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Chapter 1: Introduction

Dear Field Students:

Welcome to Field Work! The Field Education Program is a collaborative partnership between the School, University, the community of social and human service agencies, community organizations, public services, and the community of students and social work professionals. As a participant, you must assume an active and responsible role in your field education. Your participation in field work will provide you with the opportunity to apply the theories, skills, and processes learned in classes to real life situations. It will also allow you to test your interest in working with a particular client population, as well as fostering a stronger personal commitment to the social work profession, its ethics, values, and ideals.

Be very serious and committed to your field experience. Learning to integrate theory and practice is one of the purposes of your field seminar. Your field seminar assignments will also provide you with opportunities to integrate professional knowledge, values, skills, and competence development. For these reasons, both seminar and field work are taken concurrently and must be successfully completed in order to progress.

The Social Work Code of Ethics is included in this manual. Abiding by the values and ethics of social work will assist you as you learn to make sound professional judgments with the support of your field instructor and field faculty liaison.

We look forward to working with you this year and soon becoming your professional colleagues.
Sincerely,

The Field Office
Section 1: The School of Social Work

Mission and Diversity Statements

Mission Statement
The University of Southern Maine’s School of Social Work is committed to educating culturally competent social work practitioners who are prepared for multi-level, strengths-based practice that values social justice, and the centrality of community and environment in enhancing the well-being of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Diversity Statement
Commitment to diversity is an integral part of the School of Social Work’s mission. The School of Social Work faculty and staff are committed to preparing culturally competent social work practitioners. We welcome and honor people of all ages, abilities, creeds, cultures, genders, races, sexual orientations, and socio-economic statuses. We value intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, academic freedom, and integrity, and vigorously promote a safe atmosphere where ideas can be presented and challenged in a mutually respectful manner. We promote values of social justice and social change, and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice through partnership with the community and in our teaching, scholarship, and service endeavors.

Generalist Social Practice Definition
Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. The baccalaureate program in social work prepares students for generalist practice. The descriptions of the nine Social Work Competencies presented in the EPAS identify the knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors associated with competence at the generalist level of practice. (CSWE 2015)

Guiding Values
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Building knowledge through open inquiry
- Competence
- Integrity
- Social Justice
- Service

Section 2: CSWE Core Competencies

Courses in both the undergraduate and graduate levels are designed to ensure that graduates achieve competence in the following areas define by the CSWE 2015 Educational and Policy Standards:

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. Assess with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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

8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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

9. Evaluate 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 are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

Chapter 2: Field Education

Section 1: Field Education Overview

The USM School of Social Work embraces field education as the signature pedagogy of the profession. This competency-based education is critical to the successful development of the social work student. The field curriculum supports the mission and goals of the BSW program and the values of the social work profession, including social and economic justice and respect for diversity.
Field Practicum Introduction

The mission of the University of Southern Maine’s School of Social Work is to provide quality education from a generalist practice perspective. For students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for beginning level practice, successful completion of the fieldwork component is essential.

Through these field experiences students are expected to integrate knowledge obtained from courses in methods of social work practice, human behavior in the social environment, social policy, and social research. Participation in the field practicum further promotes personal commitment to, and socialization in, the profession.

The field experience is a collaborative undertaking between the School of Social Work and various community social service agencies, organizations, schools, and institutions within the state of Maine. Students actively participate in the collaborative process beginning with the application for field work and continuing throughout the subsequent year-long practicum. The field work experience takes place in the students’ final academic year. Students are placed with a single agency for the full academic year and spend 16 hours per week for 14 weeks during each semester for a total of 480 hours. This 480-hour commitment should be completed by the end of the spring semester in early May. In addition to this agency-based learning, students participate in a small group integrative seminar on campus (SWO 411 Field Work Seminar I is taken in the Fall Semester and SWO 412 Field Work Seminar II is taken in the spring Semester). Students earn six credits per semester for participation in both aspects of the experience.

Classes for field seminar will be scheduled on a weekly basis, however, variations to individual seminar schedules will be discussed at the beginning of the semester.

The field practicum is taken concurrently with social work methods courses SWO 404 (Methods of Social Work Practice II) in the fall semester and SWO 403 (Methods of Social Work Practice III) in the spring semester. SWO 393 (Methods of Social Work Practice I) precedes the field practicum experience and is taken in the spring of the junior year. Students must successfully complete both the field practicum course and the Methods III course in the fall semester in order to continue the practicum in the spring. Failure to do so requires the student either to repeat the field experience in the fall of the following year, or to withdraw from the Social Work major.

Field work is designed as a concurrent course of study with classroom curriculum throughout the academic year.
- Field work curriculum focuses on generalist social work practice.
- Students are in their field placement for 16 hours per week. Days and times are coordinated between the student and their Field Instructor.
- Placements begin when school begins in the fall and ends in early May when classes end.
- BSW field education carries a total of 12 credits for the academic year.

Field education is an integral part of the School of Social Work curriculum. In the field, under the instruction of a degreed social worker with practice experience, students learn to integrate and apply the theories they learn in classroom with actual practice with individuals, families, groups, and larger systems. This requires students to be knowledgeable about, and develop skills to intervene, at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

The field practicum supports students in:
- Improving self-awareness
- Identifying personal strengths and limitations
- Defining career interests
- Practicing within the framework of social work values and ethics
- Examining one’s suitability as a social worker

Students usually describe their field practicum as the most useful, significant, and powerful learning experience of their social work education.
Section 2: Role Titles and Descriptions

A valuable and successful student field experience requires the involvement of many people, including the student, those at the field agency, and the School of Social Work. This section defines the titles used when referring to participants in the field practicum.

Field Work Coordinator: The Field Work Coordinator has the overall administrative responsibility for the direction and coordination of the field education program.

Field Faculty Liaison: The Field Faculty Liaison is a faculty member of the School of Social Work (usually full time, but occasionally part time) who teaches the field seminar class (SWO 411 and 412) and assists students and field instructors in obtaining and maintaining quality learning experiences in field practicum. This person serves as a liaison between the University and the agency site.

Field Instructor: The agency supervisor. A social work practitioner employed by an agency who serves as the student’s field supervisor on a voluntary (unpaid) basis. This individual is responsible for providing educational guidance to the student in meeting the learning objectives and other requirements for study. Based on the standards established by the Council on Social Work Education for field study, Field Instructors for BSW students must hold a BSW or MSW degree from a CSWE accredited institution. In programs where a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited BSW or MSW degree, other options are explored to find an external qualified field instructor. An external field instructor shares all the responsibilities of a regular field instructor, except orienting the student to the agency and giving daily assignments. When an external field instructor is used, a site supervisor is assigned by the agency to provide day-to-day support to the student. Currently, the School of Social Work and field agencies share the responsibility of enlisting a consulting field instructor to provide the regular weekly supervision for the student.

Responsibilities of the field instructor during the fieldwork experience include the following:

- Provide student with a general orientation to the field agency.
- Describe the history, philosophy, and goals of the agency.
- Interpret the agency’s organizational structure and governing body, staffing pattern, funding sources, and interface with other agencies.
- Describe the situations of clients served, services offered, eligibility requirements, and sources of referrals.
- Arrange a tour of the facility and introduce agency personnel.
- Make available knowledge of agency resources such as in-service training and community seminars.
- Explain relevant agency procedures, forms, and requirements as defined in policy manuals.
- Provide other information as related to assigned work area and specific tasks (e.g., work schedule, documentation procedures, confidentiality laws, dress requirements, time planned for supervisory meetings, etc.).
- Assign learning activities for the student that include a variety of practice experiences and provide a wide range of meaningful encounters with the social service delivery system. Student assignments during placement must be developed according to the goals and objectives outlined in the student field manual and align with the CSWE competencies and behaviors. Initial assignment of cases and projects should be made as soon as possible so the student immediately feels involved and productive.
- Each student will be expected to develop, in consultation with the field Instructor, a learning agreement for his/her/their semester of field study.
- Provide ongoing consultation to the student concerning field assignments.
- Schedule weekly supervisory meetings (minimum of one to one and a half hours).
• Provide ongoing feedback to the student concerning their performance in the field.
• Maintain contact with the School's field faculty liaison to monitor student progress.
• Attend (when possible) field workshops/trainings and meetings scheduled on campus before and during the placement semester.
• Complete and submit a field evaluation of the student's performance.

**Site Supervisor:** An agency-based individual who does not hold a degree in social work (BSW or MSW) but may be responsible for social work-related activities at the agency. This individual would fulfill a secondary role to be responsible for overseeing other activities related to student field experience. Specifically, the site supervisor (the professional person the agency designates to provide day-to-day support for the student) when there is not a BSW or MSW on site:

• Provides the student with a general orientation to the field agency.
• Identifies and/or designs learning assignments for the student in consultation with the external field instructor.
• Reviews, modifies (as needed), and signs the students learning agreement.
• Provides daily supervision/consultation to the student concerning fieldwork.
• Schedules weekly supervisory conferences with the student to provide his/her/their assistance in planning, managing, and completing field assignments.
• Provides ongoing feedback to the student concerning his/her performance in the field.
• Maintains contacts with the external field instructor and field faculty liaison to monitor student progress.
• Consults with the field instructor about the student’s performance.
• Arranges for the external field instructor to review, modify (as needed), and sign the evaluations of the student’s performance before submitting it to the field faculty liaison.

**Section 3: Student Responsibilities**

The importance of the student’s responsibility for achieving a successful field placement cannot be over-emphasized. Along with field faculty liaisons and agency personnel, each student is expected to function as an equal, assertive, and active partner in planning, carrying out, and evaluating field education activities. Therefore, students participate in selecting a suitable placement, developing the learning agreement, and meeting the objectives and goals for field education.

**General Responsibilities**

• Adheres to the policies and procedures of the School of Social Work Field Education, including the NASW Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct.
• Assumes responsibility for completing the required hours of the practicum. BSW students are required to complete 16 hours per week, 240 hours per semester, and 480 hours per academic year.
• Understands and meets the requirements for field education (e.g., attendance, arriving and leaving the agency at the agreed upon time, notification of absences, seminar assignments, dress code, confidentiality, etc.), adhere to policies and procedures of the placement agency.
• Be receptive to supervision and use it to improve practice skills and knowledge, increase self-awareness, and develop professionally. Therefore, as needed, students are responsible for meeting with Field Instructors, site Supervisors (when assigned), and Faculty Field Liaisons for guidance, clarification, and assistance in completing assignments and to discuss other matters related to their fieldwork.
• Informs clients of their status as social work interns (as dictated by the NASW Code of Ethics)
• Assumes responsibility for making the Field Instructor, Field Faculty Liaison, and Field Work Coordinator,
as needed, aware of potential difficulties at the field placement.

- Develops a learning agreement with the Field Instructor and completes all field assignments that will be submitted to the Faculty Field Liaison.
- Completes required field assignments including Attendance Sheet, Learning Agreement, and other assignments as determined by the Field Faculty Liaison.
- Informs the Field Work Coordinator of any changes related to the placement.
- Pursues resolution of problems that arise during placement through proper channels. Students should share all problems with appropriate agency personnel and/or Faculty Field Liaison. Preventing or resolving problems frequently requires that a student take the initiative to interact with, question, give feedback, and constructively confront others when it appears that the educational objectives and other field requirements are not being met.
- Participates in the Evaluation Process: Evaluations of the student’s progress and performance during the placement term are completed by the Field Instructor at the end of each semester. *Each student is expected to participate in the formal evaluation process.*

**Rules of Professional Conduct for all Students in Field Practicum**

Students shall behave in a legal, ethical, and moral manner in the conduct of their Field Practicum Experience, maintaining both a personal and professional integrity, and avoiding any actions or involvement in procedures not approved by qualified field instructors which would cause harm to others.

Students will understand their responsibilities and practice within the limits of their defined roles, training, and competencies as defined and approved in the Affiliation Agreement. They shall be expected to adhere to all agreed upon requirements with regard to attendance, required clock hours, and performance of duties as contracted or amended.

Students shall respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the individuals and the groups with whom they work. They shall not misrepresent their roles or competencies to agency staff, clients, patients, or others. Professional concerns or problems with others shall be discussed with the agency field instructor or field faculty liaison.

Students shall, at all times, respect the confidentiality of information about clients or patients in the course of their Field Practicum Experience. They also shall be aware of agency policies or guidelines relating to research or training with human subjects.

Students will avoid undertaking any activity in which competency, personal problems, or conflicts of interest and/or understanding are likely to lead to inadequate performance. If, or when, such a situation arises, they shall seek Field Instructor and Field Faculty Liaison assistance to determine the appropriate course of action.

Students acknowledge that they have read and will abide by the NASW Code of Ethics, the current BSW Field Manual, and the current BSW Student Handbook.

**Chapter 3: Field Work**

**Section 1: Field Placement Process**

This section walks through the steps necessary to be placed at a field agency. Students should familiarize themselves with the process. All students must follow the Field Placement Application process.

The majority of the agencies in the program have had a long association with the University of Southern Maine. The school continues to expand and nurture relationships with these field sites. *It is the policy of the School of Social Work that all referrals of students to fieldwork sites must be made by the Field Work Coordinator. Students may provide a suggestion about a field site, but may not pursue a placement on their own. Field placements independently obtained will not be approved.* Students are expected to maintain communication with the Field
Work Coordinator throughout the placement process, especially if there is difficulty getting in touch with an agency or if there are any concerns or questions.

**FileMaker** – The School of Social Work Office of Field Education uses a data collection platform called FileMaker. All students applying for field work will be given access to the FileMaker student portal where they will be able to view the agency database and available field placements, complete the field application, upload their resume, and schedule a field appointment with a Field Coordinator.

**Step 1: Meet Field Placement Eligibility Requirements**

Students are eligible for field placement when they have successfully completed the prerequisites for placement.

- GPA 2.5 GPA or better;
- C or better in all social work and required foundation courses
- Junior status
- Successfully completed SWO 393, Methods of Social Work Practice I

**Step 2: Field Application**

Students complete and submit a field application and updated resume through the Filemaker Field Database. All students applying for field work will be given access to the Filemaker student portal. Through the portal, students can view the field placement agency database, complete the field application, upload their resume, and schedule an appointment with a Field Coordinator.

Students without a current resume should review the samples found on the School of Social Work blackboard Field Practicum site or schedule an appointment at the USM Career Center for assistance. The field application requests specific information about the student’s employment, volunteer and service learning experience, which assists the Field Work Coordinator in matching students with appropriate sites. The application must be fully completed and submitted by the student by **February 1**.

Students will receive an email with a link to the Filemaker student portal along with field application instructions when the spring semester begins. Students will be expected to schedule an interview with the Field Coordinator immediately after submitting the field application. The Field Placement interview calendar will be available once the field application has been submitted.

Note: The timely submission of the field application increases the opportunity for placements in preferred settings. Failure to submit the application by the due date may result in being assigned a placement with no input from the student. Students with disabilities should indicate on the application whether they require support services or other accommodations in order to perform course and field work effectively. Students interested in a field placement at their place of employment should discuss this option with the Field Coordinator during the pre-placement interview. Please see Employment Based Field Placement Policy in the policy section of this manual.

**Step 3: Interview with the Field Coordinator**

Once the application has been received, the Field Work Coordinator will review the application and resume and prepare for an in-person appointment with the student. This interview will initiate the start of the placement process providing the student information necessary to prepare for their field placement interviews. In preparation for this initial interview, students will be given access to the Agency Profiles. Students should review the agencies and make a list of placements of interest in the desired geographic location to discuss during the interview with the Field Coordinator. Please note: while we attempt to keep our list current, we cannot guarantee an agency posted will be available for placement every year. The Office of Field Education cannot guarantee that students will be placed in their preferred settings.
During the interview, the Field Work Coordinator will match the student with up to two agencies. The setting in which the student is matched is determined by a number of factors including, but not limited to:

- The field application information,
- Student preparedness for the interview,
- The student’s experience, interests and areas of potential growth,
- The fit between the student and the Field Instructor and the student’s potential to function well in a particular agency setting
- The agency’s ability and willingness to work with a particular student.

The interview with the Field Work Coordinator is a professional interview. Be prepared.

Step 4: Student Referral to Agency(s)

Once 1-2 agencies have been agreed upon, the Field Work Coordinator will email a referral to the agency contact, copying the student. Timeliness in outreach to the agency is critical in securing a field placement. Students are directed to email their resume and cover letter to the agency contact person within three (3) business days of the referral.

Students are encouraged to send a polite follow-up email reminder to the agency and the Field Coordinator if after 1 week of initial contact the referring agency has not responded. After 2 weeks of no response, students should contact the Field Coordinator.

Step 5: Field Placement Interview at Agency

Students are screened for interviews by agencies based on their resume, cover letter, and Field Coordinator referral. An invitation to interview for an internship should be treated the same as an employment interview. Students should be professional, dress appropriately (business casual attire), research the agency web-site, come prepared to the interview with a copy of their resume, and a list of questions about the placement or agency. Students are expected to send a thank you email after interviewing.

An interview does not guarantee a placement. Many sites are selective and the process can be competitive. In addition to USM students, sites are interviewing students from many programs and Schools of Social Work.

Students are encouraged to accept a field placement if it is offered. When accepted, it is the student’s responsibility to send an email to the second field placement referral politely thanking them for their consideration but another placement has been accepted. Students must not decline a placement offer without consulting first with the Field Coordinator.

If a student is simultaneously offered a placement from two sites, it is the student’s responsibility to make a decision about which offer they will accept and then to respond professionally declining the other offer. This must be done in a timely fashion so that sites may continue their search. Students should be in communication with the Field Coordinator about their placement decision or if there are questions or concerns.

Step 6: Field Placement Confirmation

Once a field placement has been secured, the student must provide the Field Coordinator the agency Field Instructor’s name (the BSW or MSW providing your supervision), email address, and address of the field placement location (Some agencies have more than one site location). A letter of Field Placement Confirmation will then be emailed to the Field Instructor and the student.
Once a placement has been accepted by the student and confirmed, the student will remain at that placement for the academic year. Any changes must be approved by the Field Coordinator.

**Step 7: Preparing for the Field Placement**

At the end of the spring semester or early summer, students are advised to contact their field instructors to schedule a time to meet to discuss the start date for the field placement in the fall, determine placement hours or schedule, and complete any agency required paperwork. *Field placements typically begin the first week of classes in the fall and end in early May when classes end.*

**Background Check, Fingerprinting, & Other Pre-Placement Fees**

Many field placement agencies require fingerprinting, criminal background check, and other pre-placement fees. All pre-placement fees are the responsibility of the student if not covered by the field placement agency.

**Pre-Placement Training Policy**

When field placement sites require training prior to the start of an internship and field seminar class, students may participate and count such training hours toward their yearly total. Students are still expected however, to remain in their field placement for the entire academic year, but may alter their weekly hours accordingly if necessary and with the approval of the field faculty liaison and field instructor. *Training may not include client contact.*

**Change of Placement**

Once a field placement has been accepted, no student has the authority to leave a field placement. Change of a field placement site any time after a student accepts a placement and/or a confirmation letter has been sent requires the approval of the Field Coordinator. While the Field Department makes every effort to ensure compatibility between the student and the placement site, there may be times when there is an imperfect fit. When this occurs, the following steps should be taken:

1. The student and Field Instructor meet to discuss the situation and to determine a solution.
2. The Field Faculty Liaison is informed of the problem, the efforts to resolve it, and the success or failure of the attempt.
3. In the event that the Field Faculty Liaison is unable to rectify the situation, the student and the Field Faculty Liaison contact the Field Coordinator to arrange a meeting.
4. The student and Field Faculty Liaison meet with the Field Coordinator to discuss the factors that led to a need for a placement change, and alternative placement options are explored.
5. Some situations may require an academic review.

**Additional Field Information**

If a student is not able to successfully secure a placement after interviewing with three (3) potential placements, an in-person meeting will be scheduled with the Field Coordinator to discuss the process, assess the student’s readiness for field work, review how the student approached the interview process, and share any feedback offered by agencies. The goal of the meeting will be to determine the next steps in the field placement process. Possible outcomes of the meeting include: one additional referral or deferment of field work until the following year. If the student is not successful with the 4th interview an Academic Review will be scheduled to determine suitability for the social work field, or deferment of field work until the following year. Other outcomes would be determined on a case-by-case basis. The Academic Review will include the BSW Coordinator, the students’ Social Work Faculty Advisor, and the Field Coordinator.

The general expectation is that the majority of placement time will be completed during regular business hours, although arrangements for some placement hours on weekends and evenings may be possible.
Deadline for placement of all students is MAY 1st.

Section 2: During the Field Practicum

Field Practicum Purpose
The field practicum is an integral part of preparing the student for generalist practice. Through this experiential learning, students have the opportunity to integrate theory with the realities and demands of professional social work. The generalist practice experience is intended to provide students with:

- An opportunity to engage actively in direct practice with socially and economically oppressed populations on both the micro and macro levels;
- An understanding of the agency’s purpose, function, and structure within the context of the overall human services network;
- The development of a strong sense of professional identity with a firm commitment to public service;
- An appreciation of the relationship between social work policy and services provided;
- Exposure to the day to day realities of social work as a profession in order to help clarify their career goals;
- An understanding of the political, economic, social, and cultural influences on the human services;
- An appreciation of the importance of their responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions with clients;
- An opportunity to develop sensitivity to human diversity; and
- An understanding of the implementation of ethics and values in social work practice.

Objectives
The Field Placement is intended to provide an environment that will reinforce and integrate the student’s understanding of theory. The placement is expected to include opportunities to practice and develop the skills, knowledge, and values necessary for entry level generalist practice.

It is anticipated that students be exposed to a progression of learning experiences from basic to more challenging, at a pace compatible with individual variations in readiness, rate of development, and learning styles.

Objectives of the Field Practicum are:

- To develop an understanding of the placement agency, its place in the human service system, its clientele, and the community it serves;
- To develop basic practice skills that are applicable to client systems of various sizes;
- To demonstrate an ability to utilize the strengths perspective and systems framework within the context of a generalist practice model that includes empowering processes; forming partnerships; interviewing skills; articulating client situations orally and in writing; formulation of direction and goals; identifying strengths and resources; analysis, interpretation, and integration of data for assessment purposes; framing solutions; activating resources; expanding opportunities; and evaluation of one's own practice;
- To develop skills in time management and in organizing one's own work;
- To enhance one’s understanding of and identification with the Social Work profession, in terms of its values, ethics, and responsibilities;
- To develop an understanding of the role of supervision in Social Work and to become skilled in using supervisory time;
- To develop the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing with individuals, families, and groups;
- To identify and be sensitive to the ways in which cultural, economic, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and gender issues have a direct impact on the client’s situation and access to services;
- To gain an understanding of how one’s own values, feelings, and attitudes are triggered by and have an impact on the client system, and to evaluate one's own appropriateness and readiness for the Social Work profession;
To develop understanding of how data management and social research is integrated into the range of processes and outcomes that are inherent in the operation of a social service agency;

To develop an understanding of how organizations and institutions may impede client need as well as assist clients, and to develop strategies of intervention that can promote improvement in agency services;

To develop an ability to collect and interpret data on organizations and communities in order to begin the process of organizational change, community organization, or a needs assessment.

Monitoring and Assessment of Students’ Progress in Field

Monitoring of students is the joint responsibility of the School and the placement site. At the University level, the field faculty liaison provides monitoring of students; in the agency, the field instructor serves this function. The review of each student’s progress by field faculty liaison is ongoing, which is in keeping with educational principles enunciated by the University. The field faculty liaison’s role is to assist the student in integrating the educational program of the School, monitoring the field and class experience, assisting and guiding the student in regard to resources, and facilitating a learning process throughout the educational program. It is the student’s responsibility to make and keep appointments on a regular basis, attend classes, and present specific concerns and issues.

There are a number of structures that facilitate this monitoring process:

- The initial admission process and interview with field coordinator;
- Faculty-student discussions which occur throughout the semester;
- Contacts between field instructor and field faculty liaison; field site visits.
- Discussions between field faculty liaison, faculty advisors, and the field coordinator which occur when there are special issues or concerns about a student’s progress; and
- Preparation of the student evaluation (mid-year and end of the year evaluations)

The methods of assessment utilized by the school and placement site are as follows:

- Students’ participation and performance in field seminar.
- The use of written assignments such as the learning agreement, journals, supervisory agendas, and other assignments.
- Individual meetings between field faculty liaison and student as needed.
- Field site visits and communication between the field faculty liaison, student, and field instructor.
- Field faculty liaison phone or email “check-ins” with agency field instructor.
- The use of mid-term check-in, end of semester, and end of year written evaluations.

The field instructor monitors the student in the placement through various means:

- Direct observation of student activities;
- Learning agreement and evaluations;
- Weekly supervision including students’ agendas;
- Feedback from other agency personnel;
- Student performance in professional meetings within the agency; and
- Client feedback.

Student Safety in the field

Each agency is responsible for orienting the student to the safety policies and procedures of that setting. This should occur within the first two weeks of placement and before students work with clients and/or travel in the community. Such orientation should include, but not be limited to, discussion of safety issues in the community, within the agency building(s), and with particular clients prone to violent behavior. Security of personal belonging
should be covered. Procedures for the student(s) to follow in the event of a safety or security problem should also be reviewed.

**Use of Vehicle for Agency Business**

Field placement agencies may require students to use their personal vehicles as part of their field placement activities. This may include driving to home visits and other agency activities and/or transporting patients/clients. Students must maintain a valid driving license and appropriate automobile insurance and follow the placement agencies' policies and procedures regarding use of personal vehicles.

**Field Seminar**

The field work seminar, which is taken concurrently with the field placement experience, is the primary mechanism that facilitates students' integration of classroom content with work in the field. Students secure placements in a variety of settings. By sharing their experiences in field seminar, students enable others to learn about the various fields of practice and the social service delivery system. Through this peer learning model, students develop knowledge about the resources and the range of social welfare policies and programs. Seminar discussions and assignments reinforce the concept of generalist social work practice as students come to understand that social work skills and knowledge can be used effectively with diverse client systems in all fields of practice. The seminar structure creates a supportive environment in which students can process their experiences in becoming generalist practitioners. Because a primary focus of the course is student sharing of field experiences with one another, students are expected to arrive on time, attend the entire class, and be prepared as participants to listen and support classmates in the learning process. The collaborative development of group norms and social work practice values include the following:

- Attendance at all seminars except for circumstances that have been discussed with the field faculty liaison prior to the seminar;
- Maintaining confidentiality;
- Arrival to class on time - repeated lateness will be counted as an absence;
- Equitable distribution of seminar time among all members;
- Respect for different levels of individual assertiveness in class participation;
- Creation of space and safety for all students to join in the group process;
- Respectful attention to class members who are speaking;
- The use of "I" rather than "you" statements; and
- The absence of any disrespectful language regarding race, ethnicity, color, socio economic status, gender, sexual orientation, age, culture, disability, family structure, relationship status, national origin, religion, and mental health issues.

**Evaluation of Student Performance**

Student learning, in accordance with the 9 core competencies, is evaluated through journals, process recordings/journals, other written assignments, and field seminar participation. Students are required to be active participants in the seminar both in sharing their field experiences and serving as consultants with their peers. Given the nature of the seminar, student learning is exposed, explored, and supported. Students often raise issues related to how effective agencies have been in providing meaningful learning experiences and supervision. During the academic year, students are asked to complete an Assessment of Field Placement, which offers them an opportunity to provide feedback about the strengths and challenges of the agency as a field placement. This assessment is given to the Field Coordinator.
The evaluation of a student’s field practicum performance is intended to be a continuous process that encourages reciprocal mutual participation between student and field instructor. The process culminates in the completion of a written Mid-Semester Progress Update in the fall and an electronic evaluation at the end of the fall and spring semesters.

The purpose of the Field Evaluation is to obtain information about the student’s performance from the field work instructor. It requires the field instructor to assess the student’s performance in the areas of skill development and competency (with particular emphasis on the nine core competencies and corresponding practice behaviors). In evaluating the student, field work instructors are expected to consider the following:

- The learning agreement (prepared by student and field instructor);
- Direct observation by the field instructor;
- The student’s views concerning his/her/their progress;
- Written work;
- Feedback from other agency staff;
- Meetings between student, faculty field liaison, and field instructor.

The evaluations for each of the two semesters serve different functions. The fall semester evaluation identifies the student’s strengths and learning needs at the midpoint of the field experience. The evaluation focuses primarily on assessment of the student’s adjustment to the agency, skill development, the appropriate use of supervision, the degree to which the student has developed an awareness of their learning needs, and whether the student has acquired a working knowledge of the agency itself and the community it serves.

The spring semester evaluation provides a detailed review of the student’s progress over the course of the entire year, centering primarily on how successfully the student has acquired the skills necessary to function as an entry level generalist practitioner and has successfully mastered the nine core competencies.

The evaluation is a confidential document, used solely within the confines of the School of Social Work, and is to be prepared with this understanding. At no time are students required to show this document to future employers or agency personnel.

Placement Difficulties

In the event that a student encounters difficulty or develops concerns related to her/his/their field placement experience for any reason, it is expected that she/he/they will raise the issue first with their field instructor. If an agreeable plan cannot be worked out, the student should then meet with the field faculty liaison, either in the context of the field seminar or in a privately arranged meeting. The field faculty liaison’s role is to discuss and provide support around field related issues and to assist students in dealing with and resolving them. Students are responsible for raising concerns honestly and in a timely fashion and working with their faculty liaison to address difficulties they are encountering. Most placement concerns can be resolved readily if students, their faculty liaison, and field instructor work together to address them. Field Faculty Liaisons are responsible for keeping the Field Coordinator informed about any student/placement difficulties. Students are also encouraged to reach out to the Field Coordinator as needed.

Change of Seminar

The Field Seminar has been established as a year-long, two semester sequence. Students are expected to remain in the same section both fall and spring. The primary purpose of this is to provide the cohort members the opportunity to develop as a cohesive unit (providing a safe and familiar environment within which to work). Maintaining a consistent faculty field instructor-student connection and balancing enrollment numbers are also important.

Only under extenuating circumstances may students be approved to move into another seminar. Students must submit a written (electronic) request to their current field faculty liaison, to the field faculty liaison into whose seminar they propose to transfer, and to a field coordinator. The request must outline the reasons for the
transfer. In consultation with one another (field faculty liaison and coordinator), a transfer will be approved or denied. The student will be informed of the decision by the field coordinator.

Section 3: Student Support Services

If at any point in the semester, the student encounters difficulty with the course or feels she/he/they could be performing at a higher level, she/he/they should consult with their field faculty liaison. Students may experience difficulty in courses for a variety of reasons. The following are resources on campus for students:

- For writing skills or time management, students can make an appointment to see a student tutor at the Learning Commons located in both the Portland and Gorham Libraries. For more information, visit http://www.usm.maine.edu/learningcommons. The Writing Center at LAC is also available to all USM students, and is a great option for students living in the greater Lewiston/Auburn area. For more information, please visit http://usm.maine.edu/writingcenter.
- If accommodations are needed due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Center for confidential assistance and accommodation authorization. Timely notification of accommodations is essential. For more information, visit http://usm.maine.edu/dsc.
- University Health and Counseling Services is a student resource that promotes the health and well-being of the USM community. More information can be found at www.usm.maine.edu/uhcs.

Section 4: Syllabus and Assignments

University of Southern Maine
School of Social Work
BSW Field Work Syllabus
SWO 411-412 Field Work/Seminar I & II

Course Description

The mission of the University of Southern Maine’s School of Social Work is to provide quality social work education from a generalist practice perspective. In their field placement, students are expected to integrate knowledge obtained from courses in the methods of social work practice, human behavior in the social environment, social policy, oppression and diversity, and social work research. It is anticipated that participation in field work and the seminar will develop a personal commitment to and socialization into the profession and foster practice skills that promote social and economic justice.

This class also necessitates the integration of two experiences: the field agency and the classroom learning. It allows for the processing of both areas with a focus on professional development. The theories and tools of the social work profession can be learned in the classroom, but practice behavior is another level of skill development. Both learning in the classroom and the practicum are aligned with the core competencies as are the educational objectives listed below. The focus of the field work seminar is to nurture students’ professional development so they can become critical thinkers and self-directed learners. Combining practice and field will facilitate problem-based learning with real practice situations rather than pre-formulated cases.

Students are placed in one social service agency for the full academic year and spend an average of 16 hours per week for a total of 480 hours. In addition to this agency based learning, students participate in a two and half hour per week small group integrative seminar on campus. Students earn six credits per semester. Successful completion of two semesters, SWO 411 and 412, are required to graduate.
The field practicum is taken concurrently with Social Work Methods: SWO 404 in the fall semester and SWO 403 in the spring. Students must successfully complete both the field practicum course and the fall methods course in order to continue the practicum in the spring. Failure to do so requires the student to either repeat the field experience in the fall of the following year, or withdraw from the Social Work major.

The field sequence is designed to integrate social work theory, multiculturalism, research, policy, and methods, with social work practice. Such student practice occurs under professional supervision in approved agency settings.

The weekly seminar class is designed as a forum in which students discuss their field work experiences and integrate them with course work. Students are expected to participate actively in all aspects of the seminar, which includes identifying and discussing their ethical dilemmas, integrating personal and professional value concerns, learning how to develop a practice methodology including making difficult decisions and evaluating the effectiveness of their own practice.

**Educational Objectives**

By the end of this year-long seminar, students will:

1. Develop self-confidence and capacity for independent and interdependent functioning as a professional social worker; **Competency 1**
2. Reflect on, identify the impact of, and manage personal values, feelings, and behavior in a way that allows professional values to guide practice; **Competency 1**
3. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice by applying strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions; **Competency 1**
4. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish between facts, impressions, opinions, and feelings in their work with clients and collateral systems; **Competency 2 and 6**
5. Engage diversity and difference in practice by uncovering and highlighting their own biases around the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation; **Competency 2 & 3**
6. Appreciate and understand forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and work to advance social justice; **Competency 2 & 3**
7. Evaluate the effectiveness of practice interventions; **Competency 9**
8. Apply strengths perspective and systems model within the context of generalist social work practice in the field; **Competency 4 & 6**
9. Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing needs/problems within communities and propose solutions for organizational or policy change; **Competency 4 & 5**
10. Develop an understanding of how organizations and institutions may impede service users’ needs as well as assist users by developing strategies of intervention that can promote change in service delivery; **Competency 5 & 8**
11. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; **Competency 6, 7, 8, & 9**
12. Utilize the seminar setting to develop and practice small group facilitation skills; **Competency 6 & 7**

Students will demonstrate meeting the above objectives through their participation in seminar discussions, their journal entries and other written work. These objectives are a basis for evaluating student performance in the seminar.

**Teaching and Learning Process**

This is a seminar format course that provides students with a confidential forum to explore generalist social work practice issues within agency settings. It is organized around discussion sessions, experiential learning activities and case presentations. Students must be active and committed participants in seminar discussions in order to
offer peer support and share achievements, concerns and disappointments related to field work experiences. Students also have the opportunity to serve as a group facilitator for the seminar process.

Course Requirements and Grading

This is a Pass (P), Low Pass (LP), Fail (F) course. A grade of LP (Low Pass) or below in any field seminar class will automatically trigger the convening of an academic review, if one has not already occurred.

Field Seminar Grading scale

Pass:
- Timely attendance to every class
- Full engagement in each class including giving feedback to peers.
- High to good quality and timeliness in all assigned written work.
- Good performance in field as documented in field evaluation.
- Clear and concise learning agreement that is actively used in placement.
- Behavior in field and class in accordance with the NASW Codes of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct.

Low Pass: (A student may be at risk of a low pass grade at the end of a semester if one or more of the following is evident. Students receiving a low pass will automatically be subject to an Academic Review.)
- Absent from two classes and/or repeated lateness.
- Excessive absences from field placement.
- Lack of professional comportment in class and/or in field.
- Minimal engagement or participation in seminar.
- Late submission of written work.
- Marginal quality of written work.
- Field evaluation that minimally meets expectations.

Fail:
- Evaluation does not meet expectations.
- Low quality written assignments.
- Chronically late assignment submission.
- Poor class participation.
- Three absences from class.
- Behavior in class and field that is not in accordance with NASW Code of Ethics or Rules of Professional Conduct.

Course objectives and requirements must be met for the student to pass the course. The field faculty liaison maintains contact with your supervisor throughout the semester and should visit the field placement site during the semester. Your grade is based upon satisfactory completion of all of the following requirements as well as your agency field instructor’s evaluation of your work. In order to take SWO 412 you must receive a passing grade in SWO 411. Incomplete course grades will be considered only in emergency and hardship situations and a request for such a grade option must be discussed with the field faculty. A time frame and method for completing the necessary work will be negotiated but must be completed before the beginning of the spring semester. You cannot go into SWO 412 with an incomplete from SWO 411.

- Satisfactory Completion of 240 hours of field work per semester (480 for the year) in an approved social service agency. The 480 hours should be completed by the end of the spring semester.

- Class Attendance. Attendance at each class is expected and is recorded. It is important that students attend class weekly so that the instructor can follow the progress and so that group cohesion can be established. Students who miss 3 classes during a semester may receive a failing grade. You should not schedule agency activities during any of your academic classes. However, should important field learning opportunities present themselves that conflict with your seminar time, you must discuss this with your field faculty liaison before you attend.
• Class Participation. Social work is a profession that requires people to think and talk about their work. This seminar is a place to begin to hear oneself talk among colleagues, to share concerns, to expose one’s uncertainties, to consider feedback and in general, to learn the tools of reflective social work practice. The "heart" of this course is the discussions we have about students' experiences in their agency. It is, therefore, each student's responsibility to share their experiences, thoughts and questions within the field work seminar. All students are expected to come to class with some topics for discussion in mind. In addition, it is expected that they will be actively involved by asking questions, giving suggestions, and joining in the discussion when classmates are sharing their experiences. Students are expected to behave in a professional, accountable manner at all times. The quality of your participation in class is considered as part of your overall performance in this course.

• Field Work Journal. Journals reflect the thoughts and feelings that you have about your work in your placement. The journal gives you a way to organize the experiences you are having on the job, as well as provide a way in which you can reflect upon and re-examine those experiences. The journal should not be written as a personal journal. The journal is also an educational learning tool through which faculty and students communicate about the field work experience and progress. It will be treated as a private communication. For example, what is written in your journal will never be shared in class without your permission. Also, you are not required to share your journal entries with your agency field instructor unless you choose to do so. However, it is important to note that journals are regarded by the University and under the law in the same category as other academic work. While it is highly unlikely that your journal will ever be read by anyone other than your field faculty liaison, there is that possibility. This is an important reason not to regard your journal as a personal journal. Journals will be submitted to your field faculty liaison at specific times with due dates TBD. Below are guidelines for writing your journal entries.

• Students are expected to remain in the section of field seminar for which they are registered. A request to transfer from one section of field to another must be made in writing to both field faculty. Any change in seminar class must be approved by both field faculty and field coordinator prior to a change.

Seminar Plan

This seminar is conducted as a collaborative process between students and the field faculty liaison. In this sense, it is different from the traditional classroom experience. The content of seminar discussion is generated by students with the guidance of the faculty liaison. In addition to the practice issues and challenges experienced by students in their placements, the following topics may be integrated into seminar discussions:

• Issues of social justice.
• Social work values and ethics.
• Relationship with supervisors: Use of supervision time.
• Oppression: Institutional, cultural and personal.
• Working with diverse populations.
• Agency and organizational dynamics.
• Development of reflective practice and professional identity.
• Application of a generalist model in social work practice.
• Relevance of research to professional practice.
• Impact of social policies on clients and service delivery.
• Self-care.
• Launching your social work career: Licensing, graduate education, resume writing, job hunting, career planning.

Confidentiality:

The seminar is meant to provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon and process field experiences. To
this end, students are required to share personal and specific information related to those experiences. In order to take full advantage of peer support and input, it is crucial that all members of the seminar adhere to the following rules of confidentiality:

- No information regarding clients should be discussed outside the seminar setting;
- Information that would identify the client, including contextual and ancillary information, should be changed to avoid revealing the client’s identity;
- No specific information regarding the student-field instructor relationship should be discussed with anyone outside of the seminar.

**Field Assignments**

1. Learning Agreement (fall and spring)
2. CSWE 9 Core Competency class/group assignment (fall)
3. Safety Issues and Guidelines in the Field
4. Personal Reflections on Prejudice (fall only)
5. Mid-Semester Check-In (fall only)
6. Journal (fall and spring)
7. Capstone Proposal Form (fall)
8. Capstone Project (spring)
9. Attendance Sheet (fall and spring)

**Assignments**

*Safety Issues and Guidelines in the field:* In-class discussion

*CSWE 9 Core Competency:* In-class group assignment/discussion

**Learning Agreement** – (See Appendix for– Guide to Creating and Using Your Learning Agreement and sample activities)

The learning agreement provides a broad framework for developing an individualized learning plan which is designed to give direction and learning structure to the field experience. The learning agreement has been developed around the 2015 CSWE Competencies and practice behaviors

**Purpose of Learning Agreement:**

- To provide a planned approach to student learning in the field setting
- To promote effective linking of field agency goals and objectives with those of the student and University
- To promote clear and continual overall communications among all parties involved in the students’ total learning program: student, field instructor, field agency and University
- To clarify University expectations of field agencies, field instructors, and students
- To promote effective integration of students’ classroom theory-based with practical application through identifying tasks or activities specifically designed to meet stated learning objectives
- To encourage student self-awareness through identification of learning strengths and deficits, and through negotiation of agreement content to meet identified needs
- To promote effective delivery of services to identified client populations

**Guidelines for Effective Learning Agreements:**

- Terminology is clear and understandable
- Written content is thorough, but as brief as possible
- Established goals and objectives are realistic and attainable:
  - for the specific student
  - in the specific agency
  - with the specific field instructor
• Objectives are measurable (and thus can be evaluated)
• Student and supervisor agree and commit to it.

**Personal Reflections on Prejudice: In-Class Exercise**

**Fall Semester Only**

Prejudice and discrimination can take many forms. Think about a situation in your field setting when you experienced or witnessed overt or covert prejudice, discrimination, or bias. Include in your presentation:

• a description of what you witnessed
• the reason you consider it to be prejudicial or discriminatory
• the targeted person's response, if he/she/they were present
• your responses on your inner reactions and/or outward response to the incident

Be prepared to present and discuss this incident in the seminar. Generate a few questions to facilitate the seminar discussion about the situation. Here are a few examples of questions you might consider:

• What are your reactions to hearing about this incident?
• What does the incident bring up for you?
• What are some possible ways of handling encounters with prejudice or discrimination?

**Mid Semester Check-in**

See Blackboard BSW Field Work Practicum- Fall Semester Only
This assignment form is meant to be completed following a reflective discussion between the field instructor and student. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for a mutual exchange about how the field experience is progressing. It also serves as a bridge between the faculty field liaison, the student, and the field instructor by highlighting both strengths and areas of potential concern at this early stage. Please use this as a guide for your discussion. The following offers some suggestions for what might be considered in the context of this discussion, including both the student’s and field instructor’s perspectives. This is intended to be brief, but if more room is needed, feel free to attach an additional page. Please make sure this form is signed by both participants. (Assignment can be found on Blackboard BSW Field Work Practicum)

**Journal**

**Fall and Spring Semesters**

**Expectations for Journal Writing**
The purpose of your journal is to (1) document field placement activities; (2) reflect on your thoughts and feelings about your experiences in order to enhance learning; and (3) prepare for supervision and field seminar; (4) provide a forum for communicating with your faculty field liaison about your field experiences; and (5) provide an opportunity for you to integrate knowledge and skills with field work. It is important to remember that your journal must protect the identity of all clients and consumers in your agencies. (NASW Code of Ethics)

**Possible Question to focus on:**
• What new social work practice skills did you use this week?
• What was it like for you using this skill? (E.g. Did it make you uncomfortable? Did you feel competent? Were you pleased?)
• What was the most important thing that you learned this week?
Based on your experience this week, what do you want to learn next week? How will you go about meeting your personal learning objective next week?

*Please do not use a client's real name or identifying information in your journal.*

**Capstone Project**

**Capstone Assignment** (Complete Assignment can be found in Blackboard-BSW Field Work Practicum)

**SWO 411 - 412 CAPSTONE PROJECT ASSIGNMENT**

**Due date:**

This assignment allows you to demonstrate your proficiency with the nine social work competencies while you are in your placement accruing hours. You will be able to work with your supervisor and your field faculty liaison to select an appropriate project that will benefit your agency and your client population. In addition, this project will benefit you in many ways by helping you to:

- Learn how to respond to a social work problem, gap in service, need, or issue
- Encourage lifelong learning
- Develop problem-solving skills within a social work agency
- Develop leadership and project planning skills.

Some examples of capstone projects are:

- Researching and developing a pamphlet that explains the day to day experience of incarceration for children whose parents are in prison
- Developing a grant proposal for a needed service not currently funded by an agency
- Researching and developing a plan to serve a new population due to a shift in neighborhood demographics
- Responding to a bedbug infestation in the children’s play area in an agency—researching the bedbug literature, consulting with local health experts, working with the janitorial staff to implement a cleaning plan, securing donations of furniture and floor covering that is bed bug resistant, helping to create a bedbug policy for the agency, developing a pamphlet for clients that explains how to guard against bed bugs
- Developing a series of PowerPoint or video modules about local services that could be playing in a rural medical center’s waiting room
- With clients, researching and developing a proposal for a “Teen Entrepreneurs” group in an agency

The final product will be a 25-30 minutes in-class presentation of your project that covers all the CSWE Core Competencies:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice
3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
4. Engage in practice informed research and research informed practice
5. Engage in policy practice
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

A final product of this assignment is a 2-3-page reflective essay that allows you to think about how your education at USM, especially in social work, informs your academic, professional, and personal life.

**Chapter 4: Policies and Procedures**
Section 1: School of Social Work

Student Field Grievance Procedure

Difficulties between student, field faculty liaison, and field instructor are handled within the School of Social work. Student complaints regarding field practicum are first addressed to his/her/their field faculty liaison. It is the responsibility of that field faculty liaison to set up a meeting with the field instructor to discuss the student's concerns. Although most grievances are resolved at this level, in a few cases there is a need to take the process further. In such instances the following procedure occurs.

The Field Coordinator is consulted regarding the issues being raised by the student and a plan of action is determined based on the Field Committee's decision regarding the problem. This can result in several outcomes:

1. Changing the student’s field placement based on available information.
2. Asking that the agency provide another field instructor to take the student.
3. Counseling the student regarding his/her/their readiness for the rigors of field placement and suggesting that he/she/they withdraw from field.
4. Requesting that the Fieldwork Coordinator work with the other three parties to mediate the issues regarding the field placement.

If after working in the above way it is decided that the student is not currently able to meet the needs of the clients and agency and therefore should not continue in field, but the student refuses to accept this decision, then an Academic Review Meeting is called to make a final decision.

Problem Resolution Meeting and Academic Review Policy

Difficulties between a student, a faculty member, Faculty Field Liaison, and Field Instructor are handled within the School of Social Work. If field is involved, it is the responsibility of the Faculty Field Liaison to notify the Field Work Coordinator and to set up a meeting with the Field Instructor to discuss the student's concerns. Although most grievances are resolved at this level, in a few cases there is a need to take the process further. In such instances, a Problem Resolution Meeting or Academic Review will be arranged. The procedure is outlined as follows:

(1) Purpose of and Reasons to convene a Problem Resolution Meeting

This option is instituted to address minor issues or concerns that arise for students in the classroom, in fieldwork or any other part of the program that require a process for intervention and problem resolution, but do not rise to the level of needing an Academic Review. This is an intermediate step that allows for assessment of the problem, open discussion and problem resolution. The outcome of this may point to the need for a full Academic Review, but typically problems are solved at this level. Any student or faculty member can request a Problem Solving Meeting by contacting the BSW Program Coordinator. The BSW Coordinator will assess the need to convene the meeting and make the decision about which type of meeting forum is needed. This meeting is facilitated by the BSW Program Coordinator.

(2) Purpose of and Reasons for the Academic Review:

The purpose of an Academic Review Meeting is to provide a forum for discussion and decision making when the traditional advisor/advisee relationship is believed to be inadequate for resolving the problem situation. Please note: If you find yourself encountering difficulty with either the seminar or your field placement, please let your field faculty liaison know this as soon as possible.
It is not unusual for students to experience emotional stress in the context of studying and practicing social work. If you feel the need for support services around personal issues, help is available through University Counseling Services, 105 Payson Smith, 780-4050.

The issues that are the focus of an Academic Review are often related to problems that emerge in field work (e.g., the suitability of a student for the field of social work as defined in the NASW Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers). However, there are many other reasons an Academic Review might be called. The following list, though not exhaustive, offers some examples of issues that would prompt an Academic Review:

- A student is evidencing academic or field difficulties;
- A student receives a failing grade in a critical course or is placed on academic probation;
- Problems emerge between a student and his/her/their field instructor that cannot be remediated with the faculty field liaison.
- A student violates the NASW Code of Ethics in field or in the classroom.
- A student receives a poor field evaluation or has been dismissed from field placement.

The outcome of the Academic Review usually includes: (a) resolution without conditions, or (b) a plan for resolution with conditions. In some situations, when a resolution cannot be achieved, the Academic Review may result in the student’s termination from the Social Work program.

In addition to addressing clearly identified problems needing resolution, the Academic Review may be used as a forum to facilitate early intervention when a student is evidencing signs of academic or fieldwork difficulties. In some situations, developing plans to deal with emerging problems can mitigate more serious complications, and efforts are made to use the Academic Review in this way whenever possible.

(3) Academic Review Procedures:

A. An Academic Review is requested.
   - Any social work faculty member or student can request an Academic Review. This meeting may be called after a student has spoken to his/her/their advisor but before the issue is taken to the level of the Office of the Dean.

B. An Academic Review is scheduled.
   - The Academic Review is called by the BSW Coordinator. The Coordinator contacts the individuals involved to invite them and arrange for a day and time. The student is then informed when the meeting is scheduled. The Academic Review will occur within ten business days of the request for such a meeting.
   - All relevant social work faculty and community professionals may be invited to attend the Academic Review Meeting, along with the student and his/her/their advisor. If key individuals cannot be present for the meeting, they are asked to submit their contributions in written form to be read aloud at the review meeting.
   - The student may choose to invite one person to accompany him/her/they at the review meeting. This person can serve as a support only and is not a participant in the meeting. The support person may be invited to add information at the end of the meeting but should not plan to be a contributor. If the student does invite someone, he/she/they must notify the Coordinator in advance of the meeting.
   - The academic advisor, or his/her/their proxy, serves as the note taker during the Academic Review to ensure the discussion is accurately documented.

C. An Academic Review is held.
   - The BSW Coordinator serves as Chair of the Academic Review and facilitates the meeting.
   - The advisor serves as the recorder of the Academic Review and is also a participant.
   - All people present at the review, except for the support person, are invited to participate in the discussion of the issues at hand.
• The meeting usually takes one hour (a bit more or less, depending on the situation). Once the discussion has come to a close, the student and the support person are asked to leave the room and the Academic Review Committee remains to discuss and make a decision about the outcome.
• A letter summarizing the academic review and the outcome is prepared by the Coordinator. Since the formal written letter may take some time to compose, usually the Coordinator informs the student promptly of the outcome by phone or via email once decisions have been made.
• The official letter is mailed to the student within ten business days following the meeting and a copy is placed in the student’s record. The student has the option to prepare a written response within ten days of receiving the letter and it is also placed in the student’s record.
• If a resolution plan is the outcome of the review, this serves as a contract between the student and the SSW. The student is expected to follow through with the plan as detailed in the letter.

(3) The Right to Appeal

Nothing in this policy statement is intended to interfere with or deny any right guaranteed to a student by the University of Maine system.

Appeal Process

Should a student not agree with a decision resulting from the Academic Review, an appeal may be precipitated by the student. The appeal process is initiated by a letter from the student to the Director of the School of Social Work outlining the reasons for the appeal. The Director may contact the student for more information or to schedule a meeting to discuss the situation in more detail. The appeal could be resolved at this level, but should the student feel the process has not addressed the issue in a satisfactory manner, he/she/they may appeal to the Dean of the College of Management and Human Services by contacting the Dean’s office. Further, if the student is not satisfied with the resolution at the Dean’s level, the student may appeal further to the Provost. All stages of the appeal process are documented and filed in the student’s record.

If the student feels the above process has not resolved the issue, he/she/they may request that the USM Student Senate Executive Committee review the issue and report its findings to the President of the University. The final decision rests with the President, after the receipt of recommendations from those involved.

Policies Related to Academic and Field Calendar, Holidays and Absences

Students normally work in the field 16 hours per week and are required to complete 240 hours per semester. Weekly schedules are negotiated between the student and agency field instructor. It is expected that the majority of placement time will be completed during regular business hours, although arrangements for some placement hours on weekends and evenings may be possible.

Students are required to attend their placement only during the academic calendar year, unless otherwise negotiated between the student, field coordinator, and field instructor.

The academic calendar lists the holidays and school vacation days during which students are not required to be in field placement. If an agency holiday occurs on a normal placement day, it is considered a holiday for the student. However, students will need to make up missed hours at another time. Students should plan on working at their placements during the Winter Session break between the fall and spring semesters. Scheduling a vacation during this time is recommended and highly encouraged. Planned absences should be negotiated in advance.
In the event of illness, emergency, inclement weather, or other unavoidable absence, students should inform the agency as soon as possible. If a student misses a considerable amount of placement time, the field faculty liaison should be contacted by the field instructor to discuss a plan for making up the time. In extreme situations the student may need to withdraw from field and begin a new placement the following academic year. Students must submit a re-admission to field application by the designated deadline. (See section on Placement Difficulties).
It is expected that students will work their 480 hours over the course of the entire academic year. The 480 hours should be completed by the end of the spring semester.

**Employment Based Field Placement Policy**

Students who are interested in completing an employment-site placement must get prior approval from the Field Coordinator.

Students are discouraged from using their employment site for a field practicum for the following reasons:

- Field placement is intended to expose students to a new learning experience and environment;
- The student, clients, staff, and employment supervisor are apt to experience role confusion with the addition of a field practicum relationship;
- The requirements of a new assignment requiring new knowledge and skills and the provision of a field instructor who is different from the work supervisor is often difficult to arrange in the place of employment;
- The expectations of a placement relationship and a work relationship are different (field placement should be educationally focused rather than centered on agency service), and the School has little ability to facilitate necessary changes in the student’s learning environment;
- Students might be less likely to take a critical/objective stance toward their agencies or to question agency policies.

Therefore, if a student proposes to use their place of employment as their field site, the following guidelines must be met:

- Complete the Employment-Based Field Placement Contract outlining how they will separate their paid employment from their field placement work. A current job description should be attached, as well as a description of the different tasks and duties that would be considered placement work.
  - The agency and student must agree that the student will be given release time to do field placement work. The field placement work must be in addition to (not included within) their work schedule.
  - The Field Instructor must be a different person than the employment supervisor.
- Students must then submit the proposed contract to the Field Work Coordinator, who will assess the employment site for field placement suitability, which includes the appointment of a qualified Field Instructor
- This contract must be signed by the student, work supervisor and field instructor. A copy of this contract will be forwarded to the student’s Field Faculty Liaison.

**Class Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend regularly scheduled classes, and field work agencies should not schedule students or require the attendance of students during class time.

**Grade Policy**

1. If a grade of less than C has been earned in a social work practice course, students may not remain in a current field placement or begin a new field placement until the course is satisfactorily completed with a grade of C or better.
2. A failing grade in either semester of field seminar will require the student to either repeat an entire year of field work and seminar or withdraw for the Social work major.
3. Students who receive a grade of less than C or whose GPA drops below a 2.5 must contact their advisor within one week of receiving their grades.

**Incomplete Grade Policy**

An incomplete grade must be changed to a full grade prior to progression to the next sequential course, unless an arrangement involving the student and the faculty has been agreed upon in writing. Students who do not complete
the required work by the designated time will be ineligible for field practicum placement in September.

**Field Work Grade Policy**

A grade of LP or below in any field seminar or field experience (SWO 411/412) will automatically trigger the convening of an academic review.

**Grade Appeal Policy**

Please refer to the Academic Appeal Policy in the USM Undergraduate Catalog.

[https://usm.maine.edu/registration-services/academic-policies-undergraduate](https://usm.maine.edu/registration-services/academic-policies-undergraduate)

**Policy Regarding Academic and Professional Standards**

- Students must adhere to all policies outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics (see Student Handbook) and the USM Student Conduct Code (see Undergraduate Catalog or call 780-5242).
- Students have the responsibility of understanding and ensuring the protection of client confidentiality and right to privacy. Any case material that is used for educational or instructional purposes must be completely disguised so that total anonymity of the client is assured. All case material required for the School’s educational purposes will be gathered from the field practicum experience (not from an employment or volunteer experience).
- Any agency materials or information used for professional, educational, or instructional purposes must be cleared for use by the field instructor.
- Students are responsible for adhering to the laws, legal and ethical issues involved in the social work profession, and specifically in the State of Maine. Field practice should familiarize the students with the following: child abuse and neglect reporting laws and procedures; elder abuse reporting and procedures; suicide and homicide reporting; HIPPA regulations; voluntary vs. involuntary hospitalization; gravely disabled; privileged communication; domestic violence; informed consents, release of information; scope of practice; personal safety; any other potential high risk situations that students may be exposed to.
- Violations of academic standards, confidentiality, ethical or other professional principles or social work values shall result in an academic review, which may lead to dismissal from the program (see BSW Student Handbook).

**Withdrawal from Field Placement**

Students who wish to withdraw from their field placement any time after the placement has been confirmed must do so in collaboration with the Field Coordinator and their Field Faculty Liaison. Once a decision to withdraw has been made, a student must meet with her/his/their advisor to discuss the process and procedures for withdrawal and for returning to field at a later time.

**Section 2: University Policies**

**Equal Opportunity**

In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

The University will regard freedom from discrimination and discriminatory harassment as an individual employee and student right which will be safeguarded as a matter of policy. Any employee or student will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy. Retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint of discrimination or harassment or who is involved in a complaint process will not be tolerated.
HIV and AIDS Policy

The USM AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) policy has been established to protect both the rights of individuals infected with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) as well as the health and safety of all others at the institution. Current research indicates that AIDS and ARC (AIDS - related complex) may develop from HIV infection. Individuals infected with HIV may not always be diagnosed or have symptoms of AIDS; HIV infection is not transmitted by casual contact. Please see policy at this link.

Discrimination

The University of Southern Maine will not discriminate in any manner against any person who is infected with HIV. This includes admissions, facilities access, hiring, housing, promotion, tenure and/or termination.

Testing

The University of Southern Maine will not require HIV testing for either its students or employees. Persons who want more information on HIV testing may contact a health care provider either at the University or off-campus.

Confidentiality

Information about a person's HIV status may only be included in medical or health care records and not in student or employee records of a general nature. Furthermore, it is against the law to disclose HIV test results to anyone without the written consent of the person tested. This means that no one, under any circumstances, may discuss or share records of HIV test results with anyone other than individuals designated in writing by the tested person.

Penalties

Disclosing a person's HIV test results without written consent may result in disciplinary measures under University policy. Also, Maine law states that anyone who does tell another's test results may be sued for actual damages and costs, plus a civil penalty of up to $5,000.

Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Retaliation Policy

Please visit this link for a comprehensive look at USM’s policy.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, the use without attribution of language, ideas, or the organization of ideas not one’s own, is a fundamental breach of basic academic principles and is prohibited in all courses. Evidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the assignment and may, at the discretion of the instructor, lead to an F in the course. In addition, further sanctions may be imposed through the Student Conduct Code. A copy of the USM Student Guide to Academic Integrity and/or a copy of the Student Academic Integrity Policy is available from the Office of Community Standards, 125 Upton Hall, Gorham (Tel: 207-780-5242) or on their website.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The primary goal of the alcohol and other drugs policy is the health and safety of all members of the University of Southern Maine community. We value and promote an environment of legal and lower risk alcohol use and support alcohol-free environments. We recognize alcoholic beverages may be available at some campus activities however such activities must be consistent with the University's values and being under the influence of alcohol in no way lessens accountability to the University community.

The University complies fully with local, state, and federal laws regarding the sale, possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages. The unlawful manufacture, possession, use or distribution of drugs or controlled substances is strictly prohibited. All students and guests are held responsible for behavior in violation of this policy. The
University provides education on alcohol and other drug use through programs, support, and resources. For more information, please go to this link.

Chapter 5: Addendums

Section 1: NASW Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly

The NASW Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of social workers. This Code includes four sections:

- The first Section, "Preamble," summarizes the social work profession's mission and core values.
- The second section, "Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics," provides an overview of the Code's main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice.
- The third section, "Ethical Principles," presents broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values that inform social work practice.
- The final section, "Ethical Standards," includes specific ethical standards to guide social workers' conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

Preamble

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence.

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.
Purpose of the Code of Ethics

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers’ conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

The NASW Code of Ethics serves six purposes:

1. The Code identifies core values on which social work’s mission is based.
2. The Code summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession’s core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The Code is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The Code provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The Code socializes practitioners new to the field to social work’s mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. The Code articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members.* In subscribing to this Code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

*For information on NASW adjudication procedures, see NASW Procedures for the Adjudication of Grievances.

The Code offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the Code must take into account the context in which it is being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the Code’s values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the personal and familial to the social and professional.

Further, the NASW Code of Ethics does not specify which values, principles, and standards are most important and ought to outweigh others in instances when they conflict. Reasonable differences of opinion can and do exist among social workers with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be rank ordered when they conflict. Ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker and should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the ethical standards of the profession would be applied.

Ethical decision making is a process. In situations when conflicting obligations arise, social workers may be faced with complex ethical dilemmas that have no simple answers. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this Code that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers’ decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

In addition to this Code, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the NASW Code of Ethics as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients’ and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical
Instances may arise when social workers' ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this Code. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

The NASW Code of Ethics is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this Code does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the Code would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The NASW Code of Ethics reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

With growth in the use of communication technology in various aspects of social work practice, social workers need to be aware of the unique challenges that may arise in relation to the maintenance of confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries, professional competence, record keeping, and other ethical considerations. In general, all ethical standards in this Code of Ethics are applicable to interactions, relationships, or communications, whether they occur in person or with the use of technology. For the purposes of this Code, “technology-assisted social work services” include any social work services that involve the use of computers, mobile or landline telephones, tablets, video technology, or other electronic or digital technologies; this includes the use of various electronic or digital platforms, such as the Internet, online social media, chat rooms, text messaging, e-mail, and emerging digital applications. Technology-assisted social work services encompass all aspects of social work practice, including psychotherapy; individual, family, or group counseling; community organization; administration; advocacy; mediation; education; supervision; research; evaluation; and other social work services. Social workers should keep apprised of emerging technological developments that may be used in social work practice and how various ethical standards apply to them.

**Ethical Principles**

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

**Value: Service**

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.
Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

**Value:** Social Justice

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers challenge social injustice.

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers’ social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

**Value:** Dignity and Worth of the Person

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.

Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients’ socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients’ capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients’ interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

**Value:** Importance of Human Relationships

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

**Value:** Integrity

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.

Social workers are continually aware of the profession’s mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

**Value:** Competence

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.
Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society.

Some of the standards that follow are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may on limited occasions supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

1.02 Self-Determination

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.

1.03 Informed Consent

(a) Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.

(b) In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.

(c) In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with the clients' level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.

(d) In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients the social workers' policies concerning the use of technology in the provision of professional services.

(f) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should obtain informed consent from the individuals using these services during the initial screening or interview and prior to initiating services. Social
workers should assess clients’ capacity to provide informed consent and, when using technology to communicate, verify the identity and location of clients.

(g) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should assess the clients’ suitability and capacity for electronic and remote services. Social workers should consider the clients’ intellectual, emotional, and physical ability to use technology to receive services and the clients’ ability to understand the potential benefits, risks, and limitations of such services. If clients do not wish to use services provided through technology, social workers should help them identify alternate methods of service.

(h) Social workers should obtain clients’ informed consent before making audio or video recordings of clients or permitting observation of service provision by a third party.

(i) Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or other people from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons.

1.04 Competence

(a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

(b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.

(c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

(d) Social workers who use technology in the provision of social work services should ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services in a competent manner. This includes an understanding of the special communication challenges when using technology and the ability to implement strategies to address these challenges.

(e) Social workers who use technology in providing social work services should comply with the laws governing technology and social work practice in the jurisdiction in which they are regulated and located and, as applicable, in the jurisdiction in which the client is located.

1.05 Cultural Awareness and Social Diversity

(a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients’ cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients’ cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to 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.
(d) Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socioeconomic differences among clients and how they may use electronic technology. Social workers should assess cultural, environmental, economic, mental or physical ability, linguistic, and other issues that may affect the delivery or use of these services.

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

(a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients’ interests primary and protects clients’ interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients’ interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

(b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

(c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)

(d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers’ professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.

(e) Social workers should avoid communication with clients using technology (such as social networking sites, online chat, e-mail, text messages, telephone, and video) for personal or non-work-related purposes.

(f) Social workers should be aware that posting personal information on professional Web sites or other media might cause boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

(g) Social workers should be aware that personal affiliations may increase the likelihood that clients may discover the social worker’s presence on Web sites, social media, and other forms of technology. Social workers should be aware that involvement in electronic communication with groups based on race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical ability, religion, immigration status, and other personal affiliations may affect their ability to work effectively with particular clients.

(h) Social workers should avoid accepting requests from or engaging in personal relationships with clients on social networking sites or other electronic media to prevent boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

(a) Social workers should respect clients’ right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from or about clients except for compelling professional reasons. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.
(b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

(c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or others. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.

(d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients’ right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with client’s circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker-client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.

(f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual’s right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

(g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker’s, employer’s, and agency’s policy concerning the social worker’s disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

(h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semi-public areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

(j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client’s consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

(k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.

(l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients’ written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients’ records are stored in a secure location and that clients’ records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

(m) Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use applicable safeguards (such as
encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.

(n) Social workers should develop and disclose policies and procedures for notifying clients of any breach of confidential information in a timely manner.

(o) In the event of unauthorized access to client records or information, including any unauthorized access to the social worker's electronic communication or storage systems, social workers should inform clients of such disclosures, consistent with applicable laws and professional standards.

(p) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of electronic technology, including Internet-based search engines, to gather information about clients.

(q) Social workers should avoid searching or gathering client information electronically unless there are compelling professional reasons, and when appropriate, with the client's informed consent.

(r) Social workers should avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional websites or other forms of social media.

(s) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws governing records and social work licensure.

(t) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

(u) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.

(v) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.

(w) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

1.08 Access to Records

(a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients’ files.

(b) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of technology to provide clients with access to their records.

(c) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

1.09 Sexual Relationships
(a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communications through the use of technology or in person, or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

(b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients’ relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients’ relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers—not their clients, their clients’ relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship—assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers—not their clients—who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

(d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

1.10 Physical Contact

Social workers should not engage in physical contact with clients when there is a possibility of psychological harm to the client as a result of the contact (such as cradling or caressing clients). Social workers who engage in appropriate physical contact with clients are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern such physical contact.

1.11 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass clients. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances; sexual solicitation; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

1.12 Derogatory Language

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written, verbal, or electronic communications to or about clients. Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients.

1.13 Payment for Services

(a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients’ ability to pay.

(b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers’ relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client’s initiative and with the client’s informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the
full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

(c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

When social workers act on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make informed decisions, social workers should take reasonable steps to safeguard the interests and rights of those clients.

1.15 Interruption of Services

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, disruptions in electronic communication, relocation, illness, mental or physical ability, or death.

1.16 Referral for Services

(a) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that other services are required.

(b) Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.

(c) Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

1.17 Termination of Services

(a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.

(b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

(c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

(d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

(e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

(f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.
2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

2.01 Respect

(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.

(b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in verbal, written, and electronic communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as 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.

(c) Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the well-being of clients.

2.02 Confidentiality

Social workers should respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions. Social workers should ensure that such colleagues understand social workers' obligation to respect confidentiality and any exceptions related to it.

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

(a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

(b) Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

(a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.

(b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

2.05 Consultation

(a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.

(b) Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.

(c) When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

2.06 Sexual Relationships
(a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact (including verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact) with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.

(b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

2.07 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass supervisees, students, trainees, or colleagues. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances; sexual solicitation; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

2.08 Impairment of Colleagues

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague’s impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague’s impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague’s incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

(a) Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues, including unethical conduct using technology.

(b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues’ unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.

(c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

(d) When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, the NASW National Ethics Committee, or other professional ethics committees).

(e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.
3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

(a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation (whether in-person or remotely) should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.

(b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media.

(d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

3.02 Education and Training

(a) Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.

(b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

(c) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.

(d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.03 Performance Evaluation

Social workers who have responsibility for evaluating the performance of others should fulfill such responsibility in a fair and considerate manner and on the basis of clearly stated criteria.

3.04 Client Records

(a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in electronic and paper records is accurate and reflects the services provided.

(b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.

(c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.

(d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by relevant laws, agency policies, and contracts.
3.05 Billing

Social workers should establish and maintain billing practices that accurately reflect the nature and extent of services provided and that identify who provided the service in the practice setting.

3.06 Client Transfer

(a) When an individual who is receiving services from another agency or colleague contacts a social worker for services, the social worker should carefully consider the client’s needs before agreeing to provide services. To minimize possible confusion and conflict, social workers should discuss with potential clients the nature of the clients' current relationship with other service providers and the implications, including possible benefits or risks, of entering into a relationship with a new service provider.

(b) If a new client has been served by another agency or colleague, social workers should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

3.07 Administration

(a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.

(b) Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.

(c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.

(d) Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the Code.

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics.

3.09 Commitments to Employers

(a) Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.

(b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies’ policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

(c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers’ ethical obligations as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.
(d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.

(f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.

(g) Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes

(a) Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.

(b) The actions of social workers who are involved in labor-management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals

4.01 Competence

(a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.

(b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.

(c) Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

4.02 Discrimination

Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

4.03 Private Conduct

Social workers should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.
4.05 Impairment

(a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

(b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

4.06 Misrepresentation

(a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker’s employing agency.

(b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.

(c) Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, and services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

4.07 Solicitations

(a) Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.

(b) Social workers should not engage in solicitation of testimonial endorsements (including solicitation of consent to use a client’s prior statement as a testimonial endorsement) from current clients or from other people who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

(a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

(b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

5. Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

(a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

(b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.

(c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research,
consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.

(d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

(a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

(b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.

(c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.

(d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

(e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants’ well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

(f) When using electronic technology to facilitate evaluation or research, social workers should ensure that participants provide informed consent for the use of such technology. Social workers should assess whether participants are able to use the technology and, when appropriate, offer reasonable alternatives to participate in the evaluation or research.

(g) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants’ assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.

(h) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

(i) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.

(j) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.

(k) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.
(l) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

(m) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

(n) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants’ confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.

(o) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

(p) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants’ interests primary.

(q) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

6. Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society

6.01 Social Welfare

Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

6.02 Public Participation

Social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions.

6.03 Public Emergencies

Social workers should provide appropriate professional services in public emergencies to the greatest extent possible.

6.04 Social and Political Action

(a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.

(b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.

(c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that
demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.

(d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

Section 2: Council on Social Work Education

Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards 2015

Purpose: Social Work Practice, Education, and Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

Social work educators serve the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education at the baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral levels shapes the profession’s future through the education of competent professionals, the generation of knowledge, the promotion of evidence-informed practice through scientific inquiry, and the exercise of leadership within the professional community. Social work education is advanced by the scholarship of teaching and learning, and scientific inquiry into its multifaceted dimensions, processes, and outcomes.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master’s level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models and methods of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparable outcomes across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate.

EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design: (1) program mission and goals, (2) explicit curriculum, (3) implicit curriculum, and (4) assessment. The educational policy and the accreditation standards are conceptually linked to each other. Educational Policy describes each curriculum feature. Accreditation standards are derived from the Educational policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program at the baccalaureate (B) or master’s (M) level.

For the complete Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards please refer to the web address below.

https://www.cswe.org/Home.aspx

Section 3: Educational Links


   Founded in 1955, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with more than 120,000 members. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies.

➢ **NASW PRESS - NASW Press Journals Online:** [link](http://www.naswdc.org/)

➢ **Social Workers SPEAK:** [link](http://www.naswdc.org/)

   SocialWorkersSpeak.org gives you a chance to influence how the entertainment industry and news media depicts the social work profession and issues social workers care about.

➢ **SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration):** [link](http://www.samhsa.gov/)
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

➢ **Social Work (Jobs Link):** [https://joblink.socialworkers.org/jobs](https://joblink.socialworkers.org/jobs)

- Whether you're looking for a new job, or ready to take the next step in your career, we'll help you find the opportunity that's right for you.

➢ **Maine Social Work Board of Licensure:**

- Information regarding the status of an application will not be provided by telephone or email.


- The Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care is an association, 1200 members strong dedicated to promoting the universal availability, accessibility, coordination, and effectiveness of health care that addresses the psychosocial components of health and illness.


- Welcome, Social Work Students and Professionals! Please take a look at our *New Social Worker* magazine.

### Section 4: Learning Agreement

#### Creating and Using the Learning Agreement for Field

Competency-based education is a comprehensive, holistic approach to learning. Students are expected to demonstrate competence in each area or the ability to successfully perform skills and apply knowledge, values and cognitive-affective processes (critical thinking, judgment and self-reflection).

**During the first two-four weeks of your field placement**

1. Meet with your field instructor. Use this time to understand assigned roles, projects, expectations and specific areas of responsibility that will be a part of your learning during the semester.

2. Review agency materials related to your assignments at the agency such as: job descriptions, policies, procedures, reports, forms and records.

3. With input from your field instructor prepare a list of projects, assignments, roles and responsibilities. Review the Nine CSWE Competencies and Behaviors on the Learning Agreement.

4. Each behavior requires that the student demonstrate competence for each behavior and in one or more dimensions of learning (knowledge, skill, values and cognitive-affective processes).

5. Write at least one activity for *each behavior*. Each activity should be comprehensive and allow the student to perform it several times over the semester.

6. Be sure the activities are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, and Realistic with a Timeframe).

7. The student and field instructor review the Learning Agreement.

8. The field liaison reviews, offers feedback for corrections (at times) and signs the agreement.

**Each Week**
The student reviews the Learning Agreement before supervision with the Field Instructor. Use the supervision log form to document activities completed and the corresponding competencies.

**Mid – Semester Check-in**

1. The date for this pre-evaluation will be determined by the Field Faculty Liaison (seminar instructor). The student prepares by reviewing the learning agreement, making note of accomplishments, and planning for the rest of the semester. Identify areas of growth to enhance learning and ranking for each behavior to determine areas of focus for the rest of the semester.

2. This pre-field evaluation is completed during supervision and is meant to be completed following a reflective discussion between the field instructor and student. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for a mutual exchange about how the field experience is progressing. It also serves as a bridge between the faculty field liaison, the student, and the field instructor by highlighting both strengths and areas of potential concern at this early stage.

**Two to three weeks before the End of Semester Evaluation is due**

1. Review the learning agreement activities and other areas of accomplishment for each competency.

2. Students may complete a self-field evaluation. This can include an assessment of strengths, areas for growth in the coming semester. In the spring semester, review and assess learning activities for the academic year for the final field evaluation.

**Note:** The Learning Agreement competencies and behaviors are worded exactly the same in the Field Evaluations both fall and spring.

**Sample Learning Agreement Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review necessary and pertinent agency policies and procedures related to social work role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review the agency’s policy manual, mission statement, funding streams, confidentiality, and documentation requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow and/or interview other disciplines at your agency (psychiatry, nutrition, case aide, transportation aide, educator, administrator, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read the NASW Code of Ethics and discuss core values and professional obligations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spend time in different departments of the agency to gain an understanding of client service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend staff, team, workshops, or other professional meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify 2 ethical dilemmas and note what part of the Code of Ethics applies during supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review case files completed by various social workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and explain at least two different ethical decision models and discuss/compare/contrast the models and their application(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read agency policy on client confidentiality as well as maintain client confidentiality throughout field experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather information about how agency uses social media and social media policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss appropriate roles and boundaries of a student intern with Field Instructor and other agency staff; practice behaviors that demonstrate commitment to appropriate roles and boundaries (e.g. not exchanging personal contact information with clients; being mindful of use of social media, etc.).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Engage diversity and difference in practice</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend a diversity training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep a reflective journal to record observations, reactions, cultural practices, that arise from working across diversity and difference in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a reading (journal, book, news articles) relevant to client or neighborhood culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and discuss instances when culture and diversity influence the outcomes of practice, policy, and program implementation in context with this current placement agency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identify personal biases and preconceptions related to areas of difference and process how to manage discrepancies between personal and professional values and beliefs.

Observe agency programs to recognize different populations served and to identify how this observation helps engage diversity in practice.

Attend a community meeting or celebration in the agency's neighborhood.

Identify agency practices that promote diversity.

### 3. Advance Human Rights & Social, Economic, & Environmental Justice

- Review literature on oppression, discrimination, as well as social, economic, and environmental justice.
- Shadow a patient rights advocate and write a reflection in weekly journal or narrative.
- Research a current issue or legislative action that requires advocacy, and organize a letter-writing campaign among your staff, volunteers.
- Discuss a current event that impacts how a specific service is delivered at the agency and identify methods of advocating for the service or impacted population.
- Assist in the development of a staff training on diversity issues and co-lead a brainstorming session on how agency can improve both internally as well as in its interactions with broader systems to address discriminatory policies and systems.
- Attend a public hearing or organizational meeting focused on increasing social and economic justice.

### 4. Engage in Practice-informed Research & Research-informed Practice

- Research and read scholarly articles related to service delivery within the service population discuss application in supervision.
- Interview an agency representative to see how client outcomes are assessed and how research is utilized at the agency.
- Identify various models of assessment and prevention relevant to population served by agency.
- Research and document evidence-based practice models that are relevant to the population served by the agency. For example, review the literature on group work with adolescents who abuse alcohol or another applicable client population.
- Identify an existing agency barrier impacting clients, and develop an intervention plan to remove or mitigate the obstacle. By year’s end, develop sufficient competency to proactively address impediments to client service and include this process in Capstone Project.
- Research poverty statistics, incidences of homelessness, incarceration and other items related to agency work to better understand community and to state need for services.
- Plan and implement an evidence-based practice model, such as facilitating a psycho-educational group with adolescents who abuse alcohol or another applicable client population.
- Identify ways in which evidence-based practice is used in funding and grant writing.

### 5. Engage in Policy Practice

- Identify local, state, and national policies that impact client population and demonstrate an understanding of how these policies impact service delivery and access to social services.
- Help prep, or interview, staff about the process for accreditation/re-accreditation. (CARF, JCAHO, etc.)
- Complete the agency’s HIPPA training.
- Review patient rights policy and write a reflection in weekly journal.
- Attend a court hearing or legal proceedings.
- Attend a community meeting in the agency’s neighborhood.
- Attend staff and board meetings and/or relevant community meetings where policies are being discussed.
- Collaborate with agency to identify tasks to help resolve an identified social problem that is impacted by policy at the agency, community, local, state or federal level.
- Become familiar with the agency’s strategic plan, and how the plan was created.

### 6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities

Observe intake interviews.
Take intake calls, calls for agency information, or constituent calls.

Engage with an appropriate number of clients each semester based on agency capacity and demonstrate empathy, reflecting content and meaning, and establishing rapport.

If student is at a State agency, visit a local agency; meet and interview direct service workers; shadow client interactions; and/or participate in assessments.

Attend a Motivational Interviewing workshop or presentation.

### 7. Assess with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities

- Attend at least one board meeting, training or data warehouse meeting to learn about board governance.
- Perform an appropriate number of assessments, per semester, based on agency capacity.
- Observe, reflect, and apply practice skills that assist individuals and/or groups to enhance their well-being from a strengths-based perspective.
- Read DSM-V on most frequently dealt with diagnoses.
- Apply for benefits in order to understand process that clients go through.
- Identify the major social service agencies and services in the target environment and compare to services offered by internship agency.

### 8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities

- Observe the field instructor or other staff members engaged in interaction with clients.
- Observe a social worker doing a home visit.
- Conduct at least 3 interactions with clients, groups, or committees in the presence of field instructor.
- Provide case management to a minimum of 3 clients.
- Facilitate referral process of client to another agency.
- Observe a number different groups offered at the agency.
- Complete two client discharge summaries by end of placement.
- Evaluate various interventions across all levels of practice (micro, mezzo, macro) in considering the best response to meet client needs and share findings during staff meetings and/or in practicum seminar.
- Visit other agencies or relevant settings; understand referral processes for linking clients to these agencies.
- Teach a class or workshop for clients. (Example: ESL, citizenship, personal finance/budgeting, resume preparation, interviewing skills)
- Work on writing a grant application with partner agencies.
- Pedestrian strategies as defined in treatment plan with an appropriate number of clients per semester and be evaluated based on above skill sets.
- Update the agency's website.

### 9. Evaluate with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities

- Participate in the preparation of audits.
- Participate in a peer review.
- Monitor and/or evaluate clients, utilizing agency evaluation instruments to determine effectiveness.
- Actively participate in case reviews/team meetings.
- Document patient progress on individual and group notes using an electronic medical record.
- Identify & explain the appropriate method(s) for evaluation to be used in assigned field placement projects and tasks.

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**Sample Learning Agreement**

University of Southern Maine School of Social Work

BSW COMPETENCY BASED LEARNING AGREEMENT

| Student Name: ____________________________ | Semester: ____________________________ |
| Field Instructor: ____________________________ | Faculty Liaison: ____________________________ |
Placement Name and Address: _________________________________________________________________________________
Field Instructor Email(s): ________________________
Field Instructor phone number: _______________________________ Weekly Supervision time: _________________________

This Learning Agreement represents a working contract between the named student and Field Instructor. Students are expected to develop and detail the work they expect to complete at their placement that will demonstrate the required competencies listed below. As Field Instructors know the work that can and needs to be accomplished in each agency, the student should ask for input and guidance into what is realistic, and field instructors must approve the final draft. The Field Instructor should ensure that the tasks included here are appropriate for BSW students working under supervision. Further, as a working document, this should be modified to reflect the work that each student is doing throughout the year. As modifications are made, please inform the Faculty Liaison.

Evaluation: The Field Instructor will evaluate the student at the mid-term and end of each semester using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-Proficient/Mastered</td>
<td>The student has mastered the competency of this task to the highest level for a BSW entering the field, and is able to demonstrate advanced application of all of the dimensions of knowledge, values, skills, cognitive, and affective behaviors related to this field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Advanced/Competent</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an advanced application of this task and is able to do so with indirect supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Emerging as Competent</td>
<td>The student demonstrates more than beginning level of competence. While the student is able to complete perhaps parts of this task solo, they are still dependent on direct supervision to complete some of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Insufficient Competence</td>
<td>The student is able to demonstrate some of the knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective behaviors for the descriptors here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Unmet level of Competence</td>
<td>The student attempted but failed in this task, and has yet to demonstrate any of the expected knowledge, skills, values and behaviors expected with the competency and task.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as the relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research and policy arena. Social workers recognize personal values and the difference between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgement and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social workers also understand the role of other professions when engaging in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. This competency will be demonstrated by the tasks the student accomplishes related to the demonstrable expectations below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior to be demonstrated</th>
<th>Student tasks to demonstrate this behavior</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.1 Develop knowledge of the NASW Code of Ethics and make ethical decisions across all client levels served in program/agency. | • I will read the NASW Code of Ethics and will discuss core values and professional obligations.  
• I will read agency Policy and Procedure Manual and discuss it with my field instructor  
• I will review and discuss additional ethical or governing policies which may impact the way in which the agency is able to provide services to its clientele (i.e. agency rules, Maine Code, HIPAA, FERPA, FMLA, SSI, etc.).  
• I will maintain agency and client confidentiality.  
• I will utilize an ethical decision making model each semester and review with field instructor, including discussing the issue of ambiguity in resolving ethical dilemmas.  
• I will identify 2 ethical dilemmas and note what part of the Code of Ethics applies during supervision. | □ Observation  
□ Documentation  
□ Assignment  
□ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative |
- I will identify potential strategies to resolve ethical dilemmas and will demonstrate emerging knowledge of ethical decision-making.

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| 1.2 Use of reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations. | - I will read agency policy on the following areas: 1) conflicts of interest, 2) boundaries, 3) dual relationships, 4) sexual harassment, and 5) confidentiality. Student should discuss how to address challenges that may arise in these areas.  
- I will identify 2 ways client values differ from my own and reflect how or why that might affect how I engage with clients and discuss during supervision and/or reflective journaling.  
- I will journal personal biases or judgments that may hinder appropriate behaviors and discuss managing the same with Agency Field Instructor, Faculty Field Liaison, and/or peer in practicum seminar.  
- I will discuss personal/ethical/value dilemmas with supervisor / Field Instructor and reflect on how they influence work with clients. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 1.3 Demonstrates professional demeanor in behavior, appearance and written, spoken and electronic communication. | - I will review procedures manual and attend orientation  
- I will dress according to agency policy.  
- I will treat clients and staff in a respectful and non-judgmental manner and will demonstrate positive relationship-building communication with staff and clients.  
- I will demonstrate appropriate documentation within the field agency.  
- I will demonstrate professional communication in all oral and written interactions, including email, both internal and external to the agency.  
- I will discuss needed areas of growth in supervision and work on strategies toward growth. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 1.4 Consistently use technology appropriately and ethically to facilitate practice outcomes. | - I will demonstrate awareness and appropriate use of social media and the impact it has on their practice with clients.  
- I will discuss with agency personnel what factors have been discussed to determine if agency does or does not use technology to deliver services and, if available, will observe the use of technology to deliver services. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 1.5 Effectively uses supervision and consultation to guide professional judgement and behavior, and to evaluate and enhance practice. | - I will ask for supervisory feedback on my professional demeanor during my supervisory meetings and apply any feedback received.  
- I will come prepared to supervision conference with an agenda for discussion for all supervisory meetings.  
- I will discuss appropriate roles and boundaries of a student intern with Field Instructor and other agency staff; practice behaviors that demonstrate commitment to appropriate roles and boundaries (e.g. not exchanging personal contact information with clients; being mindful of use of social media, etc.). | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |

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

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Behavior to be demonstrated</th>
<th>Student tasks to demonstrate this behavior</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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</table>
| 2.1 Applies and communicates an understanding of the significance and role of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels (please include task for each of these levels). | ● I will review two forms of literature (journal articles, books, etc.) on areas of difference and diversity related to client population served by agency. I will share findings with filed instructor and/or discuss in practicum seminar.  
● I will keep a reflective journal to record observations, reactions, cultural practices, that arise from working across diversity and difference in practice and discuss in supervision  
● I will be able to describe the impact of culturally diverse factors at all system levels (micro, mezzo, and macro).  
● I will identify how agency policies and procedures affect diverse populations eligible for services.  
● I will demonstrate cultural sensitivity when working with our diverse population, which will be reflected in strength-based interactions with clients.  
● I will attend diversity awareness workshops offered by the agency. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 2.2 Consistently presents as a learner and demonstrates the ability to engage with all individuals in agencies, groups and communities as experts of their own experiences. | ● In formal supervision meetings, identify and process ways clients experience difference and implications for providing services.  
● I will identify client differences using a strengths perspective.  
● Based on classroom and field learning, I will identify areas in which agency could improve its responsiveness to minority groups  
● I will present suggestions for improvement at staff meeting | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 2.3 Uses self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients, groups and communities. | ● I will identify specific strategies used to work with different populations in a culturally competent manner and demonstrate ability to apply those strategies  
● In supervision, I will identify personal biases and preconceptions related to areas of difference and process how to manage discrepancies between personal and professional values and beliefs.  
● With the direction of the field instructor, I will develop appropriate strategies for managing biases effectively in order to practice without discrimination. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |

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

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Behavior to be demonstrated</th>
<th>Student tasks to demonstrate this behavior</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 3.1 Demonstrate understanding of social, economic and environmental justice and advocates for human rights at individual systems levels. | ● I will review literature on oppression, discrimination, as well as social, economic, and environmental justice  
● I will be able to identify agency policies and structures that adversely affect client systems.  
● I will assist in the development of a staff training on diversity issues and co-lead a brainstorming session on how agency can improve both internally as well as in its interactions with broader systems to address discriminatory policies and systems  
● Utilizing client and staff communication, case record document review, and current demographic analyses, I will engage in ongoing program needs assessment  
● I will report findings at staff/team meetings and assist in the development of program enhancements.  
● I will follow a bill promoting civil rights for a marginalized group. Educate others and encourage advocacy related to this bill. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 3.2 Participate in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice. | ● In supervision, I will identify how clients experience and are impacted by injustice on micro, mezzo, and macro levels.  
● I will contact a legislator about a current client population need.  
● I will attend a public hearing or organizational meeting focused on increasing social and economic justice. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |

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

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

*Note: In planning tasks to demonstrate this competency, consider including research on topics for individual or groups sessions; presentations for clients, staff or groups; background on topics relevant to interests of individuals, groups and/or communities the student is working with; identifying under-researched issues relevant to the population(s) being worked, etc. if working with individuals, consider ways to identify and apply evidence-based practice in your work.*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Behavior to be demonstrated</th>
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<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4.1 Demonstrates understanding of how practice experience and theory informs scientific inquiry and research. | ● I will research and read three scholarly articles related to service delivery within the service population discuss application in supervision.  
● I will research and document evidence-based practice models that are relevant to the population served by the agency. For example, review the literature on group work with adolescents who abuse alcohol or another applicable client population. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
4.2 Applies critical thinking skills to analyze both qualitative and quantitative research methods and research findings.

- In supervision, discuss with field instructor research findings and practice implications related to evidence-based practice models, such as group work interventions for adolescents who abuse alcohol or another applicable client population.
- I will identify various models of assessment and prevention relevant to population served by agency.
- I will demonstrate the ability to evaluate the efficacy of assessment and prevention models relative to population served.
- I will be able to identify sources of knowledge (ex. Theoretical, Service Delivery Systems, Evidence-based Practice).
- I will be able to distinguish which sources are relevant to client population served by agency.

4.3 Demonstrates understanding of research findings to inform and improve practice, policy and service delivery.

- I will identify an evidence-based practice used within organization and discuss its effectiveness during supervision.
- Plan and implement an evidence-based practice model, such as facilitating a psycho-educational group with adolescents who abuse alcohol or another applicable client population.
- I will identify an existing agency barrier impacting clients, and develop an intervention plan to remove or mitigate the obstacle. By year’s end, develop sufficient competency to proactively address impediments to client service and include this process in my Capstone Project.
- In consultation with my field supervisor, I will identify an agency problem or issue that needs to be addressed and formulate a problem statement.
- I will identify potential participants and plan to gather data.
- I will have access to and review current data and outcome measures.
- I will share the research proposal outline with supervisor, begin to develop a potential research project, and outline a data collection plan.

### Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

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

*Note: In planning tasks to demonstrate this competency, consider identifying policies relevant to the populations being worked with for discussion and direct exploration. Students should consider ways to include work in policy courses as relevant (for example, writing policy briefs, preparing testimony, attending NASW social work day at the hill). Whether or not the student is actively involved in policy work, tasks should be designed to assess, analyze and advocate for policies related to the work at hand.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior to be demonstrated</th>
<th>Student tasks to demonstrate this behavior</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5.1 Identifies policies at the local, state and federal levels that impact wellbeing. | - I will research local, state, and national policies that impact client population and demonstrate an understanding of how these policies impact service delivery and access to social services.  
- In supervision, I will identify ways clients experience oppression and discrimination when it comes to accessing resources at my | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
service delivery and access to social services.

5.2 Understands the ways in which social welfare, economic, and environmental policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.

- I will define how the agency partners with local resources in the provision of services
- I will visit three allied agencies to learn about fundraising resources and share what I learned in supervision or in the practicum seminar.
- Discuss with field instructor the implications of current public policy and relevant legislation issues on service provision to agency clients.
- Attend staff and board meetings and/or relevant community meetings where policies are being discussed

5.3 Demonstrates application of critical thinking to analyze, formulate and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social and economic justice.

- I will use at least one human rights activity to discuss policy implications with field instructor and discuss possible policy changes that would address the issue.
- I will verbalize an understanding of how changes in policy can help clients to overcome an identified social problem
- I will collaborate with agency to identify tasks to help resolve an identified social problem that is impacted by policy at the agency, community, local, state or federal level

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage clients and constituencies to advocate practice effectiveness.

*Note: This competency focuses on students ability to engage those they are working with*
Keep a reflective journal of how I use my interpersonal skills to engage clients and share with agency or in the practicum seminar
- I will demonstrate growing effectiveness in my relationship building and sustaining skills as observed by my field instructor
- I will demonstrate growing effectiveness in my relationship building and sustaining skills as observed by my field instructor

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

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

*Note: This competency focuses on students ability to assess those they are working with*

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<tr>
<th>Behavior to be demonstrated</th>
<th>Student tasks to demonstrate this behavior</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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| 7.1 Collect and organizes data, and applies critical thinking to interpret information from interactions with those they are working with. | - Educate myself about the agency assessment process by reading the client files and noting how the social worker assessed client needs; developed goals and objectives; and selected intervention strategies. I will discuss findings in supervision or practicum seminar.  
- Review, evaluate, and appraise current agency services, as well as needs and trends in the communities in which services are being provided. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 7.2 Applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other theories/frameworks in assessing and collecting data. | - I will perform an appropriate number of assessments, per semester, based on agency capacity  
- I will observe, reflect, and apply practice skills that assist individuals and/or groups to enhance their well-being from a strengths-based perspective. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 7.3 Identifies mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges of those they are working with. | - I will work with a client or client system to develop an intervention plan or treatment plan  
- I will maintain communication and follow-up with client to determine client outcomes and potential success. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 7.4 Understands appropriate | - Discuss with field instructor how client interventions can change as clients’ situations shift. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation |
**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities**

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

*Note: This competency focuses on students ability to intervene with those they are working with*

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| 8.1 Chooses interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of those they are working with. | ● I will evaluate various interventions across all levels of practice (micro, mezzo, macro) in considering the best response to meet client needs and share my findings during staff meetings and/or in practicum seminar.  
● I will identify the process, and demonstrate the ability, to effectively link clients with appropriate social services | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 8.2 Demonstrates knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environments, and theories/frameworks in interventions with those they are working with. | ● I will identify theories used with the practice population during supervision and identify the strengths and weaknesses of each  
● Evaluate assessments/data collection and intervention practices during supervision. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 8.3 uses collaboration with other providers, agencies, and/or systems to achieve beneficial outcomes for those they are working with. | ● I will facilitate referral process of client to another agency, when appropriate.  
● I will identify ways in which an interprofessional team works to ensure ‘best practices’ for client (client system)  
● I will demonstrates knowledge regarding roles of interprofessional team and benefits of working in an interprofessional setting. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Journal/Narrative |
| 8.4 Demonstrates confidence and independence in negotiating. | ● I will implement strategies as defined in treatment plan with an appropriate number of clients per semester and be evaluated based on above skill sets. | ☐ Observation  
☐ Documentation  
☐ Assignment |
mediating, and advocating with and on behalf of those they are working with.

| 8.5 Facilitates effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals. | - I will discuss client progress on treatment goals and agency termination protocols during my ongoing supervision in the agency.  
- I will review client progress throughout termination phase; prepare client for final sessions/meetings. | □ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative  
□ Observation  
□ Documentation  
□ Assignment  
□ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative |

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

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

*Note: This competency focuses on students’ ability to evaluate their work with all those they are working with*

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| 9.1 Selects appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes. | ● I will become familiar with the agency’s evaluative tools and utilize in the therapeutic process or program evaluation.  
● I will discuss with my supervisor how client interventions can change as client’s situations shift. | □ Observation  
□ Documentation  
□ Assignment  
□ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative |
| 9.2 Demonstrates knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes. | ● I will monitor and/or evaluate an appropriate number of clients, discuss progress with supervisor, utilizing agency evaluation instruments to determine effectiveness. | □ Observation  
□ Documentation  
□ Assignment  
□ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative |
| 9.3 Monitors and evaluates intervention and program process of outcomes. | ● I will discuss Capstone project with field instructor and agency personnel affected by the project to obtain needed permissions, identify possible barriers, and work with the course instructor and field instructor to insure the completion of the Capstone project.  
● I will identify appropriate measures, implement them, and collect data to monitor client or program outcomes. | □ Observation  
□ Documentation  
□ Assignment  
□ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative |
| 9.4 Applies evaluation findings to continuously improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo and macro level. | ● I will identify strengths and potential future changes with evaluation process at the agency that could lead to improved outcomes for clients and client systems.  
● Capstone Project: I will develop a logic model based on course assignments to guide the evaluation of client or programmatic outcomes. | □ Observation  
□ Documentation  
□ Assignment  
□ Discussion  
□ Journal/Narrative |
| macro levels (please include a task for each level as appropriate.) | ● I will report the outcomes of my Capstone project with appropriate agency personnel and discuss the implications of the results for practice and program planning |

Rules of Professional Conduct for all Students in Field Practicum Experiences

- Students shall behave in legal, ethical, and moral manner in the conduct of their Field Practicum Experience, maintaining both a personal and professional integrity, and avoiding any actions or involvement in procedures not approved by qualified field instructors which would cause harm to others.

- Students will understand their responsibilities and practice within the limits of their defined roles, training, and competencies as defined and approved in the Affiliation Agreement. They shall be expected to adhere to all the agreed upon requirements with regard to attendance, required clock hours, and performance of duties as contracted or amended.

- Students shall respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the individuals and the groups with whom they work. They shall not misrepresent their role or competencies to agency staff, clients, patients or others. Professional concerns or problems with others shall be discussed with the agency field instructor or field liaison.

- Students shall, at all times, respect the confidentiality of information about clients or patients in the course of their Field Practicum Experience. They also shall be aware of agency policies or guidelines relating to research or training with human subjects.

- Students will avoid undertaking any activity in which competency, personal problems, or conflicts of interest and/or understanding are likely to lead to inadequate performance. If, or when, such a situation arises, they shall seek Field Instructor and Field Faculty Liaison assistance to determine the appropriate course of action.

- Students acknowledge that they have read and will abide by the NASW Code of Ethics, the current MSW Field Manual, and the current MSW Student Handbook.

I fully understand and agree to abide by these rules of professional conduct for students in a Field Practicum Experience. I understand that failure to follow the above guidelines may result in an academic review and/or dismissal from the program.

Student Signature: ____________________________  Date: __________

Learning Agreement Signatures

1st Semester:

Student_________________________________________Date: __________________

Field Instructor________________________________________Date: __________________

2nd Semester:

Student_________________________________________Date: __________________
Section 5: Field Safety Checklist

Student Field Safety Checklist

___ Read agency safety policies and procedures

___ Discuss agency safety policies and procedures with field instructor on ongoing basis during placement

___ Discussion with field instructor should address the following safety considerations:

• Elements of *social work best practices* that apply to agency and their relationship to personal safety. A few examples of best practice that might influence safety include respectful communication with client including a respectful greeting, honoring client’s personal space, honoring client’s household space when on a home visit, explaining purpose of meeting to alleviate client anxiety, listening to client story without interruption, demonstrating empathy throughout meeting, appropriate professional dress. There are many more elements of social work best practice that apply to personal safety. Interns are responsible for learning these as they improve their social work practice skills through course of field placement.

• Knowledge of neighborhood through agency orientation.

• Building safety, including offices, waiting rooms, closets, hallways, interview rooms, bathrooms, etc.

• Parking lot safety – walking to and from car, lighting, hours of access, bus stops, etc.

• Security during agency closing and opening. Who closes the office at night? Are there differences between closing when it is dark and closing during daylight hours?

• Non-violence policy.

• Sexual harassment policy.

• Gun and weapon policy.

• Check-in and check-out procedures.

• Safety on home visit procedures.

• Emergency procedures (e.g. panic alarms, security cameras, or other building safety devices).

• Restraint procedures. *USM does not allow interns to restrain clients*

• Universal precautions or CPR. If placement is in a medical setting and if agency employees receive training in universal precautions and/or CPR, interns must also receive this training.

• Post-incident procedures. Interns are expected to report any unsafe incidents to Field Instructor and/or agency staff and to know when, where, what, how, and to whom they should report.

Section 6: Field Placement Termination Process

A few thoughts about field placement termination...

Most of you have discussed termination with clients which is a process that needs careful thought, consideration and processing with your field instructor/supervisor. But, careful consideration also needs to be given to your supervisor and agency. Internship opportunities are not easy to come by and the willingness of an agency or individual to accept interns depends on each intern doing quality work and leaving a positive impression. Because future interns depend on the good will of a placement site and staff for their opportunities, you must attend carefully to how you conclude your placement.

Sometimes the most difficult part of the evaluation process (which is part of the termination process) is being able to give and accept critical feedback constructively. It is natural for students to hope to hear nothing but praise
from supervisors. It is equally understandable that supervisors would want to give all their interns glowing reviews. Praise is important, and one hopes that all supervisors think carefully about and acknowledge the achievements and efforts of even their most challenging interns. At the same time, however, constructive criticism is essential if students are to develop beyond their existing levels. Constructive criticism helps show direction for further progress. So, you are advised to seek and welcome critical feedback to help you identify what you need to work on as you move forward in your social work career.

Feedback should be mutual. Giving mutual feedback helps to bring better closure to the relationship. If communication is only one directional, you may be left with a feeling of unfinished business. Talking about your impressions of supervision helps reduce the feeling that something has been left unsaid or is incomplete. If you have an opportunity or are asked to give your impression of your supervisee experience, keep in mind that supervisors are human and also like to hear positive things. At the same time, well-intentioned and sensitively communicated feedback can also be welcome. Just think carefully about how you might deliver any constructive comments. This is an opportunity for you to practice the strength's perspective and your interviewing skills. Just remember, if you choose to impart any constructive feedback to your supervisor, present your impressions in a way that he or she is most likely to take well.

Finally, if you haven't thought about this already, a letter or card with a note of thanks is always a professional touch. Even if your supervisor was not the best, a thank you is in order. Even if supervisors were busier than you had hoped, or other factors somehow diminished the experience, the supervisor still made it possible for you to have a real-world learning opportunity that is valuable and merits an expression of appreciation. If there are other individuals in addition to your supervisor that were helpful, special notes of thanks to them is also a nice touch.

In addition to a note to your supervisor, it is also courteous to drop a note of thanks to an agency director, school principal, etc. even if you had no or minimal contact with him or her. They are usually the ones that approve the staff's time to provide supervision to students. Also, a group thank you might be in order to all of the staff, teachers, etc. with whom you worked with during your placement. A simple note—one or two lines is appropriate and will be appreciated. So anyone, who has been especially helpful to you, should be recognized.

I know this takes some time and thought but as a professional entering the field this is good practice that is often remembered and it is part of the termination process.

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