



Field Practicum Handbook

2025-2026

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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

Table of Contents

Division of Social Work Vision Statement	4
Division of Social Work Mission Statement	4
The Social Work Profession	4
Standards for Professional Practice Education	4
Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, and Self-Monitoring	5
Openness and Willingness to Learn: Flexibility and Adaptability	5
Interpersonal Skills	5
Communication Skills	5
Critical Thinking Skills	6
Presentation of Self	6
Self-Care and Community Care	6
Division of Social Work Programs and History	6
<i>Section I: Introduction to the Field Education Program</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Section II: Roles and Responsibilities</i>	<i>8</i>
Student	8
Field Instructor	9
Onsite Supervisor	10
Faculty Liaison	11
Field Coordinator	11
Field Director	11
Field Committee	12
<i>Section III: Practicum Site Expectations and Approval</i>	<i>12</i>
Agency Approval Process	13
Standards and Procedures for the Appointment of Field Instructors	14
Standards and Procedures for the Appointment of Onsite Supervisors	14
<i>Section IV: Practicum Overview</i>	<i>14</i>
Methods of Instruction	14
Field Seminar Courses	15
Learning Contract	15
Weekly Supervision	15
Faculty Liaison Visits	15
Fall Semester Progress Report and Final Field Evaluation	16
Grading Scheme	16
<i>Section V: BSW Field Education Information</i>	<i>17</i>
BSW Field Sequence	17
BSW Eligibility to Enter Field	18
Curriculum and Program of Study	18
BSW Scholastic Requirements	18
Lapse in Course Work	18
<i>Section VI: MSW Field Education Information</i>	<i>18</i>
FULL TIME MSW PROGRAM	19
Full Time Generalist Year Field Sequence	19

Full Time Advanced Generalist Field Sequence	19
PART TIME MSW PROGRAM	20
Part Time Generalist Field Sequence	20
Part Time Advanced Generalist Field Sequence	20
MSW Eligibility to Enter Field	21
Curriculum and Program of Study	21
MSW Scholastic Requirements.....	21
Leave of Absence.....	21
Pandemics and Field Practicum (All Programs and Cohorts).....	21
<i>Section VII: Placement Procedures</i>	<i>22</i>
Placement Process.....	23
Experiential Learning Cloud (Formerly Tevera)	23
Exception Requests	23
Summer Block or 'non-standard' field placements	24
Use of Employment Settings for Practicum Placement	24
Out of State Placements	25
Completion of Off Site Hours.....	25
Completion of On Call Hours	26
Completion of Training Prior to the Start of Fall Classes	26
<i>Section VIII: Policies Relevant to Practicum Placement.....</i>	<i>26</i>
Required Practicum Hours.....	26
Illness or Family Emergencies	27
Holidays	27
Winter Break.....	27
Finals Week Hours	27
Thanksgiving Week and Spring Break Hours.....	27
Other Absences.....	28
Early Completion of Practicum Hours.....	28
Previous Work or Life Experience	28
Student Travel.....	28
Termination of Practicum.....	28
Termination by Student	28
Termination by Field Instructor	29
Background Check, Additional Costs, and Students with Criminal Records	30
Transporting Clients	31
Alcohol and Drug Use	31
Conflicts of Interest and Dual Relationships.....	31
University of Wyoming Statement on Non-Discrimination	31
Sexual Harassment	32
Academic and Professional Performance Review Policy	32
Grievance Procedures and Appeals.....	33
Appendix A: Focused Learning Plan Template	36
Appendix B: BSW and MSW Foundation Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors.....	37
Appendix C: MSW Advanced Standing Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors.....	41
Appendix D: Justification for Use of Employment Setting for Practicum Placement	46

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 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 critical self-reflection consistently and genuinely. Accepting supervision and incorporating feedback are essential 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 critically 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 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 needs and expectations of classroom and field placement environments and the larger university community. Professional behavior also includes being punctual, dependable, and accountable, and being able to prioritize responsibilities. Giving consideration to appearance, attire, and general demeanor that support the needs of the respective environment is an expectation for professional behavior.

Self-Care and Community Care

It is critical within social work to engage in practices that allow for the prioritization of personal and professional well-being. Cultivating supportive, reciprocal relationships with classmates, friends, family, and chosen communities is vital for mutual support, accountability, and shared resources. Engaging in a community of care helps prevent isolation, burnout, and overwhelm and reduces stigma around asking for help.

As life stressors arise, they may begin to affect academic and field performance. In accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics (sec 4.05), social work students must take measures to prevent personal problems or issues from interfering with their judgment and performance and from jeopardizing the best interests of people for whom they have professional responsibility. Social work students whose personal challenges, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties might 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 and will guide students to supportive resources.

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 week-end classes, video conferencing, and online course work. There is a full time MSW option through the campus in Laramie and a part-time MSW option based from the UW-Casper campus. **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 30-50 students across the state, with about 20-25 MSW graduates annually. The Division has thirteen full-time faculty positions. 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>

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 2022 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), field education is the signature pedagogy of social work education:

“Field Education is the signature pedagogy for social work. 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 intentionally, ethically and with integrity.

The field setting is where students apply human rights principles from global and national social work ethical codes to advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. It fosters a learning environment where anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion are valued. Field Education is designed to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the explicit curriculum in the field setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum-classroom and field- are of equal importance, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria and measures of student acquisition and demonstration of the nine social work competencies. Responding to the changing nature of the practice world and student demographics and characteristics, field education programs articulate how they maintain or enhance students' access to high-quality field practicum experiences. Field education programs develop field models to prepare students for contemporary and interprofessional social work practice, including the use of various forms of technology. (CSWE, 2022).”

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 (competence) 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 administer the student practicum experiences successfully and efficiently. 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 documentation by the given deadlines and/or due dates.
- Practice social work in a disciplined manner and at the highest level of competence possible in view of skill and knowledge limitations.
- Conduct themselves 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 and/or Field Coordinator 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 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 (usually one of the Field Coordinators) 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 (faculty liaison visit) 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 student's 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. 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 them 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 Experiential Learning Cloud (formerly Tevera) 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 should be 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 on 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 timeframe given in the syllabus. 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 must develop an agenda to guide supervision. The Field Instructor may request that the student add specific items to the 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 by their Field Instructor, Faculty Liaison, and Onsite Supervisor (if applicable). Evaluation is based on progress made on each practice behavior in Field Practicum. Evaluations are completed in the Experiential Learning Cloud by the given due date in order for the student to receive a grade for each semester's work. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the progress report or evaluation form is activated in the Experiential Learning Cloud, completed and 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 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 CHESS exam with 100% (Fall semester only)
- Development of the Field Learning Contract
- Participation in weekly supervision - documented on weekly supervision agendas
- Submission of all paperwork by the given due dates
- Participation in Faculty Liaison meeting(s)
- Satisfactory completion of Fall Semester 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, 2024). 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 by the given due dates
- Failed to attend weekly supervision
- Failed to complete the HIPAA or CHESS exam
- Failed to participate in Faculty 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, anti-oppressive, 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 Generalist 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 14 hours per week to stay on track in a 15-week semester. The BSW level field sequence consists of 400 hours of field practicum taken concurrently during Fall/Spring semesters with the Field Seminar coursework:

Fall Semester:

SOWK 4990 – Social Work Practicum (5 cr.): 200 supervised field hours

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

Spring Semester:

SOWK 4990 – Social Work Practicum (5 cr.): 200 supervised field hours

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

SOWK 4990 requires the completion of 400 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 Experiential Learning Cloud)
- 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 a “C” or higher
- Students must complete field practicum 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.

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 Generalist Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors and Appendix C for 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 Generalist Year Field Sequence

The generalist 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 mid to late September)

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.)

Generalist year students are typically in their field placement site from mid to late September 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 18 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 Generalist Field Sequence

The generalist 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 generalist practicum students are typically in their field placement site from the mid to late September 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 18 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 (2nd year for Advanced Standing Students and 3rd 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 Generalist 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 generalist 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 and Field Seminar with a “B” or better.
- Students must pass elective courses with a “C” or better.
- Students must complete field practicum 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 (All Programs and Cohorts)

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 VII: Placement Procedures

All BSW and MSW students must submit a Field Application in Experiential Learning Cloud, the field management software, to be placed in a field practicum. Field Applications due dates will be communicated in the fall semester prior to the year that students begin field placement (at the time of admission for newly admitted MSW students). The due date will be announced in writing and the Field Director will present to each class that will be applying for Field. 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, the Field Director, Field Coordinators, 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 the Experiential Learning Cloud by the established due date. The Field Director or designated Field Coordinator meets with and interviews each student to assess students' readiness for field, and 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 students' resumes 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 the Experiential Learning Cloud.

Field applications and forms are only available through Experiential Learning Cloud

Experiential Learning Cloud (Formerly Tevera)

The Division of Social Work uses a field management system that provides a database of potential practicum site information. Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC) allows for practicum related data to be collected for field program evaluation. Students are given access to ELC at the beginning of the placement process. ELC is also used for tracking time and completing field practicum assignments and documentation. There is a one-time fee for using ELC 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. Whether described below or not, any time a student needs to fall under the required hours for practicum or faces any situation that is not described elsewhere in this Field Handbook, they must reach out to their Field Coordinator or the Field Director with as much advance notice as possible to determine if an exception request or other approval is needed.

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 preferred) 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

In order to facilitate the broadest variety of learning experiences as a social work student, the Division encourages students to seek practicum options outside of their current or former employment settings. 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. A student will not be allowed to complete both field placements at the same 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. Please see Appendix D for a template you can use to submit your request:

- 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 cases where a student lives outside Wyoming, the Division will make a good faith effort, in collaboration with the student, to secure a placement in the area where they live. If a placement cannot be secured, a meeting will be arranged with the student, Field Director, and respective Program Director to determine what steps need to be taken.

All of the same policies and procedures apply for out of state placements including an in-person faculty liaison visit once per year. If the travel expense will exceed the cost that would be incurred for a visit within the state, 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.

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 (i.e. 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.**

At their discretion, agencies can give approval to students to attend campus and/or community events that don't involve the agency or an agency representative as long as the event is relevant to the students learning

as outlined in the Learning Contract. Students may not log hours for campus and/or community events they attend without prior agency approval.

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 hours. 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 Experiential Learning Cloud 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 prior to the start of the training. 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 must begin their practicum during the designated start week, and remain in their practicum through the last week of regular classes for the semester even if they have already reached the total required number of hours for the semester.

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.

Finals Week Hours

The last week of regular classes in each semester is the final week to log hours without prior approval from the Field Director. Therefore, should a need arise for a student to log hours during finals week, they must reach out in advance to their respective Field Coordinator and explain the need to log hours during that week. Students must wait for a response from their Field Coordinator about whether or not the request to log hours during finals week will be granted. Hours logged during finals week in the fall semester can only be counted toward fall semester totals. Respective Field Coordinators will determine whether or not weekly supervision is also required if a student is granted permission to log hours during finals week. A time log report and supervision agenda must be entered in Experiential Learning Cloud if hours are logged during finals week.

Thanksgiving Week and Spring Break Hours

Logging hours during the week of Thanksgiving in the fall semester and the week of Spring Break in the spring semester is OPTIONAL. If a student chooses to log hours during either or both of those weeks, they may log up to 8 hours without having a one-hour supervision meeting that week. If a student logs more than 8 hours during either of those weeks, they must also have a one hour supervision meeting.

Students in a school placement setting that has a different spring break than the University of Wyoming spring break, may request approval in advance to be excused from logging hours during the week of their school's

spring break and log hours during the University of Wyoming spring break instead. A time log report and supervision agenda must still be submitted for the week they are excused from to document that they were excused.

If students log hours during either Thanksgiving Week or Spring Break, they must submit a time log report and supervision agenda during those weeks.

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, through the final week of regular 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 they are 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
- Unethical or unprofessional activity within the agency setting

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
- Repeatedly presenting in attire that is inappropriate for the work of the agency
- Unprofessional conduct as determined by agency policy, social work ethics, or other expectations
- 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. Students can contact the Field Director for additional direction on accessing this resource.

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 Program Director if anything occurs, such as new involvement in the legal system, that would change the results of their background check. Program Directors must 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 obligations 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 that don't involve transporting clients, it is at the student's own risk. It is strongly suggested that if a student uses their personal vehicle for practicum, they contact their insurance company to clarify coverage. Even if covered by their vehicle insurance, students are still not permitted to transport clients.

Social Work Student Practice Liability Insurance

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/regs-policies/section-4-equal-opportunity/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)

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.

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). 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 policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy areas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgement and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize the historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- a. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
- b. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- c. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- d. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgement and behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- a. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- b. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

- a. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- b. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

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

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

- a. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- b. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social

workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

- a. use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and
- b. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, 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 individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- a. apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- b. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with 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. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

- a. apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
- b. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

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. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings. Social workers:

- a. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- b. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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 evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- a. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
- b. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Appendix C: MSW Advanced Standing Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Advanced generalist practitioners integrate an understanding of social work's ethical underpinnings, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. These practitioners recognize that ethical considerations are compounded by rural-specific challenges such as limited access to services, lack of resources, privacy issues due to close-knit communities, and dual relationships. Ethical integrated practice involves advocating for systemic changes to address social, racial, and economic, and environmental injustices that disproportionately affect rural communities in research, practice, and policy. In their decision-making, advanced generalist practitioners employ critical thinking informed by frameworks of ethical reasoning that consider the intersections of individual, family, and community life. They are aware of the interplay between personal values and professional obligations, particularly in rural settings where professional roles may overlap with personal community ties. Advanced generalist practitioners are proficient in using technology ethically and effectively to enhance service delivery and overcome geographical barriers, while being mindful of the unique accessibility needs in rural settings. Advanced generalist practitioners critically evaluate the profession's history and current practice through rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to address systemic issues unique to rural settings. Advanced practitioners demonstrate an advanced understanding of interprofessional roles, which often require a broader scope of integrated practice in rural areas due to a lack of resources and limited availability of professionals. Recognizing the importance of lifelong learning, advanced practitioners seek out networks, supervision, and training opportunities to enhance their practice. They continually adapt their skill set to the evolving demands of rural social work practice, including the innovative use of technology to overcome geographical barriers and enhance service delivery.

Advanced Generalist Practitioners:

- a. Make ethical decisions that respect the complexity of rural social work, integrating the NASW Code of Ethics, local regulations, and other relevant ethical decision-making models.
- b. Demonstrate professional behavior that is responsive to cultural norms, ensuring that appearance, communication, and conduct are attuned to the complexities of the communities they serve.
- c. Use technology in a manner that is ethical and responsive to the accessibility and confidentiality needs inherent in rural practice to facilitate better practice outcomes.
- d. Engage in supervision and consultation to guide their professional judgment and behavior to effectively navigate the unique professional landscape of rural areas.
- e. Engage in ongoing critical self-reflection and examination of the values and assumptions that shape social work theory, practices, policies, and programs.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Advanced generalist practitioners advocate for human rights, especially within rural contexts where isolation and limited access to services can exacerbate social injustices. They possess a detailed understanding of historical and ongoing injustices that perpetuate oppression and racism globally and locally, with an acute awareness of how these issues manifest in rural areas. Advanced generalist practitioners leverage technology to promote social justice and human rights, recognizing its potential to connect rural communities with essential services and resources. These practitioners advocate for equitable access to technology in rural

areas, acknowledging that the digital divide is a significant social justice issue. Advanced generalist practitioners critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in order to reduce inequities and ensure dignity and respect for all, understanding the importance of strategies that may be tailored to the specific needs of rural populations. They are adept at identifying and addressing the unique barriers that rural communities face in accessing social resources. Advanced generalist practitioners engage in advocacy and integrated practice methods that seek to dismantle oppressive structures and to safeguard the equitable distribution of social resources, as well as the protection of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights.

Advanced Generalist Practitioners:

- a. Advocate for human rights at all system levels recognizing the unique challenges rural populations face and the importance of community collaboration in tailored advocacy efforts.
- b. Engage in practices that advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice aimed at influencing social welfare policies, practices, and services that can empower rural communities.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Advanced generalist practitioners recognize the importance of cultural and understand how racism, oppression, and privilege shape human experiences. These practitioners are attuned to the insidious influence of White supremacy across different levels of practice. Advanced generalist practitioners apply this knowledge to address the unique challenges of rural communities including limited access to services, heightened privacy concerns due to close-knit communities, and the importance of cultural norms and values that may affect attitudes towards diversity and inclusion. Advanced generalist practitioners are keenly aware of how diversity and intersectionality shape the human experience. Diversity is understood as the intersectionality of social factors that include but are not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Advanced generalist practitioners understand how these factors influence practice, policy, and research at the individual and family levels, as well as within broader group dynamics, organizational structures, community interactions. These practitioners recognize that individuals in rural settings may experience unique forms of oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation, as well as privilege and power, influenced by their societal, historical, and geographical contexts. Advanced practitioners are committed to understanding the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the specific forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination that may be present in rural settings. By leveraging their understanding of diversity and intersectionality within the rural context, social workers engage in anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice and address dynamics of privilege and oppression.

Advanced Generalist Practitioners:

- a. Apply an understanding of the effects of oppression, privilege, discrimination and historical trauma on individuals and communities to guide advanced integrated practice.
- b. Implement anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches to foster equitable service access and inclusion, with particular attention to the rural context.
- c. Engage in critical self-reflection and reflexivity to mitigate the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and stakeholders.
- d. Partner with clients as experts in their own lives to develop and evaluate practices, programs, and policies.

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

Advanced generalist practitioners integrate ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in research, with a specialized focus on rural contexts. Advanced practitioners use research to inform decision-making in practice, policy development, and program enhancement, emphasizing the needs within the culture of rural communities. These practitioners understand that while research aims to be objective, it is conducted within social and cultural contexts that can influence its processes and outcomes. Advanced generalist practitioners use an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens to critically design, evaluate, and apply research. They recognize the limits of objectivity and are aware of the inherent biases that can shape research agendas, methodologies, and interpretations. Advanced generalist practitioners access, critique, and synthesize literature to develop research projects that address the complexities of rural contexts. They utilize a variety of research methods to address diverse areas of inquiry, and harness digital research tools to gather, analyze, and disseminate data that can inform practice and policy in rural settings. These practitioners are adept at articulating and disseminating research findings in accessible formats that speak to the needs of rural clients and stakeholders.

Advanced generalist practitioners:

- a. Apply research findings to enhance integrated practice, influence policy, and improve programs in rural communities.
- b. Use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive program evaluation and research strategies to promote organizational and community change.
- c. Use practice experience to guide research inquiries and utilize research evidence to enhance practice.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Advanced generalist practitioners understand that historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global factors influence the development and implementation of social policy at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. These practitioners are attuned to the multifaceted influences that shape social policy, particularly within the distinct context of the rural Rocky Mountain West. Using rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses, advanced generalist practitioners act as leaders in policy analysis, development, advocacy, implementation, and evaluation across all levels and fields of practice. These practitioners prioritize the distinct needs of rural populations and the specific challenges posed by the geographical vastness and sparsely populated areas. Advanced generalist practitioners use their skills and knowledge to actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy in practice settings.

Advanced generalist practitioners:

- a. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services, including in rural communities.
- b. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that address the specific needs and challenges of rural populations, promote access to services, and create systemic change within these communities.
- c. Employ a variety of strategies, including digital advocacy, to navigate the complexities of policy development and advocacy in rural spaces.

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

Advanced generalist practitioners negotiate the dynamic and interactive engagement process in various environments, including rural contexts with their unique challenges. Utilizing an integrated practice approach, these practitioners draw on advanced theories of human behavior and the social environment and apply this

knowledge to facilitate engagement with the clients in multidimensional settings across system levels. These practitioners navigate the nuances of rural social work with an awareness of the complexities of power, privilege, and positionality, ensuring that engagement strategies are equitable and inclusive. They creatively utilize a variety of communication tools, including virtual platforms, to build bridges and facilitate communication across geographical divides.

Advanced generalist practitioners:

- a. Demonstrate interpersonal skills, including empathy, acceptance, and reflection, through the development of culturally responsive relationships with clients and stakeholders.
- b. Identify key stakeholders and contextualize engagement by considering positionality, privilege, power, and difference at multiple levels of practice in various contexts, including in rural areas.
- c. Integrate service user voices in decision-making processes, fostering an environment of power sharing that supports collaborative goal setting and recognizes the agency of all clients and constituencies.

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

Advanced generalist practitioners conduct multidimensional assessments using critically reflective, dialogical processes that challenges power dynamics and structural biases. Advanced generalist social workers are committed to a dynamic and ongoing assessment process that is informed by advanced theories of human behavior within the social environment and enriched by anti-oppressive, critical, and anti-racist frameworks.

Assessment involves a collaborative process

of defining challenges and identifying strengths, which is especially important in rural areas. In rural settings, these practitioners place special emphasis on the complex interplay between individuals, their environment, and the systemic forces that impact their lives. Advanced generalist practitioners use assessment to inform integrated practice interventions. Advanced practitioners give critical attention to how their personal biases, power, privilege, and values may affect assessment and decision-making.

Advanced generalist practitioners:

- a. Use historical, cultural, and political perspectives and theories, including a critical understanding of power and oppression, when assessing clients, systems, and stakeholders.
- b. Uphold client self-determination, honoring how clients, systems, and stakeholders define and perceive their own concerns and experiences.
- c. Develop mutually agreed-on client goals and plans based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges for client systems, particularly for those in rural areas.
- d. Critically assess values, power, and assumptions underlying practice, policies, and programs at all levels, striving to transform and empower rather than maintain status quo.

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

Advanced generalist practitioners understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of integrated practice with a special attention to how interventions are implemented in rural areas. They leverage telehealth and other digital intervention strategies to expand access to services and support for rural populations. These practitioners offer leadership in conceptualizing and implementing culturally responsive, evidenced-informed interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Advanced generalist practitioners engage in participatory justice-oriented interventions at all system levels and facilitate those interventions to transformative endings. In addition, advanced generalist practitioners participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve individual, family, group, organization, and community goals.

Advanced generalist practitioners:

- a. Creatively bridge multiple levels of intervention to support anti-oppressive practices in rural settings.
- b. Bring knowledge and skills of direct practice, research, policy analysis, and advocacy to bear in practice, regardless of setting, problem area, or specific job description.
- c. Mobilize community resources and assets to build on existing strengths within the rural contexts, fostering community-led initiatives.

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

Advanced generalist practitioners understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of integrated practice, including in rural settings. These practitioners take leadership roles in creating collaborative evaluations, emphasizing the importance of service user voice in shaping practices and outcomes. Advanced generalist practitioners are aware of and utilize technology and a diverse range of range of methods,

including participatory approaches, to evaluate outcomes and the effectiveness of advanced integrated practice interventions, with particular attention to the needs of rural communities. These practitioners ensure that evaluations contribute to policy and service delivery enhancements. Advanced generalist practitioners also recognize that evaluation includes celebration of successes, large and small.

Advanced generalist practitioners:

- a. Take the initiative in critical analysis of policies and practices, advocating for service user voice, and applying evaluation findings to enhance practice and policy effectiveness.
- b. Demonstrate leadership in the evaluation process, guiding teams in reflective practice and data-informed decision-making, ensuring that the unique aspects of rural practice are considered and honored.
- c. Implement ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive evaluation strategies to improve and inform their practice.

Appendix D: Justification for Use of Employment Setting for Practicum Placement

Student Name: [Your Name]

Agency Name: [Your Agency Name]

Agency Representative Contact: [Your Agency Contact]

→ Introduction: Begin by stating your request to complete your practicum at your current or former place of employment .

→ Competency Integration: Summarize how your practicum experience will align with the nine core social work competencies. Please list each competency and write one to two sentences about duties that will fit within that competency.

Example: Competency 1: I will have opportunities to apply the code of ethics in practice and will conduct myself in a professional manner.

Example: Competency 2: I will have opportunities to connect clients with resources, give input on policy changes, and explore ways to create meaningful change to the systems that impact the population I will be serving.

Example: Competency 3: My agency serves people from many backgrounds and I will have numerous opportunities to explore anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices.

(Continue through all 9 Competencies which can be found at the back of the Field Handbook)

→ Educational Focus: Explain how you will maintain an educational focus while completing your practicum at your place of employment. I.e, how will it be different than just going to work every day?

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Agency Representative Signature: _____

Date: _____

Statements to Meet Requirements for Use of Employment Setting for Practicum Placement

Student Name: [Your Name]

Agency Name: [Your Agency Name]

Field Instructor Contact: [Your Field Instructor]

Plan for What Will Happen if Your Employment Ends

→ Include a statement indicating that if your employment ends you understand that your practicum may be impacted and you will work with your Field Coordinator to secure a new practicum site and make up any lost hours.

Field Instructor Assignment and Supervision Plan

→ Provide the name of your employment supervisor and the name of your Field Instructor (the person who will provide supervision for your practicum). If your employment supervisor must also serve as your Field Instructor because no other options are available, include a formal statement outlining how professional boundaries between employment supervision and practicum supervision will be maintained.

Agency Commitment to Practicum Requirements

→ Include a statement that your agency understands the plan and requirements listed above and will support you in maintaining an educational focus for the duration of your practicum.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Agency Representative Signature: _____

Date: _____