligated to be familiar with and abide by the internal and external standards that govern our school and our profession. Ignorance of these professional standards is not an excuse for non-compliance.

The Division adheres to the NASW code of ethics and expects students, faculty, and field instructors to abide by its provisions. The code can be found on the NASW website: <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>. Students enrolled in a social work program are considered social work professionals and are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics.

University of Wyoming students are expected to adhere to the UW Code of Conduct found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct/index.html>.

Students admitted into the professional social work degree program at either the BSW or MSW level are expected to demonstrate the following:

### **Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, and Self-Monitoring**

Students are expected to make a commitment to learning about self-awareness and to using self-reflection consistently and genuinely. Accepting supervision and incorporating feedback are critical to this process. As students progress through the Social Work program, they are expected to accurately assess their own strengths and limitations and to display a willingness to examine and change behaviors that interfere with their work at a field placement or in the classroom. This includes a willingness to diligently examine and address their own biases.

### **Openness and Willingness to Learn: Flexibility and Adaptability**

Students are expected to demonstrate openness to and active engagement in learning new ideas and perspectives. They should actively seek to understand the worldview and values of others. As required by the demands of professional practice, students should be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change.

### **Interpersonal Skills**

Students are expected to demonstrate the interpersonal skills and capacities needed to relate to clients, agency colleagues, fellow students, faculty, and staff. The capacity and skills to actively engage with others across difference and in situations of conflict should improve and deepen as students progress through the program.

### **Communication Skills**

In all oral, written and electronic communication, students are expected to be respectful of others. In electronic communication they should adhere to professional boundaries. In the classroom, students are expected to take responsibility for their role in discussions. They should strive to use active listening skills and to express ideas clearly. Students are expected to self-monitor and not dominate a discussion. Increasingly, as students progress through the program, they should be able to communicate effectively in writing, both in classroom assignments and in the field placement. It is students' responsibility to utilize resources to improve academic and field performance when problems in communication have been identified and brought to their attention for remediation/ focused learning.

### **Critical Thinking Skills**

As students progress through the program, they are expected to be able to frame and address problems in a disciplined way and engage at greater levels of independence in problem-solving efforts. Additionally, problem-solving efforts should be well reasoned, examine multiple perspectives and worldviews, integrate evidence and knowledge, and lead to well-supported decisions and conclusions.

### **Presentation of Self**

Upon entry to the program, students are expected to commit to learning what is required for professional behavior. Professional behavior includes the ability to evaluate and respond to the demands and expectations

of classroom and field placement environments, and the larger college community. Professional behavior also includes being punctual, dependable, and accountable and being able to prioritize responsibilities. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect professional behavior.

### Self-Care

Students are expected to recognize their own current life stressors and to seek ways to mitigate the effect of these stressors on academic and field performance. In accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics (sec 4.05), social work students should not allow their own personal problems or issues to interfere with their judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have professional responsibility. Social work students whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their judgment and responsibilities should immediately seek consultation with a faculty liaison, faculty member, or supervisor who will determine and assist in the necessary steps and actions related to field placement and course work.

## Division of Social Work Programs and History

The Division of Social Work offers both Baccalaureate (BSW) and Master's (MSW) degrees in social work. The Division offers the BSW through on-campus education in both Casper (at the University of Wyoming-Casper campus) and in Laramie (at the main campus). The MSW is a hybrid program consisting of face-to-face weekend classes, video conferencing, and online course work. **The MSW program does not offer a fully online program.** Both of the BSW and MSW programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and are guided by the Council's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. The Division was reaffirmed by CSWE in Spring 2020 for seven years.

Social work courses were first offered in the Sociology Department in 1967. In 1974, the BSW program was accredited by the CSWE and became an independent department. In 1984, the department moved from the College of Arts and Sciences to the College of Health Sciences with other professional programs. The first 10 MSW students entered the program in the fall of 1997, and 21 students graduated May 1999.

Currently, an average of 70-100 undergraduates major in social work annually, with about 35-45 BSW graduates each year. The MSW student census is typically about 40-50 students across the state, with about 20-25 MSW graduates annually. Class size for BSW courses is typically 18-25 and the class size for MSW courses is typically 12-25. The Division has eleven full-time faculty members. Additional employees include the Division Director, one full-time staff person, and many adjunct faculty/professionals who teach on a part-time, contract basis for the program. The Division maintains relations with human services organizations throughout the state, region, and nation.

More information about the Division of Social Work, the Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives can be found at: <https://www.uwyo.edu/socialwork/prospective-students/index.html>

## ***Section I: Introduction to the Field Education Program***

The University of Wyoming's Division of Social Work (DOSW) is committed to excellence in all aspects of the educational process. According to the 2015 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), field education is the signature pedagogy of social work education:

“Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline --- to think, to perform and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of social work is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum-classroom and field- are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systemically designed, supervised, coordinated and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the social work competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program. (CSWE, 2015).”

The field education program is the culmination and integration of the student's academic preparation for entry into social work practice. During the practicum and associated coursework, the student has a guided, supervised opportunity to put into practice the theories, knowledge, values, and skills learned in the classroom. The current goals of the overall field education program are:

### **Students will demonstrate the achievement of program competencies in field.**

Students are evaluated on their ability to demonstrate provisional mastery (competency) in each of the nine (9) Core Competencies. This is measured on the final Field Evaluation summary, as evaluated by the Field Instructors' rating of the students' performance in field.

### **Field practicum forms and evaluations will effectively measure students' mastery of nine core competencies and the associated practice behaviors.**

Field Instructor feedback sessions (trainings, site visits, surveys) are conducted to improve Field Education forms and evaluations. The Field Director will coordinate with MSW and BSW Program Directors to ensure field forms are in line with overall program evaluation standards.

### **Students will connect the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the classroom with the practical world of the field practice setting.**

Students' successful completion (Undergraduates: grade of C or higher; Graduates: grade of B or higher) of Field Seminar course sequence concurrently with field placement.

### **Field program will provide quality field placement sites and Field Instructors and/or Onsite Supervisors.**

The Field Director will recruit and develop new field placement sites and Field Instructors and/or Onsite Supervisors and will maintain and support existing field placement sites and Field Instructors and/or Onsite Supervisors. The Field Instructor and agency application and approval process is designed to ensure that field sites and Field Instructors are able to support the learning needs of students and meet program requirements. See Section III for more information. The Field Director will conduct annual Field Instructor training and



ensure maintenance of regular and supportive contact between Field Instructors and respective placement sites with the DOSW Faculty Liaisons and students will complete annual evaluations of Field Instructors and field placement sites.

### ***Section II: Roles and Responsibilities***

The coordination of several different professionals is needed to successfully and efficiently administer the student practicum experiences. Every person, including the student, has a role in successful field practicum. The roles and responsibilities are illuminated here.

#### **Student**

The student is an adult learner with a commitment to and investment in preparation for a career in the profession of social work. The expectations for the knowledge, values, and skills students must acquire in field practicum are specified, in detail, in the nine competencies and the associated practice behaviors. Students are expected to:

- Under the supervision and guidance of the Field Instructor (and Onsite Supervisor, if applicable) demonstrate the competencies and associated practice behaviors as outlined for the BSW or MSW program requirements.
- In conjunction with the Field Instructor (and Onsite Supervisor, if applicable), develop a Field Practicum Learning Contract which outlines the opportunities and activities that allow the student to meet the educational objectives and demonstrate the competencies related to practicum.
- Prepare for weekly supervision meetings with the Field Instructor by developing and submitting an agenda.
- Participate actively in assigned practicum duties and agency staff meetings.
- Complete all assignments, reports, and other required work on time.
- Practice social work in a disciplined manner and at the highest level of competence possible in view of skill and knowledge limitations.
- Conduct him/herself in a professional manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and in the best interest of clients.
- Follow agency policies and procedures, including dress codes.
- Engage actively in the evaluation process by completing self-evaluations, seeking ongoing feedback from the Field Instructor, and participating in the fall semester and final evaluations.
- Bring to the Field Instructor any problems or dissatisfaction with the field experience and engage constructively in finding solutions.
- Meet at least once per semester with the Faculty Liaison to review progress.
- Inform the Faculty Liaison of any problems that may arise.
- Provide documentation of their learning within the field practicum.
- Attend and participate in Field Seminar courses.

#### **Field Instructor**

Field Instructors are agency representatives to the University who possess a BSW or MSW degree from a CSWE accredited program. They provide supervision, advisement, and instruction to students to promote the development of social work skills, abilities and the incorporation of social work values and ethics. On occasion,

a social worker will volunteer to be an off-site Field Instructor. This occurs when an agency does not have an individual with a BSW or MSW who is able to provide field instruction on site. Field Instructors cannot be current or former supervisors of the student.

High quality supervision is an essential to help the student in their professional growth and development. The supervisory relationship is often the most significant relationship for the student in the practicum. This supervisory relationship provides support for students in the process of integrating the educational curriculum with the “hands on” field experience gained in the host agency. Field Instructors often serve as the student’s first mentor. Quality supervision must be scheduled weekly and one hour must be set aside for this process. Weekly supervision is required. Supervision provides both learning opportunities and reflective examination of challenges and growth while balancing the focus on task and process.

The Field Instructor, in collaboration with the student, has primary responsibility for developing the instructional curriculum for each assigned student based on the field practicum syllabus and learning opportunities available at the agency and in the community. The Field Instructor assesses the individualized learning needs of the student. The responsibilities of a Field Instructor include the following:

- Assume overall responsibility for the student’s educational experience in the agency and assess the student’s overall competency as identified on the evaluation forms.
- Orient students to the agency, its policies and procedures, staff, volunteers and stakeholders.
- Develop the Learning Contract in close collaboration with the student and Onsite Supervisor (as applicable) and with consultation from the Faculty Liaison as needed.
- Develop and provide an array of student learning opportunities which are appropriate for preparation within generalist or advanced generalist social work practice.
- Provide regular supervision for a minimum of one hour per week with the student.
  - Offsite Field Instructors may provide supervision via Zoom during instances when they are not able to meet with the student in person.
- Assist the student with incorporating social work values and ethics into all aspects of practice.
- Assist the student with socialization to the profession, the development of a professional identity, and acquisition of professional knowledge and skills.
- Assist the student in identifying the relationship between difficulties in practicum learning and personal traits and experiences.
- Provide adequate time within the normal practicum schedule for providing instruction for social work students.
- Attend yearly field related training seminars and a pre-placement orientation conducted by the UW Division of Social Work.
- Provide the student with ongoing feedback about their performance in the field practicum; assist in conducting quarterly, fall semester, and final evaluations of the student’s progress in collaboration with the Onsite Supervisor (as applicable).
- Support the student’s initiative, when needed, in gaining access to other learning experiences and resources in the agency and professional community.
- Consult with the faculty liaison for mutual planning, review, and evaluation of the field practicum experience; especially when concerns or problematic issues are identified.

## Onsite Supervisor

The Division of Social Work and CSWE require a practicum student receive field instruction from a BSW or MSW who has graduated from a CSWE accredited program. Some organizations do not have a BSW or MSW on site. In this circumstance a person in a related profession, who is employed by the agency and approved by the field committee, may act as an Onsite Supervisor. Onsite Supervisors cannot be former or current supervisors of the student. The Onsite Supervisor collaborates with the off-site Field Instructor to provide a cohesive learning experience to the practicum student. Onsite Supervisors are expected to:

- Orient the student to the agency, its policies and procedures, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.
- Collaborate with the Field Instructor and student in assessing the student's level of readiness for task assignments.
- Collaborate with the student and Field Instructor in identifying learning activities and tasks appropriate to the student's learning goals and ability.
- Provide adequate time as determined by the student's needs for supervision and task oversight.
- Attend field related orientations, workshops, and seminars conducted by the Division of Social Work.
- Collaborate with the Field Instructor and student to complete quarterly reviews, fall semester , and the final evaluations.
- Support the student's initiative, when needed, in gaining access to other learning experiences and resources within the agency.
- Consult with the Field Instructor and/or faculty liaison for mutual planning, review, and evaluation of the field practicum experience; especially when concerns or problematic issues are identified.

## Faculty Liaison

The faculty liaison is a faculty member who serves as communicator between the agency and the Division of Social Work. The liaison acts as a facilitator for the Field Instructor, student, and when necessary, as a mediator or a problem-solver. The liaison's responsibilities are to:

- Maintain ongoing contacts with the Field Instructor through at least two contacts per semester, one of which is in person.
- Assist the Field Instructor in designing learning experiences for the student, based on the educational objectives of the curriculum.
- Conduct an in-person mid-semester evaluation of the student's progress within the agency.
- If necessary, work with the Field Instructor to develop remediation plans for the student to address areas of weakness.
- Report to the Field Director on the progress of the student in field practicum and any problems encountered.
- Evaluate the suitability of the field practicum and the Field Instructor to meet program goals and student needs and inform the Field Director of this assessment.
- Evaluate the performance of the student and provide input on students' grades for field practicum.

## Field Coordinator

The Field Coordinator carries both administrative and academic responsibilities for the field practicum curriculum. Within the framework of curriculum policy, developed by the Division of Social Work, the Field Coordinator oversees the placement process and day to day coordination of student, agency, Field Instructor,

and Onsite Supervisor needs during the regular academic year for their respective program (BSW, MSW-Part Time). The Field Coordinator's responsibilities are to:

- Develop and maintain field practicum placements.
- Match students and field practicum placements.
- Coordinate faculty liaison activities.
- Develop and implement field practicum curriculum.
- Confer with the Faculty Liaison and Field Director regarding a student's performance.
- Assign final student grades for field practicum.
- Collaborate with the Field Director on development of field curriculum, preparation of field materials, and evaluation of the field program partners and overall program delivery.

### **Field Director**

The Field Director carries both administrative and academic responsibilities for the field practicum curriculum. Within the framework of curriculum policy, developed by the Division of Social Work, the Field Director oversees the contribution of field practice to the objectives of the BSW and MSW curriculum and carries responsibility for the effective and efficient coordination of field practicum activities. Since responsibilities depend largely on the performance of faculty, agency Field Instructors, and students, the Director's major function is one of expediting the field practice curriculum. The Field Director's responsibilities are to:

- Identify, assess, and recommend Field Instructors and field practicum sites.
- Develop and maintain field practicum placements.
- Match students and field practicum placements.
- Coordinate faculty liaison activities.
- Develop and implement field practicum curriculum.
- Confer with the Faculty Liaison regarding a student's performance.
- Support the Field Instructor through instruction and orientation.
- Coordinate field related orientations, workshops and training seminars.
- Participate in the preparation and maintenance of field practicum materials such as the practice handbook, syllabi, field agency agreements, and evaluation forms.
- Evaluate the suitability of the field practicum and the Field Instructor to meet program goals and student needs.
- Evaluate the performance of the Faculty Liaison, Student, Field Instructor and, Onsite Supervisors.
- Assign final student grades for field practicum.

### **Field Committee**

The Field Committee will:

- Discuss and suggest field practicum parameters that best fit with student academic needs, the University, College, Division and CSWE requirements, and field agency expectations.
- Review for approval any exception requests, change of field practicum sites, terminations from field practicum sites, and written appeals to field decisions.
- Review for approval agency applications, Field Instructor applications and On-site Supervisor applications.
- Advise the Field Director in decisions concerning the field practicum program.

- Assist with orientation and training with Field Instructors and orientation for both Field Instructors and students.

### ***Section III: Practicum Site Expectations and Approval***

Before any student is assigned to a field practicum, the Field Director, in consultation with the Field Committee approves the agency, the Field Instructor, and the Onsite Supervisor as applicable. Approval is based upon information provided on the Agency Interest Form and the Field Instructor Information Form and the Onsite Supervisor Information Form.

An agency's approval is based upon its characterization and implementation of generalist practice principles in its purpose and functioning as represented in its materials. During the agency approval process non-profit agencies are given preference. A student may request an exception for completion of a practicum at a for profit facility via the Field Committee. In approving the agency as a field practicum site and the agency's staff as Field Instructors and/or Onsite Supervisors, the Division of Social Work adheres to the guidelines of the Council on Social Work Education. **An independent private practitioner does not meet the criteria of an agency.** In order to be considered a field practicum site for the DOSW field practicum program, an agency must adhere to the following:

- An Agency/University agreement between the Division of Social Work and the field practicum agency must be signed by the agency head and by representatives of UW.
- The overall learning experience provided for the student includes a commitment to service compatible with the values, ethics, and practices of the social work profession.
- Students will be provided with the opportunity to gain practice experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities.
- The agency identifies clear and specific educational opportunities, which reflect the student's learning objectives and competencies and practice behaviors.
- Students will be provided with the opportunity to gain a breadth of practice experiences with persons from such diverse groups including but not limited to groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.
- The agency shall adhere to a policy of non-discrimination, based on race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.
- The agency will demonstrate support for field practicum instruction by:
  - Granting the Field Instructor the necessary time for teaching and supervising students.
  - Providing the student with the physical facilities and materials necessary for her/him to function as a professional. These include desk space, supplies, phone access, private space for interviewing and for participating in supervision and instruction, reimbursement for agency-related travel, and provision of essential clerical services.
  - Allowing the student to assume supervised responsibility for the client systems with whom they are working.
  - Granting time for Field Instructors to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops on field teaching, sponsored by the DOSW.

The organization and activities of the applicant agency must be such that its basic program can be maintained and developed without reliance on students.

### **Agency Approval Process**

Upon initial contact with an agency expressing an interest in becoming a field site, the Field Director will provide an Agency Interest form, the Field Instructor information form, the Onsite Supervisor information form, an Agency/University Agreement, a Non-Discrimination Agreement form and UW Reg. 1- 5 Sexual Misconduct Policies including the sexual harassment policy.

Once the completed forms with supporting materials are received they are forwarded via email to the Field Committee members for review and vote.

After the Field Committee votes on the application materials the individual and/or agency is notified. Approved applications are entered into the Tevera Field Management Software. Approved agencies complete the Agency/University Cooperative Education Agreement to finalize the partnership.

When the first student placement at the agency is complete, it is reviewed by the field committee based upon student and faculty evaluations to determine whether the partnership will be extended, needs remediation, or discontinued as a placement site.

### **Standards and Procedures for the Appointment of Field Instructors**

MSW program Field Instructors must have an MSW degree from a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education and are required to have two years post MSW experience. BSW program Field Instructors must have either a BSW or an MSW degree and are required to have two years of post social work degree experience. Social work experience should be in a paid position as a social worker and be relevant to the area the Field Instructor is supervising. Social workers wanting to assume the responsibility of a Field Instructor will need to complete and submit the Division of Social Work Field Instructor information form and provide documentation of the degree completion to the Field Committee for review and approval. The Field Committee, in consultation with the Field Director, approves Field Instructors.

### **Standards and Procedures for the Appointment of Onsite Supervisors**

Some agencies do not have an individual who has a BSW or an MSW available to provide supervision. In these situations, an Onsite Supervisor must be determined. Persons serving as Onsite Supervisors must document extensive experience in a human services area of practice and previous practice with the population that the agency serves. Persons wishing to assume the responsibility of an Onsite Supervisor should complete and submit the Division of Social Work Onsite Supervisor information form and include a current resume and a copy of degree/certification. The Field Committee must approve Onsite Supervisors.

## ***Section IV: Practicum Overview***

### **Methods of Instruction**

Within the field placement, the student will use critical thinking skills while learning to apply theories, knowledge, values, ethics, and skills to multiple level system interventions. Field learning is unique in that it occurs within an agency rather than a classroom. The student must be able to take initiative for their own learning and work within the structure of the agency as well as with the guidance of the supervisor. Many different instructional methods are used including observation, co-facilitation, accessing professional literature, working with multiple professionals, and self-instruction. Instruction occurs for the student through:

- Supervision with the Field Instructor.
- Day to day contact with the Field Instructor/Onsite Supervisor.
- Participation in the Field Seminar course.
- Meetings with Field Instructor, Onsite Supervisor (if applicable) and Faculty Liaison, including Faculty Liaison Visits.
- Networking with other agency employees, students, and agencies outside the student's field practicum.
- Attending and participating in agency and community meetings as appropriate.
- Development and revision of the Learning Contract(s), the Fall Semester Progress report and Final Field Evaluation with the Field Instructor.

During the time of the field practicum, the student is expected to have a guided learning experience. The student learning objectives listed in the practicum syllabus reflect distinct areas to be addressed throughout the course of the practicum. Students are expected to abide by the rules/policies of their placement agency; adhere to the required practicum/work hours; dress appropriately and according to agency policy; and maintain records as required by the field agency. Field Instructors may vary in their experience and approach to the responsibilities of being a Field Instructor.

### **Field Seminar Courses**

As a part of the Field education sequence, students must be concurrently enrolled in the appropriate Field Seminar course. These courses are designed so the student can further evaluate their abilities to demonstrate competence in the nine Core Competencies and associated practice behaviors required by CSWE and the Division of Social Work. The Field Seminar courses are traditional grading (A-F); any student who does not receive a passing grade in any Field Seminar course will not be allowed to continue in their field placement.

### **Learning Contract**

The learning contract is the 'blueprint' of the student's educational experience. The student and Field Instructor work together to brainstorm and design assignments within the field practicum agency that will support the student's development of professional competencies at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. At the beginning of each semester, students need to complete or update the Learning Contract within the first three weeks of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to submit this contract as outlined in the practicum syllabus.

## Weekly Supervision

One of the most critical methods of learning comes from the direct interactions of the student with the Field Instructor. Instruction occurs for the student through individual, regularly scheduled weekly supervisory sessions of at least one hour with the Field Instructor, as well as consistent guidance in daily activities. While supervision provided by Field Instructors may differ, the intent of supervision is to provide an hour that belongs to the student. Within these time periods, students may share their emerging insights about social work and their view of helping others. Supervision is intended to be a mentoring relationship and experience for students.

Sometimes a student is in almost constant contact with a Field Instructor. This is particularly true during the first hours in the practicum. In these cases, the hour a week direct supervision may seem superfluous. However, it is policy and part of an agency's agreement with the Social Work Division that the Field Instructor will **provide a dedicated one hour a week direct supervision**. The student should develop an agenda to guide supervision. The Field Instructor may add to the student's agenda. Supervision should be a balance of task and process.

## Faculty Liaison Visits

Faculty liaison visits are meetings that include the student, assigned Faculty Liaison, Field Instructor and (if applicable) Onsite Supervisor. The purpose of the visit is to provide support to the student and their learning process and provide subsequent support to the agency in guiding the student's learning. These meetings take place once per semester and can be scheduled more frequently if necessary. At least one of the visits is to take place in person within the agency setting. Other visits can take place via Zoom unless Division of Social Work faculty determine that an in-person visit is necessary. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate with all required attendees to schedule the visit at a time that works for all parties. If weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances prevent a meeting from happening in-person, it is preferable that the meeting take place via Zoom as scheduled rather than cancelling.

## Fall Semester Progress Report and Final Field Evaluation

Students are evaluated on progress in Field Practicum in the following areas: each practice behavior by their Field Instructor, Faculty Liaison and On-site supervisor (if applicable). Students will complete and sign progress reports or evaluations by the end of the semester in order for the student to receive a grade for each semester's work. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the competency evaluation form is signed by all parties and submitted on time as instructed within the practicum syllabus.

## Grading Scheme

Because of the unique nature of the field practicum experience, students in practicum courses are evaluated using a 'Satisfactory' (S) and 'Unsatisfactory' (U) grading system. Students are evaluated based on the following and must complete ALL of the following tasks and provide all associated documentation to receive a passing grade in field:

- Completion of a minimum required clock hours - documented on Time Log Reports



- Completing HIPAA or CHES exam with 100% (Fall semester only. Development of the Field Learning Contract(s))
- Participation in weekly supervision - documented on weekly supervision agendas
- Submission of all paperwork
- Participation in Faculty Liaison meeting(s)
- Satisfactory completion of Mid-Placement Progress Report and the Final Field Evaluation(s)

According to the UW Catalog, Satisfactory is “equivalent to a C or better [B or better for courses numbered 5000 or above]” (UW University Catalog, 2019). See General Information in the UW University Catalog for additional information.

A Satisfactory ‘S’ grade signifies the achievement of an initial level of competence in the BSW/MSW Program core competencies and the associated practice behaviors that apply social work knowledge, values, and skills in a practice setting. A student must earn a “Satisfactory” in order to receive credit for the course.

An unsatisfactory “U” grade signifies the student has not achieved beginning competence in the BSW/MSW Program core competencies and the associated practice behaviors and/or:

- Failed to complete the required minimum clock hours in the field practicum
- Violated an agency policy
- Violated one or more of the elements of the NASW Code of Ethics
- Failed to submit required paperwork
- Failed to attend weekly supervision
- Failed to complete the HIPAA or CHES exam
- Failed to participate in Field Liaison meetings
- Received unsatisfactory evaluations at Fall Semester Progress Report and/or Final Field Evaluation
- Failed to meet the requirements of a Focused Learning Plan
- Demonstrated academic dishonesty

If a student receives a “U” in Field Practicum they will be referred to their faculty advisor and/or Program Director.

## **Section V: BSW Field Education Information**

During a supervised field experience and Field Seminar coursework, students have opportunities to further integrate all educational facets for a beginning level of generalist social work practice. Students are expected to develop competence and have opportunities to integrate the social work knowledge base, values and standards, skills, theoretical perspectives, personal characteristics and critical thinking for culturally competent, value driven, generalist social work practice with systems of various sizes.

The CSWE competencies practiced in practicum are consistent with the BSW Program Mission and Goals (See appendix B for the BSW and Foundation CSWE Competencies)

### **BSW Field Sequence**

The BSW curriculum requires all Admitted Major students to complete the field education sequence. Typically, the sequence is completed in the student's final year of the BSW program. Students complete hours at their field placement site from the beginning of the Fall semester to the end of the Spring semester; students will log approximately 15 hours per week to stay on track in a 15 week semester. The BSW level field sequence consists of 450 hours of field practicum taken concurrently during Fall/Spring semesters with the Field Seminar coursework:

Fall Semester:

SOWK 4990 – Social Work Practicum (5 cr.): 225 supervised field hours

SOWK 4991 – Social Work Field Seminar I (2 cr.)

Spring Semester:

SOWK 4990 – Social Work Practicum (5 cr.): 225 supervised field hours

SOWK 4992 – Social Work Field Seminar II (2 cr.)

SOWK 4990 requires the completion of 450 hours of practice in a social services agency under the supervision of a BSW or MSW level practitioner who has been approved by the Field Committee. Students complete this requirement over two semesters, fall and spring; 5 credit hours each semester for a total of 10 credit hours. All coursework for the BSW degree must be completed prior to or in the same semester(s) SOWK 4990 is completed. Students must maintain a passing grade in SOWK 4991/4992 in order to continue in SOWK 4990.

### **BSW Eligibility to Enter Field**

In order to begin the field placement process students must meet the following prerequisites:

- Full admission to the BSW Program (Admitted major status)
- SOWK 3640: Generalist Social Work Practice II: Groups
- SOWK 3650: Generalist Social Work Practice III: Communities & Organizations
- Completed Practicum Placement application (submitted in Tevera)
- Be in good standing

## Curriculum and Program of Study

The Bachelor of Social Work curriculum and program of study can be found in Section III: Curriculum of the BSW Handbook.

## BSW Scholastic Requirements

University and College of Health Sciences policies governing scholastic requirements, including major changes, probation, and dismissal, apply to students enrolled in the BSW program. In addition to university/college requirements, the BSW program has the following scholastic requirements:

- Students must obtain a “C” or higher in all social work classes. The University has implemented a policy concerning repeating course work. Before withdrawing or retaking a course, the student should review this policy (see current UW General Bulletin for details).
- Students must complete field seminar/competency evaluation with an “S” or Satisfactory grade.
- In addition to receiving a grade of “C” or higher in all social work coursework students must achieve and maintain a 2.5 GPA in all social work course work and in overall coursework (including transfer coursework).

## Lapse in Course Work

Social Work Admitted Major students who have more than a year lapse in course work may need to meet additional requirements prior to entering field. See BSW Program Handbook section, *Social Work Admitted Majors Who Have More Than a Year Lapse in Course Work Prior to Field Practicum* for further information.

## Pandemics and Field Practicum

In the event of a pandemic your health and safety are of utmost importance as are the health and safety of the clients being served by your agency.

Your agency may require you to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Students are to, at minimum, follow agency policies regarding PPE. You are welcome to utilize additional PPE if you feel that it is necessary to your health and safety.

Agencies may also require that a student be fully vaccinated with one of the available COVID-19 vaccines or other vaccines. If a student has a medical or religious reason for not obtaining the vaccine(s), they need to follow the agency’s policy for obtaining an exemption. Should a student choose not to receive the vaccine(s) and be unable to obtain an exemption, the Field Director will make a reasonable effort to find another placement for the student. If another agency cannot be secured, there may be a delay in graduation for the student.

If you contract a pandemic-related illness or end up caring for someone with on or face other barriers to practicum learning, please notify the Field Director as soon as possible so we can make accommodations. We recognize that unprecedented times come with more potential scenarios than we can possibly imagine and we will work with you as best we can to support your continued learning and successful completion of the program.

## ***Section VI: MSW Field Education Information***

The MSW program is designed to provide students with a distinct field-practicum learning experience. Successful completion of the MSW field program requires a total of 900 hours of field experience in social service settings and satisfactory completion of Field Seminar coursework.

The CSWE competencies are practiced in practicum and are consistent with the MSW Program Mission and Goals and are defined by associated practice behaviors. See appendix B for BSW and MSW Foundation Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors and Appendix C for MSW Advanced Generalist Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors.

### **FULL TIME MSW PROGRAM**

For students admitted to the Standard MSW program (2 year), the hours are completed over the course of two distinct field experiences; one for 400 hours in the first (generalist) year and another for 500 hours in the second (advanced generalist) year. For Advanced Standing MSW students (those with a BSW), an advanced year placement of 500 hours is completed with their BSW field placement of 400 or more hours counting toward the 900 hour total.

#### **Full Time Foundation Generalist Year Field Sequence**

The foundation level field sequence completed during the first year of the Standard MSW Program consists of 400 hours of field practicum taken concurrently during Fall/Spring semesters with the Field Seminar coursework:

Fall Semester:

SOWK 5450 – Field Practicum I (3 cr.): 150 supervised field hours (beginning late September or early October)  
SOWK 5120 – Generalist Social Work Field Seminar I (1 cr.)

Spring Semester:

SOWK 5460 – Field Practicum II (5 cr.): 250 supervised field hours  
SOWK 5121 - Generalist Social Work Field Seminar II (1 cr.)

Foundation year students are typically in their field placement site from late September/early October until the end of the Spring semester, for approximately 15-18 hours per week.

#### **Full Time Advanced Generalist Field Sequence**

Advanced Generalist students are typically in their field placement site from the first week of the Fall semester to the end of Spring Semester (typically the first week of May) for approximately 17-20 hours per week. The Advanced Generalist field sequence consists of 500 hours of field practicum taken concurrently during Fall/Spring semesters with the Advanced Generalist Seminar coursework:

Fall Semester:

SOWK 5850 – Advanced Field Practicum I (5 cr.): 250 supervised field hours  
SOWK 5855 – Advanced Generalist Social Work Field Seminar I (1 cr.)

Spring Semester:

SOWK 5860 – Advanced Field Practicum II (5 cr.): 250 supervised field hours

SOWK 5856 – Advanced Generalist Social Work Field Seminar II (1 cr.)

### **PART TIME MSW PROGRAM**

For students admitted to the Standard MSW program (3 year), the hours are completed over the course of two distinct field experiences; one for 400 hours in the second (generalist) year and another for 500 hours in the third (advanced generalist) year. For Advanced Standing MSW students (those with a BSW), an advanced year placement of 500 hours is completed in the second year with their BSW field placement of 400 or more hours counting toward the 900 hour total.

#### **Part Time Foundation Generalist Field Sequence**

The foundation level field sequence completed during the second year of the Part Time Standard MSW Program consists of 400 hours of field practicum taken concurrently during Fall/Spring semesters with the Field Seminar coursework:

Fall Semester:

SOWK 5450 – Field Practicum I (3 cr.): 150 supervised field hours

SOWK 5120 – Generalist Social Work Field Seminar I (1 cr.)

Spring Semester:

SOWK 5460 – Field Practicum II (5 cr.): 250 supervised field hours

SOWK 5121 - Generalist Social Work Field Seminar II (1 cr.)

Part Time Foundation practicum students are typically in their field placement site from the first week of classes in late August until the end of the Spring semester, for approximately 15-18 hours per week.

#### **Part Time Advanced Generalist Field Sequence**

Advanced Generalist students are typically in their field placement site from the first week of the Fall semester to the end of Spring Semester (typically the first week of May) for approximately 17-20 hours per week. The Advanced Generalist field sequence consists of 500 hours of field practicum taken concurrently during Fall/Spring semesters with the Advanced Generalist Seminar coursework (2<sup>nd</sup> year for Advanced Standing Students and 3<sup>rd</sup> year for Standard program students):

Fall Semester:

SOWK 5850 – Advanced Field Practicum I (5 cr.): 250 supervised field hours

SOWK 5855 – Advanced Generalist Social Work Field Seminar I (1 cr.)

Spring Semester:

SOWK 5860 – Advanced Field Practicum II (5 cr.): 250 supervised field hours

SOWK 5856 – Advanced Generalist Social Work Field Seminar II (1 cr.)

## MSW Eligibility to Enter Field

In order to begin the field placement process, students must complete and submit the Field Placement Application, must have either completed or be concurrently enrolled in all prerequisite courses, and demonstrate readiness to enter Field.

Prerequisites for the Foundation Practicum (SOWK 5450/5460) include:

- Current admission to the MSW Program
- 3.0 GPA - Graduate
- Completed or concurrently enrolled in foundation year coursework

Prerequisites for the Advanced Generalist Practicum (SOWK 5850/5860) include:

- Admission to the MSW Program
- 3.0 GPA - Graduate
- Successful completion of all Foundation coursework or Advanced Standing status (with prior BSW degree)

## Curriculum and Program of Study

The Masters of Social Work curriculum and program of study for both the Standard Program and Advanced Standing Program can be found in Section III of the MSW Handbook.

## MSW Scholastic Requirements

University and College of Health Sciences policies governing scholastic requirements, including major changes, probation, and dismissal, apply to students enrolled in the MSW program. In addition to university/college requirements, the MSW program has the following scholastic requirements:

- Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0.
- Students must pass all core MSW courses with a “B” or better.
- Students must pass elective courses with a “C” or better.
- Students must complete field courses/seminar with an “S” or Satisfactory grade.

Failure to meet these scholastic requirements prohibits MSW students from progressing in the program and/or entering field practicum.

## Leave of Absence

Students who have taken a leave of absence from the MSW program must reapply to the program and be readmitted prior to applying for a field practicum placement. Please see *Division of Social Work Readmission Policy* in the MSW Handbook.

## Pandemics and Field Practicum

In the event of a pandemic your health and safety are of utmost importance as are the health and safety of the clients being served by your agency.

Your agency may require you to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Students are to, at minimum, follow agency policies regarding PPE. You are welcome to utilize additional PPE if you feel that it is necessary to your health and safety.

Agencies may also require that a student be fully vaccinated with one of the available COVID-19 vaccines or other vaccines. If a student has a medical or religious reason for not obtaining the vaccine(s), they need to follow the agency's policy for obtaining an exemption. Should a student choose not to receive the vaccine(s) and be unable to obtain an exemption, the Field Director will make a reasonable effort to find another placement for the student. If another agency cannot be secured, there may be a delay in graduation for the student.

If you contract a pandemic-related illness or end up caring for someone with one or face other barriers to practicum learning, please notify the Field Director as soon as possible so we can make accommodations. We recognize that unprecedented times come with more potential scenarios than we can possibly imagine and we will work with you as best we can to support your continued learning and successful completion of the program.

### ***Section VII: Placement Procedures***

All BSW and MSW students must submit a Field Application in Tevera, the field management software, to be placed in a field practicum. Field Applications are due the first week of class during the spring semester prior to the fall field placement (at the time of admission for newly admitted MSW students). The due date will be announced prior to Winter Break. In order to facilitate a productive learning experience for all field placement students, many variables must be considered in determining a student's field practicum:

- The DOSW Faculty Liaisons, Faculty Advisors, the Field Director, Field Instructors, and Students take part in the advising, matching and placement process.
- The DOSW is responsible for maintaining an array of field practicum sites and students are given the opportunity to state their preference to individualize learning objectives, geographic location and type of agency in which they would like to be placed.
- The DOSW is ultimately responsible for determining where a student will be placed for their field practicum.
- The geography and size of the communities in Wyoming may require that the student travel outside of their home community (this is especially true for smaller communities, including Laramie). **Students need to plan for the time and expense that may occur for travel related to their field placement.**
- All Field Instructors for MSW students will have at minimum an MSW and two years' post MSW experience; however, not all will have clinical licensure.
- An important part of the placement process is the student interview with the prospective agency. The student is expected to discuss learning goals and appropriate background issues that may facilitate or inhibit the successful completion of the practicum and expectations with the agency representatives. A student unable to secure a field placement after interviewing with a potential field site may be delayed in field and/or their academic program. Failure to secure a placement after three (3) interviews may result in the student being referred to either the BSW or MSW Program Director and the Field Director for next steps.

## Placement Process

- The student must have completed prerequisites or be taking the prerequisites concurrent with the placement process.
- The student submits the completed Field Application, including the goal statement, and a resume to Tevera by the established due date. The Field Director or designated Field Coordinator meets with and interviews each student to assess student's readiness for field, areas of strength and growth. During this meeting, student learning needs and goals and potential placements are discussed.
- The Field Director or designated Field Coordinator contacts agencies and sends the student's resume to appropriate agencies.
- The agencies review resumes and select students to interview.
- When contacted by an agency, the student makes an appointment and interviews at the designated agency.
- If the Student and Agency, including Field Instructor and Onsite Supervisor (as applicable) agree to work together in a field practicum, they complete and sign the Field Placement Confirmation Form in Tevera.

Field applications and forms are only available through Tevera,

## Tevera

The Division of Social Work uses a field management system that provides a database of potential practicum site information. Tevera allows for practicum related data to be collected for field program evaluation. Students are given access to Tevera at the beginning of the placement process. Tevera is also used for tracking time and completing field practicum assignments. There is a one time fee for using Tevera which is charged to the student's University account for the fall semester in which they begin practicum.

## Exception Requests

Sometimes students have extraordinary situations for which they would like to request an exception in regard to Field Practicum. The Field Committee will review all requests and consider them in relationship to the Division of Social Work policy, curriculum, CSWE's expectations for academic quality, and the best educational outcomes. Students who submit requests may be asked to submit additional materials and/or meet with the Field Committee. Submission of an exception request does not guarantee approval.

Specific guidelines for some exception requests are outlined below.

## Summer Block or 'non-standard' field placements

The curriculum has been designed for practicum to be completed concurrently with course work over the Fall and Spring semesters. Any field practicum, other than the traditional Fall/Spring placement, including summer placements necessitate an exception request. The request should be submitted to the Field Director (email request is acceptable) explaining the **extraordinary** need for a non-standard placement, detailed plan for completing a non-standard placement, and if appropriate, include supporting documentation. Common requests include delays in field due to illness or pregnancy (for the student, partner or significant family



member). Only extraordinary requests that demonstrate an educationally sound rationale will be considered. **Requests due to work requirements will not be considered.** If a student faces circumstances related to an extraordinary circumstance, including a pandemic, that present barriers to completing practicum during the Fall and Spring semesters, the student should immediately contact the Field Director to discuss these circumstances and appropriate accommodations.

## Use of Employment Settings for Practicum Placement

A field placement at a current place of employment is strongly discouraged. The standard policy of the Division of Social Work is that students who come into the program after being employed as social service providers will complete a field practicum in an agency different from their place of employment either current or prior. This is based on the educational rationale that students should be exposed to the broadest variety of learning experiences while in school. Agencies where a student has volunteered 40 or more hours constitute a work type setting and will need to be reviewed using the *Use of Employment Setting for Practicum Placement* requirements and guidelines.

The use of a setting where the student is a former employee, current employee, or is recently hired as an employee necessitates the submission of an exception request to the Field Director. Because we offer a Generalist and Advanced Generalist program, students are encouraged to complete their practicum at another agency to expand their learning. Students requesting their current work setting as a possible practicum placement may request this option **ONLY** once. A student will not be allowed to complete both field placements at a place of employment. The Field Director, in collaboration with the Field Committee, will make the final decision as to which year the student will be able to utilize their place of employment as a possible internship setting. Students who are in a position of authority or have a family member in such a position (CEO, Executive Director, etc.) **CANNOT** intern in their agency. Submitting a request does not guarantee approval. All factors are carefully considered before a decision is made.

Requests should provide specific details and the student is expected to have thought through the request well enough to be able to answer questions about the placement. **The proposed field practicum agency must confirm their understanding by signing the request or sending an email confirmation to the Field Director.**

In order for the exception to be considered the following criteria must be addressed, providing specific details:

- There is clear differentiation between work-related assignments and educational objectives with a clear statement about how job duties are different from practicum experiences and responsibilities.
- Assignments that are developed for practicum learning must be educationally focused in areas of new learning for the student.
- The student's administrative supervisor cannot serve as the Field Instructor. Likewise, the newly assigned Field Instructor must not have previously supervised the student.
- The agency must agree that the Field Practicum Learning Contract will guide the field practicum experience.
- The agency must meet the same criteria as other field practicum agencies.

## Out of State Placements

The University of Wyoming is a land grant university with a commitment to the state of Wyoming. The Division of Social Work places students in agencies across the state. In most cases students are expected to complete their practicum hours within the state. Placements outside of Wyoming are an exception and require an exception request. The request requires that the student identify the circumstances that impede their pursuit of educational goals should they complete their practicum within the state. If the exception request is approved the student will be charged a fee to cover the cost for travel to the field site by a faculty liaison. The fee is noted in the student fee book (See UW Student Fee Book) and is charged to the University of Wyoming student account and must be paid before the student's official transcript is released.

Students requesting an out of state placement are expected to assist in identifying an agency and Field Instructor for the proposed community and must complete the following tasks:

- Request an out of state placement by the due date provided by the Field Director.
- Submit a proposal to the Field Director that includes at a minimum the following information:
  - A rationale for an out of state placement that identifies circumstances necessitating out of state placement.
  - An acknowledgement that the student is aware that she/he is expected to pay additional costs for an out of state placement. The fees are noted in the University Fee Book and are charged through the university.
  - A proposed field site.
  - Educational goals that could be achieved via learning opportunities at the proposed placement.
  - A resume from the proposed Field Instructor and, if applicable, onsite supervisor.

## Completion of Off Site Hours

In most cases, practicum hours are expected to be completed within the facilities from which the agency normally conducts business. This includes events and meetings that the agency would expect an employee to attend, including community meetings, trainings and conferences; it also includes occasional remote work that is consistent with the agency's normal business operations. Training, research, watching of work related videos and other tasks should be completed at the agency or agency designated location.

**Off-site hours are hours completed at a location from which the agency would not normally conduct business or allow an employee to conduct business.** Sometimes, due to extreme situations including weather, it may be necessary to complete hours in an environment from which the agency would not normally allow work in order to maintain agency requirements/standards. **Rescheduling should be explored as the first option when possible.** When rescheduling is not possible, any completion of off-site hours should be approved by the Field Instructor or Onsite Supervisor and a notation should be made in Tevera indicating that the hours were logged off-site, providing the reason (ie, weather, illness), and stating the learning activities that were completed. **Off-site hours completed for convenience will not be accepted and make up hours will be required.**

## Completion of On Call Hours

Some agencies require that a student be on call as part of their practicum responsibilities. Not all hours spent on call are eligible to receive credit toward practicum totals. Time spent on call must be directly tied to learning goals and objectives in order for practicum hour credit to be given. Students can receive credit for on-call hours under the following circumstances:

- While performing other practicum duties during the course of a normal practicum schedule
- When answering a call that comes in during an on call shift.
- When responding to a call that has come in during an on call shift. This includes time on the phone and/or time spent in person with a client or completing responsibilities related to the call, and traveling to or from the location where these activities are fulfilled.

Students may not receive credit while on call when sleeping or engaging in other activities that are not directly related to practicum responsibilities. Students must provide a description of on call activity on time log notes in Tevera and describe how the time relates to learning competencies to receive credit.

## Completion of Training Prior to the Start of Fall Classes

Some agencies require that a student complete training or orientation prior to the start of fall courses. To receive credit for this training time, students must submit a written request to the Field Director via email. This request must include the date(s) and time(s) of the training and a brief description of the training content. If the training lasts more than 20 hours, a student must also participate in a one-hour supervision session with the assigned Field Instructor and submit a Supervision Agenda. No more than 40 hours credit will be given.

### ***Section VIII: Policies Relevant to Practicum Placement***

A number of policies have been described in early sections of this field handbook. As noted in the Preface, not every scenario can be covered, and the policies herein do not supersede those of the Division of Social Work and/or the University of Wyoming.

## Required Practicum Hours

Practicums span across the entire semester. One of the requirements of practicum is to complete a minimum number of total hours identified in Section V: BSW Field Education Information and Section VI: MSW Field Education Information. The number of required total hours and credits in field differ for each BSW/MSW program level. Students should refer to their field practicum syllabi for specific requirements.

For all practicum experiences, the student's schedule is arranged in consultation with the practicum Field Instructor. Specific arrangements for any given field practicum may depend on the student's academic needs, the agency's capacity, and the Division's requirements. Students are expected to adhere to the schedule agreed upon with their Field Instructor and Onsite Supervisor (when applicable).

In order to meet practicum requirements, students must show up on time and stay for the entire time period on the agreed upon days. Students are expected to begin their practicum at the beginning of the semester, and remain in their practicum until the last week of regular classes for the semester. \*Fall Foundation Full Time MSW students begin their practicum in late September/early October.

## **Illness or Family Emergencies**

A student is expected to call the field agency in advance if they are sick or have a family emergency. The hours missed must be made up at a later time.

## **Holidays**

The field practicum is an academic course and students are expected to observe the academic schedule, however **no** holiday time off or sick leave hours can count as practicum hours.

## **Winter Break**

For liability insurance purposes, students must request an exception from the Field Committee to log hours during Winter Break. Students should discuss this with their agency and supervisors early in the Fall Semester to prepare for requesting an exception if needed. Exceptions are approved on the basis of maintaining continuity of care and avoiding disruption in services and project completion. The deadline for winter break exception requests will be announced mid-semester each fall. Further instructions will also be given at that time.

## **Other Absences**

All other absences from the field placement must be cleared by the Field Instructor and Onsite Supervisor (when applicable) at least 24 hours in advance. A student may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. Attendance expectations at the field placement are the same as if the student were in a job setting.

## **Early Completion of Practicum Hours**

Students often exceed the minimum number of hours required for the practicum. It is important to remember that although CSWE determines a minimum number of hours that must be completed, the practicum is a semester long course and consists of much more than just completion of hours. Students have made a commitment to their learning, the agency and to the course to extend their practicum throughout the semester in which they are enrolled. Students are expected to continue in their placement, completing at least 12 hours per week, until the final week of classes each semester.

## **Previous Work or Life Experience**

Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience is not given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the required field practicum hours.

## **Student Travel**

Travel to and from the field site cannot be included in students' practicum hours. However, travel that is part of the field practicum expectations and for which employees would be paid or given work credit (e.g., travel to client homes) is included in practicum hours. Any questions should be directed to the Field Director.

## Termination of Practicum

### Termination by Student

Each student is expected to complete the field practicum course at the agency where she or he is initially placed. If a student is experiencing difficulties in field or if difficulties arise prior to the start date for practicum, the first course of action is to attempt to address and resolve issues directly with the Field Instructors, Onsite Supervisor (if applicable) and in consultation with the Faculty Liaison and/or Field Director. If the student's dissatisfaction is a result of circumstances at the field practicum site which are not resolvable and are not a result of inappropriate behaviors or lack of skills on the part of the student, a written request to change field practicum site can be submitted to the Field Director for review by the Field Committee. Change requests are only granted in rare circumstances. The Field Director, in collaboration with respective Field Coordinators and/or Program Directors, may determine without a written request from the student that termination is warranted and inform the Field Committee of this decision.

Examples of some circumstances that would be valid reasons for possible change of field practicum sites would include:

- Field Instructor unavailability due to increased work load or change of positions
- Field Instructor's inability to provide appropriate supervision
- Lack of opportunities to complete the requirements of the field practicum as outlined in the Field Practicum Learning Contract
- Serious interpersonal conflicts with field agency
- Conflicts with the Field Instructor and/or Onsite Supervisor (if applicable) that have not been successfully resolved despite sincere efforts by the student, Field Instructor, Faculty Liaison, and Field Director

The Field Director, in consultation with the Field Team, will consider whether the student should be:

- Placed at an alternate site and complete the field practicum hours
- Placed at an alternate site and complete additional practicum hours
- Remain at the current field practicum site

The Field Director will inform the student in writing of the decision no later than seven days after the Field Team meets.

### Termination by Field Instructor

A Field Instructor has the authority to terminate a student's placement at the agency if the Field Instructor is unable to continue as Field Instructor, or if the student's performance or behavior is unacceptable. The Field Instructor will communicate concerns to the student immediately upon observation or knowledge of the problem, discuss interventions to ameliorate the deficit during weekly supervision, and inform the Faculty Liaison immediately that the problem exists. The Faculty Liaison immediately informs the Field Director.

Examples of some behaviors that would be valid reasons for possible termination of the student's field practicum include:

- Chronic tardiness
- Absences from field practicum without notifying the Field Instructor
- Chronic tardiness in completion of agency paperwork
- Missing appointments with clients or Field Instructor without appropriate notification
- Exploiting the agency by misuse of agency supplies or resources
- Dressing in an inappropriate, unprofessional manner
- Acting unprofessionally while at the agency, such as inappropriate displays of emotions or displays of immature behavior
- Ethical violations, including:
  - engaging in intimate (sexual/romantic) relationships with a client or a client's family member;
  - falsifying agency or university documentation;
  - breaching client confidentiality;
  - initiating a physical confrontation with a client, client's family member, Field Instructor, Onsite Supervisor, agency staff, or faculty member;
  - exhibiting impaired functioning due to the use of alcohol or other substances during practicum hours;
  - and/or acting in a discriminatory manner toward a client, co-worker, fellow student, Field Instructor, or faculty member.

In the event that the field practicum is terminated for behaviors or a lack of skills on the student's part, the Field Team will consider whether the student should:

- Be placed at an alternate site and complete the remaining field practicum hours
- Be placed at an alternate site and complete additional field practicum hours
- Withdraw from the field practicum course and re-apply for another semester
- Take additional social work classes prior to re-enrollment in the field practicum course
- Be terminated from the field practicum course and receive a grade of "U" for the course

The Field Director may also refer the student to be reviewed by the Division of Social Work; please refer to the BSW/MSW Student Handbook for the *Student Academic and Professional Performance Review Policy and Procedures* or Grading Scheme Section in the Field Handbook.

### **Background Check, Additional Costs, and Students with Criminal Records**

Students complete a background check at the time of admission into the BSW or MSW Program. Field placement sites may require additional background checks. Students are responsible for any additional costs required by an agency for things such as background checks, immunizations, drug tests, etc. Should a student not be able to afford these expenses out of pocket, they can submit a request to the Division's Student Affairs Committee for financial assistance.

Many organizations have mandates regarding who can work within their organization. Consequently, the findings of the background check may impact the student's ability to complete their field placement. Students are encouraged to disclose anything on their background check that might influence their ability to obtain

placement for field. Students also need to immediately inform their respective Field Coordinators if anything occurs that would change the results of their background check. Field Coordinators immediately inform the Field Director.

Students with current criminal offences/issues will be required to complete all obligations to the court prior to being placed in a practicum site. Obligations include probation, parole, payments and other requirements as set by the court. Documentation from probation, parole, district attorney or judge is required. Documentation to verify the completion of obligation may be necessary. Should such obligations arise while the student is enrolled in the program, they must immediately notify their Program Director who will notify the Field Director.

### **Transporting Clients**

The policy of the University of Wyoming Risk Management Office is that **no student may transport clients, in their own or agency vehicles**. The University of Wyoming carries liability insurance covering practicum students. While UW provides liability coverage for practice, it does not provide car insurance to practicum students. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in the student's termination and/or failure in Field Practicum. If a student drives a personal vehicle for duties related to field practicum, it is at the student's own risk. It is strongly suggested that if you use your personal vehicle for your practicum, you contact your insurance company to clarify your coverage.

While the University carries liability insurance covering practicum students, this coverage does not extend the same coverage to students as having their own liability insurance policy for student practice. Students are encouraged to look into student liability insurance coverage.

### **Alcohol and Drug Use**

Students are expected to abstain from alcohol/drug use and be free from impairment during any type of practicum related activity. This includes any activity related to the placement process or for any hours at the agency or when the student is representing the agency (i.e., any hours being counted as practicum hours). Please be aware, some field agencies conduct random drug screenings, failure to participate or failure to pass a field agency drug screening may result in your termination from your practicum site. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary action.

### **Conflicts of Interest and Dual Relationships**

Students should not be placed in agencies where they, their family members, or significant others, are or have been a client within the last five years. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the Field Director if the student, any family member, or significant other is a former or current client of any agency being considered for possible field practicum. Furthermore, students should not be placed in agencies where their family members or significant others are employed and working in close physical proximity to the student, and/or in the supervisory chain of command for the student. If a student fails to reveal this conflict to the Field Director and is consequently placed in a field practicum at the agency, this will be considered grounds for possible termination of the field practicum, with the student receiving a grade of "U" for the course.

Dual relationships may arise during the course of a practicum placement. Agencies, agency staff, or Field Instructors may be acquainted with students from a variety of previous contacts. The Division of Social Work expects all faculty, Field Instructors, and students to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics as it pertains to dual relationships.

### **University of Wyoming Statement on Non-Discrimination**

A campus environment characterized by diversity, free inquiry, free expression, and balanced by interpersonal civility has always been, and continues to be, a top priority of the University of Wyoming. Civil discourse is an essential aspect of the search for and transmission of knowledge. Words and actions that promote and encourage self-worth, respect, and dignity are consistent with the University's mission. Specifically, racist and other discriminatory or harassing conduct based on gender, color, disability, sexual orientation, religious preference, national origin, ancestry, or age impair and disrupt legitimate University functions. Every effort, within the context and protection of First Amendment rights, will be expended to eliminate such conduct from the campus community. Teaching our students to live productively in a multicultural/multiethnic society is a process that must take place within a constructive and harmonious multicultural/multiethnic environment here at the University of Wyoming.

It is the obligation of the faculty, staff, students, and the administration of the University of Wyoming to provide this environment.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The University of Wyoming, Division of Social Work is committed to maintaining an environment in which the dignity and worth of all members of the institutional community are respected. Sexual harassment of employees, students and agency field personnel is prohibited. This policy is in keeping with Federal and State laws and the policy of the University and follows UW Sexual Misconduct Policies and Procedures (<https://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/faqs/discrimination-and-harassment/index.html>) All students, faculty and staff have a responsibility to assist in the enforcement of this policy, be aware of its contents, and to abide by its terms.

From time to time, the Employment Practices/Affirmative Action Office disseminates materials and conducts training sessions throughout the university concerning the specifics of this policy.

*Confidentiality:* All complaints of sexual harassment and other forms of unlawful harassment (race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, and sexual orientation) shall be considered confidential (particularly complaints of sexual harassment) and only those persons necessary for the investigation and resolution of the complaint will be given any information. The university will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the individual against whom the complaint is filed to the extent possible consistent with the university's legal obligations to protect the rights and security of its employees and students.

### **Academic and Professional Performance Review Policy**

One of the most important considerations in successfully completing the Division of Social Work degree requirements is for students to perform at the appropriate level academically and professionally. While this is



the case for the vast majority of Division of Social Work students, there are occasions where there may be faculty concerns about a student's academic and/or professional performance. The purpose of this policy is to provide students with feedback and direction for successful completion of course(s) or the program. Listed below are representative areas of academic and/or professional performance by students that should trigger a concern, although other areas could as well.

- Student performance in the field practicum is unsatisfactory;
- Student is dismissed from field practicum;
- Student performance in a didactic course is unsatisfactory or failing;
- Student exhibits a pattern of behavior that is judged to hinder the student's development as a professional. Behaviors prescribed in the University of Wyoming Student Code of Conduct and the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics will be used by faculty as a guide; Matters of academic dishonesty need to follow the procedures documented in UW Regulation 2-114 ([https://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/files/docs/regulations-2019/uw\\_reg\\_2-114\\_approved\\_9-12-19.pdf](https://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/files/docs/regulations-2019/uw_reg_2-114_approved_9-12-19.pdf))

### Procedure

- The student will receive verbal feedback concerning the academic, professional performance or field concerns from the faculty at the time of the occurrence.
- Following this, concerns raised by a faculty member shall be directed to the appropriate program director (BSW, MSW, Field).
- In consultation with the Program Director and/or Field Director, the course faculty member will develop a Focused Learning Plan with the student specifying an action plan with a timeframe and potential outcomes of the situation (See Template).
- The faculty (and others as appropriate) will discuss the plan with the student. The student, faculty member, faculty advisor or faculty liaison, program director, and field director will sign the Focused Learning Plan, which will be placed in the student's DOSW record.
- Failure to adhere to the Focused Learning Plan may result in failure of the course or dismissal from the program.
- A follow-up conference to review the student's progress will occur according to the timeline outlined in the Focused Learning Plan. Documentation will be attached to the original Focused Learning Plan.

APPROVED BY DOSW FACULTY ON JULY 7, 2017

### Grievance Procedures and Appeals

Any student or student group may use the Division of Social Work procedures for resolution of student disputes arising from decisions or actions of Division faculty, staff, or administrative officials. The only grounds for appeal shall be allegations of prejudice towards the appellant; capricious evaluation; or capricious treatment. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct/>) and UW Regulation 11-2, University Hearing Officers ([https://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/files/docs/regulations-july-2018/uw\\_reg\\_11-2\\_format\\_effective\\_7-1-18.pdf](https://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/files/docs/regulations-july-2018/uw_reg_11-2_format_effective_7-1-18.pdf)). Appeals must be completed within the time frames specified.

Students should first attempt to resolve the issue with the person involved informally. When the appeal relates to an action regarding a class, the appeal should first be initiated with the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, an appeal can be made to the Division of Social Work (DOSW) and will proceed pursuant to the process outlined below. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the written appeal may be forwarded to the DOSW Student Affairs Committee via the DOSW administrative offices. The appeal must be presented to the Director of DOSW or designee no later than fifteen (15) school days after the act complained of has occurred. If the act complained of occurred between academic terms, the student shall file the complaint no later than fifteen (15) school days after the beginning of the next academic term. A written appeal shall consist of a letter to the Student Affairs Committee presenting the action being appealed, the basis of the appeal, and any supporting documents.

The Chair of the Student Affairs Committee or designee will make preliminary inquiry to ascertain whether the appeal is supported by available evidence. If not, the Chair or designee shall dismiss the appeal. The Chair, in consultation with the Director of the DOSW, may also assist in the resolution of the matter through administration disposition. Otherwise, an appeal hearing shall proceed according to the process outlined below.

The Appeal Panel will be composed of the following:

- The panel will consist of the Student Affairs Committee.
- Neither the faculty member who assigned the grade to the student nor the Director will be a member.
- The chair of the panel is elected by the committee and is a non-voting member.

THE CHAIR OR DESIGNEE WILL:

- Coordinate the appeal process
- Notify the student and faculty member of the time and overall process of the hearing. Notify both the student and faculty member that all materials pertinent to the review, including whether any witnesses will be called, must be submitted to the Chair or designee at least (5) business days prior to the hearing.
- Distribute all materials pertinent to the appeal from the student and faculty member to members of the hearing panel and the student and faculty member at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing.
- Preside over all sessions of panel; ensure procedural conduct consistent with fairness. Maintain, with the assistance of DOSW staff, integrity (of the record) and confidentiality of the proceeding except as required by administrative or other legal process.
- Dismiss any person from hearing room who becomes disorderly during proceedings; document behavior and subsequent action; and keep documentation with the record of the proceedings.
- Submit the panel's findings of fact and the recommendation to the Director in writing and with a rationale within five (5) days of the hearing. All panel members shall sign the findings of fact and recommendation.

APPEALS HEARING:

- The chairperson shall call the meeting to order. The chairperson will ask the appeal panel members, the student, and the faculty member to identify themselves. The chairperson shall review the

procedural guidelines and the specific aims and limitations of the appeal process (e.g. the purpose is to ensure fairness to the student and not to substitute the judgment of the instructor.)

- The conduct of the hearing will be informal and will be determined by the panel.
- None of the parties may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, although a support person, approved by the chair of the hearing panel, may be present at the hearing. The support person may not testify or participate in the hearing.
- During the hearing both parties will be allowed to make a statement to the panel in support of their case. Following this, both student and faculty member will have an opportunity to respond to the other's statement.
- After the student and the faculty member(s) have presented their statements and responses, questions may be raised.
- Witnesses may present statements on behalf of either the student or faculty/staff. The student, faculty member, and committee members can ask questions of the witnesses.
- In the course of any hearing, the panel is authorized to request the appearance or additional evidence of any student, faculty, staff member, or other employee of the University as witness.
- If the student or faculty member/staff does not appear at the hearing, the written statements will be the entire presentation by that person and the panel's recommendation will be made accordingly.
- The hearing may take place by audio/visual teleconferencing. The conference will be scheduled by DOSW personnel and, at the discretion of the chairperson, may be set up with an independent proctor to accompany the student at the distance site. At the end of the hearing, after the student and faculty are dismissed from the call, if needed the audio/visual teleconference will be re-established with just the members of the hearing panel.
- The panel has five (5) business days following the hearing to render its findings of fact and recommendations.
- The panel shall submit, to the Director, its findings of fact and recommendations in writing, with all panel members' signatures.
- The panel shall follow established procedures maintaining confidentiality of the hearing and related records.

#### THE DIRECTOR WILL:

- Receive the findings of fact and recommendation of the panel.
- Make a final decision within ten (10) business days after receipt of the panel's findings of fact and recommendation.
- Notify the parties in writing of their decision immediately thereafter. This does not preclude verbal communication of findings.

#### FURTHER APPEAL

Further appeal shall be in accordance with the College of Health Sciences Appeals procedures.

## Appendix A: Focused Learning Plan Template

Focused Learning Plan: Field

Student Name:

Student ID:

Faculty Name:

Date:

Course:

Details
Description of Issue/Behavior
Learning Plan:
Timeline and Potential Outcome:
Acknowledgement
Student Signature/Date
Faculty Signature/Date
Field Instructor Signature/Date
Faculty Advisor Signature/Date
Faculty Liaison Signature/Date
Program Director Signature/Date

## **Appendix B: BSW and MSW Foundation Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors**

### ***Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior***

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

### ***Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice***

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

***Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice***

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

***Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice***

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

***Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice***

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; and
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

***Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities***

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

***Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities***

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

***Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities***

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency

goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

***Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities***

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels



## Appendix C: MSW Advanced Standing Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

**Approved: September 6, 2017**

The Division of Social Work provides an advanced generalist curriculum that leads to the development of advanced integrated practitioners. The Division defines advanced generalist as follows:

Advanced generalists build upon the social work generalist foundation with increasing depth and breadth in advanced integrated practice through multidimensional assessment of problem-setting using a strength-based approach, self-reflective leadership and ethical advocacy for societal transformation (Lavitt, 2009). Advanced integrated practice requires multiple professional skills, ability to select among a wide range of alternatives, and creativity to address complex practice challenges in an ever-changing world. Multidimensional assessment of problem-setting is used to contextualize client issues within historical, present and future time domains, micro/mezzo/macro subsystems and multiple practice domains, including power, possibility, context, history and meaning (Finn, 2016). Advanced integrated practitioners use sophisticated reflection skills to analyze the “fit between one’s theoretical models, methods, and their effectiveness to produce the desired change” (Lavitt, pg. 268). Finally, advanced integrated practitioners promote justice-seeking interventions at all levels using social work values in order to be a catalyst for transformation.

Advanced integrated practitioners:

- assume a key role in societal transformation through reflective leadership, assessment of multidimensional problem-setting, and ethical advocacy to promote social justice locally and globally,
- negotiate real world practice needs which are unique, ambiguous, unstable and complex in situations defined by value conflicts, and
- use a multidimensional practice approach that focuses not only on micro, mezzo and macro levels, but also on the historical context, power dynamics, meaning, and possibility.

### ***Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior***

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- 1.1 Address ethical challenges in social work practice, with an emphasis on rural/frontier environments, at all systems’ levels.
- 1.2 Engage in multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary practice, identifying and valuing the uniqueness of varied disciplines.
- 1.3 Recognize and manage personal values so that professional values guide practice.

- 1.4 Critically reflect on and contextually apply NASW Code of Ethics.
- 1.5 Develop and maintain appropriate documentation within a practice context.

***Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice***

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- 1.1 Apply theories, models and approaches to advanced integrated practice that elicit and honor client expertise and narratives, promote empowerment and respect difference.
- 1.2 Apply inclusive approaches encompassing experiences of those affected in development and evaluation of practices, programs and/or policies.
- 1.3 Use culturally-informed models of practice to enhance client or community well-being.

***Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice***

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- 1.1 Assess and apply an understanding of the multidimensional problem-setting, including effects of oppression/privilege, discrimination and/or historical trauma on individuals and communities, to guide advanced integrated practice.
- 1.2 Research, plan and develop in collaboration with others justice-seeking interventions that use the multidimensionality of practice settings.
- 1.3 Develop and apply ethical advocacy strategies and techniques using a human rights framework to advance social, economic and environmental justice.

***Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice***

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- 1.1 Use program evaluation to promote organizational or community change.
- 1.2 Apply a social justice, culturally informed approach to the application and creation of knowledge.

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- 1.1 Analyze, formulate, advocate, and implement policies that advance multidimensional aspects of social welfare.
- 1.2 Engage in policy analysis and advocate in partnership with marginalized or oppressed groups and allies to promote human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.

**Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- 1.1 Develop professional relationships considering positionality, privilege, power and difference.
- 1.2 Identify key stakeholders and contextualize engagement in multidimensional problem-setting.

**Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- 1.1 Use multidimensional assessment of problem-setting to contextualize client system issues with an emphasis on rural/frontier environments.
- 1.2 Attend to the client/system concern as defined, perceived, and experienced by the client/system.

**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- 1.1 Use empowerment and strengths-based processes that engage clients as full participants.
- 1.2 Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including clients, community members and other professionals, to develop and implement action plans
- 1.3 Intervene across client systems based on multidimensional assessment.

***Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities***

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- 1.1 Use a range of methods, including participatory approaches, to assess effectiveness of advanced integrated practice interventions.
- 1.2 Contextualize, apply and communicate knowledge of best practices and effectiveness of interventions to diverse stakeholders.