

**Field Instructor Manual**

**School of Social Work  
The University of Missouri-St. Louis**

**Spring 2025**

## To Our Field Instructors,

On behalf of the social work students of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, we would like to thank you for your interest in and service to social work education. In 2015, the Council on Social Work Education outlined the new Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, stating that field education is the “signature pedagogy” of social work education. The Council goes on to say that “the intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting.” We believe that the practicum experience is the most important influence in the development of a student’s social work practice skills. As a Field Instructor, you serve as teacher and mentor to our students. Your partnership with the social work program provides students with a high-quality learning experience. As you help students learn to be social work practitioners through teaching and mentoring, our field education office will serve as your resource, liaison and support in the field instruction process.

The field education office at the School of Social Work at UMSL collaborates in delivering services to Field Instructors with field education faculty and staff at Saint Louis University, and the Brown School at Washington University. These collaborative activities include the design and implementation of the Field Instructor certification program and common application forms for agencies and field instructors. You can learn more about our collaborative efforts by visiting [The St. Louis Field Education Collaborative](#).

We hope that you find the students’ enthusiasm and idealism parallel to the many satisfactions and rewards that you will receive serving as a Field Instructor. This manual contains an overview of our BSW and MSW programs as well as policies and procedures related to field education. We hope that you will familiarize yourself with the contents of the manual, retain it for future use and use the information to create the best possible experience for students and your agency. Please share this resource with other Field Instructors within your agency as well as any task instructors at your agency who work closely with students.

Thank you for your valuable contributions to our students, our program and the social work profession. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices with any questions.

Sincerely,

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## ***Field Instructor Resources and Information***

### ***The Collaborative Social Work Field Education Project***

In January 2000, with funding from The University of Missouri, the three social work programs in the St. Louis Metropolitan area began developing an innovative field education collaborative project now referred to as “The Collaborative Social Work Field Education Project” or simply, the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative. Using a feminist approach to leadership, The School of Social Work at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Saint Louis University School of Social Work, and The Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis identified a common goal to support Field Instructors and students in the field experience. This has evolved to include a joint Field Instructor orientation and certification program, continuing education events, a collaborative web site and database, and selected common forms. In 2009, we welcomed Fontbonne University to our collaboration, which is currently sunsetting their campus. Since many social workers in our area serve as Field Instructors for students from more than one of the social work programs, this collaboration has obvious benefits to Field Instructors and students.

### ***Field Instruction Certification Program***

To support quality field education experiences for students and Field Instructors, the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative requires the completion of the “Field Instruction Certification” program for new Field Instructors. Completion of the program qualifies a new Field Instructor to become a Certified Field Instructor and become eligible to provide field instruction for social work practicum students from the three St. Louis area programs.

To start, new Field Instructors must apply to be affiliated with our social work program using the [St. Louis Field Education Collaborative database](#), be approved, and complete the first two sessions of the Certification Program, “Introduction to Field Instruction” and “Successful Beginnings.” This process can occur prior to or simultaneous with the first experience of providing field instruction for a student.

The Certification Program consists of a half-day session comprised of our first two sessions (“Introduction to Field Instruction” and “Successful Beginnings”) and four subsequent educational sessions. The remaining sessions focus on such topics as values and ethics, cultural awareness, the role of teacher, mentor and supervisor and racial equity as they relate to field instruction. The Certification Program must be completed within two years from the time of attendance at the first orientation session. To remain certified, field instructors must apply to be renewed every three years and provide verification of continuing education.

### ***Field Instructor Resources***

#### **Agency Applications**

Agencies and Field Instructors must complete applications to be considered for approval to host practicum students.

1. **Agency Application\***– Each site must complete the Agency Application. Applicants will have the opportunity to select those programs (UMSL, SLU, WU) and levels (BSW

and/or MSW) with which they wish to affiliate. Organizations must be approved by the program(s) with which they wish to affiliate.

2. **Field Instructor Application\***– Each MSW or BSW Field Instructor must complete the Field Instructor Application. Instructors must be approved by the program(s) (UMSL, SLU, WU) with which they wish to affiliate and attend the new Field Instructor orientation prior to or during their first year of field instruction.
3. **Affiliation Agreement form** – Organizations must complete an Affiliation Agreement for each individual university (UMSL, SLU, WU).

Each site must have an approved agency and Field Instructor application and a signed affiliation agreement on file with the Office of Field Education before a student can begin practicum.

Information on the Field Instruction Certification Program, account set up and application instructions, and the link to the affiliation agreement can be found on the UMSL School of Social Work site [here](#).

**\*Please note-** applications submitted directly to the Brown School at WU cover only WU students. Full Collaborative participation requires an application to the database through the link above.

### **Documentation of Field Instruction**

At the beginning of the semester following that in which a student was supervised, Field Instructors will receive a certificate from the UMSL Office of Field Education verifying the field instruction provided. This certificate may be used for continuing education requirements for social work licensure.

### **Practicum Forms**

Necessary practicum forms for students are available on our website [here](#).

### **Social Work Code of Ethics**

The National Association for Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics* is available from the [NASW website](#).

### **Social Work Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards**

The Council of Social Work Education's (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards for undergraduate and graduate social work programs are available from their [web site](#).

### ***General Information***

#### **Academic Credit for Life or Previous Work Experience**

According to the Council on Social Work Education policy, academic credit for life experience and previous work experience cannot be granted to students in whole or in part in lieu of the field practicum courses.

**Agency Policies**

Students are required to comply with the rules and policies of the practicum site, insofar as they pertain to their activities while at the practicum site.

**Agency Reimbursement for Student Services**

Students shall follow agency policy regarding the collection of fees and accepting gifts. While in practicum, students may not keep any fees charged for their services.

**Appropriate Activities**

Students should be engaged in activities while in practicum commensurate to their social work program and level of training. Questions regarding appropriate practicum activities can be directed to the Office of Field Education.

**Automobile Insurance**

UMSL does not provide secondary auto insurance. Students who will be using their personal vehicle for agency business should negotiate automobile coverage with the agency at the time of the interview.

**Criminal, Child Abuse/Neglect and Health Screenings**

The practicum agency may require students to obtain pre-practicum health and/or child abuse and neglect and criminal background checks. The School of Social Work does not conduct child abuse and neglect or criminal background checks, and it does not secure or maintain medical information on its students. It is the responsibility of the student to work in conjunction with the placement agency to obtain and in some cases, pay for the required checks if the agency will not cover the costs. Students should be proactive in obtaining information required by the sites and allow ample time for paperwork completion. Failure to comply with agency policies in this regard may result in a delayed start to the practicum or a forfeited opportunity.

If the agency is unable to assist the student with securing the required checks, the Office of Field Education will refer the student to an independent company (CastleBranch).

**Disability and Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 extends and implements civil rights protections for disabled individuals. Students requiring an accommodation related to a disability should utilize their University resources to formally document their disability and work with those resources to request accommodations during their practicum experiences.

**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)**

Many practicum agencies that collect and/or use client health information are required to comply with the federal HIPAA law. As social work programs are not considered business associates, university programs are not required to comply. However, agencies may wish to orient their practicum students and take steps to ensure student compliance.

### **Lobbying Activities**

Students who engage in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the practicum agency and their field liaison the issue of registering as a lobbyist with the appropriate governmental entity. If the student and Field Instructor determine that registration is appropriate, the student must register as a lobbyist with the practicum agency (not the University). It is the responsibility of the student and the agency to comply with all laws and regulations relevant to lobbying.

### **Mandated Reporting**

As emerging social work professionals, our expectation is that students adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and report incidents of suspected neglect or abuse; however, we recommend students discuss these situations with their field instructors to gain full appreciation and knowledge of the reporting process. It is also recommended that students familiarize themselves with individual state laws (where they are completing practicum and/or where they intend to practice after graduation) that determine who is a mandated reporter:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/can/reporting/>.

### **Paid Practicum**

While agencies are not required to financially compensate students for practicum, the Office of Field Education encourage organizations/agencies to provide funds when possible. Such arrangements are based upon negotiations between the agency and the student. Possible advantages include:

1. **Investment/connection to the agency** – Receiving payment for a practicum may assist in clarifying the role and responsibilities of the student to all concerned. Students may feel a deeper sense of commitment to the agency in exchange for payment.
2. **Ease of financial burden and stress on the student** – The combination of practicum with a source of income may allow the student to focus more energy on learning and producing quality work, rather than dividing attention between work and practicum.
3. **Recognition of the contribution to the organization** – Even a small stipend can provide recognition to the student of the quality of the contribution to the agency and build agency loyalty.

Possible funding sources for practicum include:

1. **Agency general revenue or grant funds** – Some agencies include stipend funds for practica in grant proposal budgets. Other agencies allocate stipend funds for students in their annual budgets or use personnel funds if the student fills in for a staff member on leave. If an agency relies on student labor to fulfill specific duties they still need to be considered a practicum student and not an employee.
2. **Government funding** – Within government agencies, a variety of government funding options may be made available for training stipends. For example, students working within the Veterans Administration, the Missouri Division of Family Services, AmeriCorps and Vista programs have received stipends from government funding sources. Other state and local agencies may elect to use discretionary funds.
3. **Practicum at Place of Employment** – If a potential practicum exists at a student's employment site and would entail new and appropriate learning for the student, practicum credit may be earned at the agency with specific arrangements. Place of

Employment practica need to be individually negotiated with the Office of Field Education and meet the requirements outlined by the Council on Social Work Education.

### **Physical Restraint**

In the event that a student's practicum placement is at a setting and with a population where physical restraint may be needed, practicum students may assist in limited instances and only if:

- The practicum student is the only person available to assist
- The client is in immediate risk for harm
- The practicum student is **fully trained** in the formal, person-centered behavior management/de-escalation program **utilized by the agency**.

**Training in verbal de-escalation and approved physical restraint techniques is provided at the expense of the practicum site and must include real-time practice; virtual training will not fulfill this training requirement. Training outside of those provided by the practicum site will not count as a substitute; the student must maintain any certification in this training for the duration of the practicum experiences. In the event of a certification lapse, practicum students are prohibited from assisting with physical restraint.**

Practicum students are prohibited from assisting with physically restraining clients until they have obtained certification as listed above. **Until they are trained, students should not be in 1:1 situations alone with clients but may work with clients in the physical space where other employees are present (i.e. shadowing, observation, etc.).**

If students are asked to assist with the physical restraint of a client when they are not fully trained or when their certification has lapsed, they should refrain from doing so and the Faculty Liaison should be notified.

### **Professional Liability**

The Curators of the University of Missouri maintain a self-insured professional liability policy for its various professional fields. This program covers duly registered social work students for events that may occur while performing duties in their field practicum. The policy provides in minimum amounts not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence on an occurrence basis, \$3,000,000 annual aggregate. Students wishing to obtain **additional coverage at their own expense** may contact the National Association of Social Workers Insurance Trust at (800) 638-8799, ext 387.

### **Safety and Security of Student in Practicum**

Safety of students in field is a priority for the Office of Field Education. While the UMSL School of Social Work does not wish students to be protected from the realities of professional practice, immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks. The University and practicum agencies must partner to reduce risks to students in practicum. All social work students are required to attend safety training as a part of student orientation. Safety is also addressed in the practicum seminar courses. However, many practicum students have safety and security concerns as they enter the field practicum. If not addressed, concerns about personal safety can significantly impact learning opportunities in the practicum. Field Instructors and practicum sites, when applicable, should do the following regarding safety:

- Discuss safety and security matters with students at the placement interview or at the outset of the practicum. Information about the prevalence of or potential for violence while conducting practicum activities should be relayed to the student.
- Explain and enforce agency safety protocols with students, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients and home visit safety procedures. (NOTE: students are expected to follow agency rules regarding the necessity of home visits and home visit protocol.)
- Provide a tour of the surrounding neighborhood or areas in which the student may work, and address concerns students may have regarding work in the community.
- Allow students to observe staff engaged in the work for which the student is preparing.
- Allow students to be observed while engaged in learning activities.
- Link students with agency-provided security resources (i.e., safety training, cell phones).

The following types of activities warrant special concern and, therefore, should be discussed with the field education faculty and the student prior to the assignment:

- physical restraint of clients,
- transportation of clients in the student's private vehicle,
- transportation of a client with a history of violent behavior,
- treatment of a client with a history of violence toward the staff,
- treatment of a client with a history of drug or alcohol abuse
- visiting clients in their homes, and
- work in the agency at times when or in areas where other staff is not present

Any incident or injury involving the student should be reported to the University as soon as possible.

### **Sexual Harassment**

UMSL has a policy pertaining to harassment that extends to students in practicum. The full text of the policy can be viewed here: [Sexual Harassment Policy](#).

### **Sharing Sensitive Information**

The Office of Field Education will share all relevant information with appropriate persons including the faculty liaison, the agency Field Instructor, the student's academic advisor and social work program director for the student. Relevant information is defined as information that may have an impact on the practicum site selection, placement or implementation process and that may affect clients, agency Field Instructors, staff or the learning experience. Such information will be shared to enable informed choice by Field Instructors, protect clients, protect students and facilitate the learning process. Agency Field Instructors are also expected to share relevant information with the Office of Field Education. The student may be required to sign a release of information form for some types of information.

### **Site Selection**

UMSL has a structured self-selection model for site selection. In consultation with the Office of Field Education, students are responsible for securing a practicum site. After consulting with the Office of Field Education and attending required practicum preparation workshops, students

have the responsibility to contact agencies or organizations and participate in a formal interview with the professionals who may serve as Field Instructors.

The process is similar to applying for a job. Students and the Field Instructor interview each other to assess if the opportunities of the site and the role and skills of the Field Instructor match the educational and professional development requirements of the students.

Students can be expected to share resumes with potential Field Instructors. In the interview, students should be prepared to discuss their academic and work experiences, strengths and weaknesses, career goals and the practicum learning activities they need in order to accomplish their goals, as well as the educational competencies of the practicum level they are seeking. Field Instructors discuss the opportunities for training and supervision available in the setting as well as their expectations of students.

Field Instructors should feel free to contact the Office of Field Education to discuss student standing in the program, appropriateness for the setting, learning goals and needs or any other issues that may impact practicum.

### **Supervision and Evaluation Suggestions**

The following guidelines are designed to assist students and Field Instructors in maximizing the practicum experience. The manner in which these functions are carried out will vary from setting to setting. As many students will not work for the agency in which they complete a practicum, students are most in need of transferable social work skills they can use in a variety of service systems.

1. **Orientation and Introductions** - Formal or informal orientations should include an introduction to:
  - Setting – physical facilities, parking, schedule, personnel, dress code, etc.
  - Policies and procedures – documentation, service delivery, reimbursement, communications, safety protocols, etc.
  - Agency and community resources
  - Introductions to staff, volunteers, professionals and support staff

While orientation usually takes place most intensively during the first one or two weeks of placement, some types of orientation can be spread out over the semester, such as sessions on the nature of specific presenting problems, background on pertinent client issues and other programs with which the student is not intimately involved.

2. **Regularly scheduled, private supervisory conferences for one hour per week** – Individual supervision sessions should be carried out as regularly scheduled sessions. Some flexibility to change the time is, at times, necessary; however, it is helpful to have a prearranged time to which the student and Field Instructor can be held accountable.
3. **Supervision available as needed** – Frequent, unprompted supervision during the initial phases of the field placement is especially critical to student success. If the Field Instructor is not personally available, someone else can be designated to answer questions that must be answered immediately.
4. **Clear supervision and work expectations** – Students, Field Instructors and agencies benefit from clear supervision and work expectations. While some Field Instructors expect students to prepare for and bring an agenda to the supervision session, others

prefer to structure the time for the student. The expectations for the quality of work vary widely among Field Instructors as well. Students benefit from very clear expectations that are communicated at the beginning of their practicum and reiterated if and when expectations change.

5. **Immersion into work as early as possible in the placement** - The student should move from reading about the agency and observing others to actually practicing social work as quickly as possible. For example, assigning a piece of a larger assignment that can be completed along with another staff member is a helpful beginning experience for the student.
6. **Exposure to relevant and varied learning experiences** – The educational competencies for a student’s practicum, explicated in the Learning Agreement, depend upon the degree sought, concentration and level of practicum. However, all students benefit from both breadth and depth of learning experiences. The Faculty Liaison may also be a helpful resource as to possible practicum learning activities. Students should be engaged in work activities consonant with professional social work and should not be involved in work unrelated to practicum learning objectives. For example, students should not be primarily observing, filing or engaged in other clerical duties that do not require a professional degree and are unrelated to their learning objectives.
7. **Documentation** - The student should be responsible for some recording in official agency records and utilize computers, when possible. The content, style and frequency will vary with each setting. Students benefit from this exposure, as documentation is required in virtually all areas of social work practice.
8. **Feedback** - Evaluative feedback to the student should address positive points and areas in which further growth is needed. Students benefit from immediate, balanced feedback as well as ongoing verbal and written feedback throughout the practicum. Field Instructors are encouraged to use a variety of evaluative strategies, which may include (but are not limited to): direct observation, audio/video recording, process recording, third party reports and written materials.
9. **Coordination and evaluation** - The student, Field Instructor and Task Instructor (if applicable) should be involved in the learning agreement, site visit and evaluation processes and maintain a copy of the Learning Agreement and Evaluation for their records. The student should also receive a copy of any other written performance evaluations that may be completed by the agency. Evaluative feedback should be discussed with the student to enable clarification and mutual agreement.
10. **Relevant reading** - Time can be allotted during field placement for reading materials relevant to work in the agency (i.e., activity on an individual case, group/community issues, legislative issues affecting clients, etc.). The Field Instructor may need to direct the student to very specific sources of material, such as journal articles or other literature.
11. **Community events** - Students are encouraged by faculty to explore the possibility of attending workshops and special events in the community that are in any way related to field placement as part of their practicum. This must be negotiated between the student and the agency and can be included as practicum hours.
12. **Dealing with problematic behavior or performance issues of the student** – Behavior and/or performance problems that interfere with practicum activities occasionally occur with students. If problems arise, Field Instructors are strongly encouraged to take the following steps:

- a) Gather and document pertinent information to present to the student concerning the problematic behavior or performance issue that interferes with achieving the learning objectives.
- b) Present the information to the student as soon as possible.
- c) Provide the student, if possible, with specific suggested actions or steps that can lead to increased professional performance.
- d) Allow the student adequate time to attempt to rectify the situation. Provide honest, balanced feedback to the student on the progress of changes.
- e) Document the continuation of any persisting problems. Indicate, in writing, to the student that the continuation of the behavior or performance issue is problematic. Document the consequences that will result if changes do not occur. Contact the Faculty Liaison/Academic Advisor and send a copy of the documentation.

Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to talk with the Faculty Liaison/Academic Advisor throughout the practicum. As a general rule, the Faculty Liaison/Academic Advisor will not initiate a discussion with the Field Instructor about a problem a student is facing until the student has first discussed the issue with the Field Instructor and feels the problem is still unresolved.

### **Transporting Clients**

While transporting of clients in vehicles should be limited, if a student is required to do so, they should make their Faculty Liaison aware. If transportation includes children for whom child passenger safety laws apply, student **must** be provided with properly installed car seats and booster seats by the practicum site. **Students should not transport clients for whom car seats and boosters are necessary by state law but are not provided by the practicum site. If students are asked to do so, they should contact their Faculty Liaison.** Students who are required to transport clients for practicum activities should clarify liability issues with their personal auto insurer and their practicum site.

## ***University of Missouri-St. Louis School of Social Work***

### ***Mission of the School of Social Work***

The School of Social Work engages students and faculty in professional education, research and service to advance knowledge and competence to promote human and societal well-being. Within a collaborative learning environment, students are prepared as self-aware, culturally informed, critically thinking leaders committed to social and economic justice and professional values and ethics. **Inspiring Hope, Changing Lives**

The School's mission and goals are closely linked to those of UM-St. Louis, a land-grant comprehensive research university committed to meeting the diverse needs in the state's largest metropolitan geographical area.

### **BSW Program Mission**

Generalist practice is the basic conceptual approach for the BSW degree and forms the foundation for the BSW degree. Building on a liberal arts background, the social work curriculum develops knowledge and skills to understand complex social issues and the ability to assess and intervene directly and indirectly at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, and/or policy levels. In each phase, students are taught to think critically and analyze and evaluate their social work practice.

### **MSW Program Mission**

With a solid liberal arts and generalist foundation, students undertake advanced practice in the MSW concentration. Concentration level curricula are guided by the systems and strengths perspectives aimed at empowerment and capacity-building of at-risk populations and by the social work values of service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry. Students develop advanced knowledge and skills in Family Practice or Leadership and Social Change. Students may then choose a focus area (though this is not required) in one of these areas: Health and Behavioral Health or School Social Work.

The School of Social Work's mission is enhanced through significant partnerships and cooperative relationships with area educational institutions, human service organizations, policy makers, citizen action groups, and business organizations. Further, student learning is enriched through the growing use of shared educational resources, and information and distance learning technologies that are generated in collaboration with other public and private social work programs in the metropolitan region and the state.

***BSW Program*****Goals of the BSW Program**

Generalist practice is the basic conceptual approach for the BSW degree, and it embodies content central to a common knowledge base, values, and skills of social work practice. Students develop entry-level skills to understand, assess, and intervene effectively at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels. It implies an understanding of self and one's impact on client systems. It requires openness, understanding, and skills in working with diverse groups of people. Generalist practice is built on a liberal arts foundation, including understanding of basic psychological, sociological, economic, political, and biological processes.

**The goals of the BSW program of the University of Missouri- St. Louis are to:**

1. **Prepare students with the professional knowledge, skills, values and ethics for effective social work practice.** Graduates will understand that as professional social workers they must be able to organize and evaluate social work knowledge, practice skills and ethics to effectively intervene at the individual, family, group, organization and community levels of practice. They understand how differences shape clients' responses to life experiences and are able to use this information to engage clients to bring about change. Students gain knowledge, skills, values and ethics at the generalist level of practice that allow them to engage in advanced practice in family practice, gerontology or social work leadership and management when they graduate.
2. **Prepare students to utilize critical-thinking and capacity-building skills at all levels of social work practice.** Coursework emphasizes the use of critical-thinking skills to evaluate knowledge and approaches to practice. These skills, combined with an understanding of how social systems operate within environments to maintain well-being, enable graduates to engage in capacity building with clients at all levels of practice.
3. **Prepare students to analyze and address dynamic issues and challenges facing diverse populations and to promote social justice and positive social change.** Graduates will understand social problems and issues in a way that enables them to find resources and opportunities for their clients, no matter the level of practice. They will be able to analyze policy and understand how changes in policy affect social services and community resources. Using this information, graduates will support social justice by advocating for positive change in policies and services.
4. **Prepare students to conduct and utilize research to respond effectively to dynamic social contexts, issues and problems found in social work practice.** BSW graduates will use research skills and practice wisdom to evaluate their own practice as well as agency and community programs. This will enable graduates to continuously adjust their practice in response to changing contexts and trends.
5. **Assist and support faculty in the advancement of social work knowledge, teaching and service.** Members of graduate faculty in the School of Social Work have a strong commitment to advancing social work knowledge through research, classroom teaching and community service and share this commitment through their interaction with students.

Advancement of social work knowledge is supported through research centers, release time for grant implementation, and expectations when being considered for tenure and promotion that faculty will be active in teaching, research and service.

6. **Develop and participate in collaborative activities with social agencies, communities, organizations, and government that will enhance student learning, enrich faculty research and teaching, and promote human and societal well-being.** Faculty in the School of Social Work understand that collaborative activities with colleagues in agencies, communities and governmental agencies not only in the U.S., but also throughout the world, are essential for student and faculty learning. Faculty are productive researchers working with agencies and communities to understand social problems and to improve lives and social work practice. Students engage in practicums and other collaborative experiences with communities and agencies, and, in doing so, contribute knowledge and skills. The School also supports collaborations with other educational and research institutions. These collaborations allow those involved to make better use of scarce resources and allow the school to contribute to the community in a much broader way than would be possible otherwise.

**These goals are consistent with the land-grant public service mission of the University, the BSW feasibility study, and the educational mission statement of CSWE.**

### **Overview of BSW Curriculum**

There are two sets of requirements students must meet in order to obtain their BSW degree.

1. University's General Education requirements
2. School of Social Work requirements

### **BSW Core Requirements**

**Social Work 2000**, Social Work and Social Issues

Prerequisites: Sociology 1010 or Psychology 1003

**Social Work 2001**, Social Work and Social Issues Lab

Prerequisites: Simultaneous with SOC WK 2000

**Social Work 2200**, Social Welfare as a Social Institution

Prerequisites: Social Work 2000 or consent of instructor

**Social Work 3100**, Introduction to Strategies for Social Work Practice

Prerequisites: Social Work 2200, Psychology 1003, and Sociology 1010, or permission of the instructor.

**Social Work 3210**, Social Issues and Social Policy Development

Prerequisites: Social Work 2200, Political Science 1100, and Economics 1000 or 1005.

**Social Work 3410**, Research Design in Social Work

Prerequisite: Satisfaction of math proficiency requirement and either Sociology 3220, Psychology 2201, or Crimin 2220

**Social Work 3510, Human Behavior in the Social Environment**

Prerequisites: Biology 1012 and Psychology/ Sociology 2160, or permission of the instructor.

**Social Work 3700, Diversity and Social Justice**

Prerequisites: Psychology/Sociology 2160 and Social Work 3100 taken prior or concurrently

**Social Work 4110, Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Prerequisites: Social Work 3100, 3510, and 3700. (must also be admitted to the social work program)

**Social Work 4300, Social Work Practice with Communities**

Prerequisites: Social Work 3210 (may be taken concurrently), senior standing.

**Social Work 4350, Human Service Organizations**

Prerequisites: Political Science 1100, Psychology/Sociology 2160, and admission to the BSW program or consent of instructor

**Social Work 4800, Supervised Field Experience in Social Work I**

Prerequisites: Social Work 3100; Social Work 4110 must be taken concurrently or prior to Social Work 4800. Consent of the instructor is required.

**Social Work 4801, Integrative Field Experience Seminar I**

Prerequisite: Concurrent enrollment in Social Work 4800. Consent of the instructor is required.

**Social Work 4850, Supervised Field Experience in Social Work II**

Prerequisites: Social Work 4800, Social Work 4801. Consent of the instructor is required.

**Social Work 4851, Integrative Field Experience Seminar II**

Prerequisite: Concurrent enrollment in Social Work 4850. Consent of the instructor is required.

**Before students will be accepted into Social Work 4800, they must have been accepted into the social work program, and they must attend a special pre-practicum workshop which meets for two sessions during the preceding semester.** This workshop assists students in selection of field placements and helps identify learning objectives for the practicum experience.

Two semesters (each consisting of 240 hours) of practicum are required in order to graduate

**RELATED AREA REQUIREMENTS**

Select one of the following:

**Biology 1012, General Biology**

**Biology 1102, Human Biology**

**Biology 1131**, Human Physiology and Anatomy I

**Biology 1141**, Human Physiology and Anatomy II

**Economics 1000**, Introduction to the American Economy or **Economics 1005**, Family Economic and Household Development

**Political Science 1100**, Introduction to American Politics

**Psychology 1003**, General Psychology

**Sociology 1010**, Introduction to Sociology

**Sociology/Psychology 2160**, Social Psychology

**Sociology 3220**, Quantitative Data Analysis in Social Science Research (or Psychology 2201 or Criminology 2220)

**In addition to the courses listed on the previous page, at least 9 hours must be taken in social work, sociology, psychology, economics, political science, criminology & criminal justice, gender studies, gerontology, child advocacy studies, or anthropology at the 2000 level or above. Social Work courses taken in fulfillment of this requirement will be applied toward the maximum of 50 hours allowed in social work.**

### **Additional Information**

1. Each student must contact their advisor before applying for practicum. This is generally done immediately prior to entering the senior year. After the faculty advisor signs the practicum application, the Assistant Director of Field Education will review each application before final approval is given.
2. A student will not be allowed to enroll in a practicum if they have:
  - A. Any incomplete or delayed grades
  - B. Not completed the mathematics proficiency requirement
  - C. Fewer than 90 credit hours by the time practicum begins
  - D. Less than a 2.5 GPA in social work and related area requirements
3. No student can enroll in the practicum program without the Office of Field Education consent and participation in the special pre-practicum workshops

**The “Ideal” Social Work Curriculum**

The following is a sample 4-year program which will allow students to complete the program in a timely manner, meeting all the degree requirements.

**Sample Four Year Program**

**First Year**

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Psychology 1003	3
Sociology 1010	3
Biology 1012	3
English 1100	3
General Education	3

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Economics 1000 or 1005	3
Human Biology 1102	3
General Education	3
Math 1020 or 1030	3
Elective or minor	3

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

**Second Year**

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 2000	3
Soc. Work 2001	1
Pol. Sci. 1100	3
General Education	6
Elective or minor	3

*TOTAL-16 Hours*

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 2200	3
Psych. 2160	3
Soc. Science Elec.*	3
Elective or minor	3
General Education	3

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

**Third Year**

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 3100 (apply to SW program)	3
Soc. Work 3510	3
<i>Soc 3220, Crim 2220, or Psy 2201</i>	3-4
English 3100 or 3120	3
Soc. Science Elective	3

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 4110	3
<i>Soc. Work 3700</i>	3
Soc. Work 3210	3
<i>Soc. Work 3410</i>	3
Soc. Science Elective	3

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

**Fourth Year**

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 4800	4
Soc. Work 4801	2
Soc. Work 4300	3
<i>Soc. Work 4350</i>	3
Elective or minor	3

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 4850	4
Soc. Work 4851	2
Elective or minor	7-8

*TOTAL-15 Hours*

**Students need 120 hours to graduate.**

### **Organization of BSW Practicum Experience**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) refers to field education as the “signature pedagogy” in social work education (Educational Policy 2.2). The practicum provides students the opportunity to draw upon the theories and practice skills they learn in the classroom and apply them to the practice setting. By demonstrating specific practice behaviors, students are challenged to master the 9 core competencies outlined by the CSWE.

Some general field placement goals include:

- Integrating social work theory and practice
- Deepening understanding of social work principles, concepts, and values
- Refinement of social work practice skills
- Increasing self-awareness
- Learning to use supervision and feedback constructively
- Developing an understanding of agency functioning and organizational dynamics
- Beginning the professional socialization process by observing and interacting with social work professionals
- Learning to perform a social work role in a human service agency
- Expanding understanding of how social policy applies to specific practice situations and target populations
- Increasing knowledge of the social service delivery system
- Refining oral and written communication skills
- Providing opportunities to work with diverse populations
- Acquainting students with research and evaluation methodology
- Identifying areas of interest and areas for professional development

Practicum placement at UM-St. Louis is a structured, self-selection process. BSW students perform 480 hours of practicum (240 hours per semester) in agency sites that provide the opportunity for them to engage in generalist social work practice activities with populations of interest to them. Specific assignments are based on a learning agreement developed between a student and an agency and include core competencies, behaviors students will be engaged in to meet the competencies, and methods used for evaluation. Although all students must engage in 9 core competencies over 2 semesters, tasks will vary.

Students receive four credit hours per semester for the agency practicum experience and two credit hours for the companion seminar courses - SW 4801 and SW 4851.

Topics for the first semester of the practicum seminar focus on direct practice issues. Students keep a journal that links class work with the practicum experience and students are expected to engage in self-reflective reporting to learn about themselves as they work as professional helpers. Administrative issues such as agency structure, agency management, advocacy, and program evaluation are topics for the second semester. This allows students to integrate both micro and macro level practice approaches into their field placement.

**A few special notes about practicum:**

*Students must work a minimum of 12 hours per week at the practicum site in order to complete the 240 hours by the end of the semesters. The standard number of hours per week is typically more than this.*

*Practicum work shifts are limited to 12 hours a day.*

*Academic credit for life experiences and previous work experience will not be granted in lieu of the field practicum courses.*

*Students must have a practicum site secured by the first seminar meeting date or they may not move forward with practicum that semester. Students must start their practicum hours the first week of the semester for which they are enrolled in practicum.*

**BSW Competencies**

**Students will be engaged in the following five competencies for their first semester of practicum (4800):**

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

- Behavior 1.1: Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- Behavior 1.2: Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- Behavior 1.3: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- Behavior 1.4: Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;
- Behavior 1.5: Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.** Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the

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

- Behavior 2.1: Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences;
- Behavior 2.2: Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

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

- Behavior 6.1: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 6.2: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

**Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.** Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- Behavior 7.1: Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 7.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 7.3: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 7.4: Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.** Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- Behavior 8.1: Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 8.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 8.3: Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- Behavior 8.4: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 8.5: Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

**In the second semester (4850), students will be engaged in the following four competencies:**

**Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.** Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and

responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- Behavior 3.1: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

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

- Behavior 4.1: Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

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

- Behavior 5.1: Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- Behavior 5.2: Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

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

- Behavior 9.1: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes;
- Behavior 9.2: Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

## ***MSW Program***

### **Program Description**

The MSW Program in the School of Social Work at the University of Missouri-St. Louis is designed to prepare students to be competent professional social work practitioners. Graduates will have the knowledge, skills and values for direct social work practice with individuals and families, or the knowledge, skills, and values to effectively manage and lead non-profit and public human service agencies and engage in community development and policy advocacy. Social justice and trauma-informed principles will guide graduates in their practice at all levels of intervention particularly with persons who are oppressed because of their race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation or physical or mental ability.

The MSW program requires 60 hours of graduate coursework. However, a student who has earned a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) within the past seven years or who has taken graduate coursework, comparable to that required for our program, in another social work program or another department at UM – St. Louis or another university may receive credit toward the 60-hour requirement or, by passing a test-out exam, have content waived.

MSW students upon admission can choose from two program options (in-person or live/virtual). Students who choose the in-person option can enroll in classes full-time (taking at least nine credits) or part-time (less than nine credits) and complete the program in two-six years. The live/virtual program is a highly structured, family practice program and only offered as a part-time option with program completion in a maximum of five years (for non-advanced standing students) and three years for those with advanced standing.

The MSW has two levels of study. In the first year, students complete 30 graduate credit hours of coursework, identified as *foundation* content. In the second year of study, students complete another 30 credit hours of coursework in their *concentrations*.

The two *concentrations* offered in the MSW program at UMSL are:

- Family Practice
- Leadership and Social Change

Students complete the foundation practicum (300 hours) in their first thirty hours of the MSW program. Students entering with a BSW degree may be exempted from the foundation practicum. The concentration practicum (divided into two courses, 300 hours each) is completed during the second half of the MSW program. The MSW program curriculum at UMSL was developed in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards developed by the Council on Social Work Education.

### **Goals of the Master of Social Work Program**

**The goals of the MSW program of the University of Missouri- St. Louis are to:**

1. **Prepare professional social workers with the knowledge, skills, values and ethics for effective social work practice.** Students learn to engage in professional behavior, to evaluate that behavior and adjust their behavior to engage in more effective practice. They are educated to intervene – at individual, family, group, organization, community, and policy

levels, and using generalist and problem-solving perspectives, integrate social work knowledge and skills with an understanding of social issues from local, national, and global perspectives.

2. **Prepare social work students to analyze and address dynamic issues and challenges facing diverse populations and to promote social justice and positive social change.** The School educates graduate level social work students for advanced practice with children, older adults, and families, and for leadership roles in community organizations. Students gain understanding of social problems and social issues, and how to build capacity and provide resources and opportunities, especially to populations affected by poverty, violence, and/or discrimination. Students are prepared to move into leadership positions, where they will promote social change and economic and social justice.
3. **Provide a professional social work education to a diverse body of students, who desire a public university education in social work in St. Louis.** Students are offered flexible educational opportunities, including course schedules and practicum placements that acknowledge their traditional or non-traditional student status. Diversity is embraced, as faculty and staff work with students individually, in groups, and in classes to maximize learning and professional development.
4. **Prepare students to conduct and utilize research to respond effectively to dynamic social contexts, issues and problems found in social work practice.** The promotion of life-long learning – including continuing professional education, on-going assessment of practice skills, critical analysis of economic and social structures and policies, and possible doctoral education – occurs through coursework, faculty mentoring, and continuing education programs offered by the School.
5. **Provide educational opportunities and diverse learning environments in partnership with public and private graduate social work, and related programs.** Students have opportunities to earn certificates in specialized areas, to participate in a university consortium for field education program among all St. Louis social work schools, to engage in special learning experiences (e.g., practicum placements for students interested in schools), to interact with students elsewhere in the state through distance learning, to access the shared library resources of the majority of institutions of higher education in the state, to participate in courses in other departments and institutions, and to participate in scholarly and professional conferences and other learning opportunities.
6. **Contribute to solving local, regional, and global problems and to promoting social change through teaching, research, and service.** The graduate faculty of the School of Social Work has expertise in social work education, research and scientific inquiry, micro and macro practice, and policy development. In their work, they focus on excellence in teaching, productive research agendas, and service to local, national, and international organizations. Furthermore, faculty and staff work closely with colleagues and institutions in St. Louis and elsewhere to maximize their capabilities and impact in teaching, research, and service.

**These goals are consistent with the land-grant public service mission of the University, the MSW feasibility study, and the educational mission statement of CSWE.**

### *Overview of MSW Curriculum*

#### **Foundation Content**

The first 30 credit hours of the MSW curriculum is comprised of our foundation content and emphasize generalist social work practice. Students take courses, which provide a common base of knowledge across all practice settings and populations. Students gain the basic knowledge and skills to intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities and can apply this generalist perspective to advanced social work practice.

Upon completion of these 30 foundation credit hours, students will have the core knowledge, skills, and values of the profession to move into an area of concentration based on their career interests. Students cannot proceed to their concentration choice without having successfully completed most foundation courses and cannot begin their concentration practicum until having successfully completed all 30 credits of the foundation curriculum.

It is anticipated that students who successfully complete the foundation courses will have gained and will be able to demonstrate (in observable ways) a measurable degree of achievement of the following underlined competencies. Each competency is followed by ways each will be observed and measured.

#### **Foundation Competencies**

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

- Behavior 1.1: Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- Behavior 1.2: Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;

- Behavior 1.3: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- Behavior 1.4: Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- Behavior 1.5: Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

- Behavior 2.1: Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- Behavior 2.2: Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- Behavior 2.3: Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

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

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

- Behavior 3.1: Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- Behavior 3.2: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from

multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- **Behavior 4.1:** Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- **Behavior 4.2:** Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- **Behavior 4.3:** Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

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

- **Behavior 5.1:** Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- **Behavior 5.2:** Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; and
- **Behavior 5.3:** Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

- **Behavior 6.1:** Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- **Behavior 6.2:** Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

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

- Behavior 7.1: Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 7.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 7.3: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- Behavior 7.4: Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

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

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

- Behavior 8.1: Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 8.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- Behavior 8.3: Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- Behavior 8.4: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- Behavior 8.5: Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

**Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.** Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- Behavior 9.1: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- Behavior 9.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- Behavior 9.3: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and  
Behavior 9.4: Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

### **Concentration Options**

At the time that students complete the Admissions packet, they are asked to identify their career interests as they apply to the two concentrations offered in the MSW program: Family Practice and Leadership and Social Change. Each concentration requires completion of 30 hours of coursework (in addition to the 30 foundation credits), including 6 hours of advanced field practicum.

### **Family Practice Concentration**

Students wishing to work primarily with individuals and families will elect the Family Practice Concentration. Upon graduation, the new MSW will have the knowledge and skills to work in child welfare agencies, family service agencies, mental health clinics, health-care organizations, family violence service agencies, substance abuse prevention and treatment programs, correctional organizations, and other such settings.

The following tables are samples of the Family Practice concentration curriculum for full-time and part-time students. Three to six hours may be taken in the summer. Students with advanced standing may complete the program in a shorter timeframe. Due to varying start dates and advanced standing options, students matriculate through the program at various rates.

SAMPLE PLANS: Family Practice Concentration

Full-Time Students (Non-advanced standing)

Year 1	Year 2
<p><b>Fall</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5300 Community Practice &amp; Social Change (3)</li> <li>• SW 5350 Social Work &amp; Human Service Organizations (3)</li> <li>• SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)</li> <li>• SW 5700 Diversity &amp; Social Justice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6160 Advanced Practice Strategies Across the Life Span (3)</li> <li>• SW 6200 Family Policy or SW 6250 Social &amp; Economic Policy (3)</li> <li>• SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) 300 hours</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5200 Social Policy &amp; Social Services (3)</li> <li>• SW 5150 Perspectives on Trauma and Crisis for Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5450 Research Methods &amp; Analysis (3)</li> <li>• SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4)</li> <li>• SW 5801 Foundation Field Practicum Seminar (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6150 Theory &amp; Practice with Families (3)</li> <li>• SW 6400 Practice &amp; Program Evaluation (3)</li> <li>• SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) 300 hours</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>

Part-Time Students (Non-advanced standing) \*

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5350 Social Work &amp; Human Service Organizations (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5300 Community Practice &amp; Social Change (3)</li> <li>• SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6160 Advanced Practice Strategies Across the Life Span (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5200 Social Policy &amp; Social Services (3)</li> <li>• SW 5150 Perspectives on Trauma and Crisis for Social Work Practice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5450 Research Methods &amp; Analysis II (3)</li> <li>• SW 5700 Diversity &amp; Social Justice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6150 Theory &amp; Practice with Families (3)</li> <li>• SW 6200 Family Policy or SW 6250 Social &amp; Economic Development Policy (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6400 Practice &amp; Program Evaluation (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Summer</b> (6 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4)</li> <li>• SW 5801 Foundation Field Practicum Seminar (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer</b> (6 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>	

\*Note: The curriculum plan for students enrolled in the Live/Virtual program will look like the sample plan for the Family Practice concentration outlined above. Live/Virtual students can take electives in any format they desire (e.g., virtually, asynchronous online, in-person, etc.), and the

Live/Virtual students who received advanced standing can matriculate through the program more quickly.

The Family Practice concentration competencies, which are operationalized below, were developed after consideration of the knowledge, skills, and values that faculty believe are needed to be effective MSW family practitioners.

## MSW Family Practice Competencies

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.** Advanced Family Practice social workers recognize the importance of the therapeutic relationship. They are able to apply the person-in-environment and the strengths perspectives when working with families. They incorporate the professional use of self with clients in family practice settings and adhere to ethical guidelines of professional behavior. Practitioners in clinical social work recognize their role on inter-professional teams in their practice with families. They recognize the need for ethical use of technology tools in their clinical social work practice. They use self-reflection to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice. They demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and oral, written and electronic communication. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 1.1: Effectively use personal reflection, self- correction, supervision, and consultation to enhance their clinical practice;
- Behavior 1.2: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior and appearance when engaging with client and inter-professional teams;
- Behavior 1.3: Uses person-in-environment, strengths perspectives, and/or other social work frameworks to guide therapeutic relationships; and
- Behavior 1.4: Apply models of ethical decision making incorporating the NASW Code of Ethics and other relevant ethical guidelines to guide professional decisions as they relate to social work family practice and use of technology.

**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.** Advanced Family Practice social workers demonstrate an understanding of how diversity and difference in life experiences affect a client's response to help-seeking behaviors and how that can be used in building a therapeutic relationship. They understand the dimensions of diversity as the intersectionality of multiple factors that may lead to oppression, poverty, and alienation as well as privilege, power and acclaim. They understand how cultural diversity can affect explanations of illness, help-seeking, and healing practices. They use this information to enhance well-being, and to identify and use practitioner/client differences and life experiences from a strengths perspective to guide practice choices. They understand that clients are experts in their own lives and experiences and seek better understanding of those experiences. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 2.1: Engage clients as experts to better understand how diversity and difference shapes unique life experiences and strengths, and utilize this information to inform practice decisions; and
- Behavior 2.2: Apply and communicate an understanding of how diversity and difference shape clients' life experiences.

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

Advanced Family Practice social workers understand that every person in our society should have fundamental human rights, and when these rights are missing, clients are unable to function fully in society. Social workers use their knowledge of human need and social justice to implement strategies that will improve the lives of clients within their communities. They understand the globalization of our society and understand how legislation and program services are developed and funded. They use their skills to advocate for effective practices that eliminate structural barriers and ensure that resources, rights, and responsibilities are equitably distributed to support family functioning. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 3.1: Develop approaches to client treatment that take into account client's difficulties created by social, economic, and/or environmental injustice, particularly in terms of inability to access services;
- Behavior 3.2: Engage in social justice advocacy and/or other strategies to ensure that clients receive services they need; and
- Behavior 3.3: Analyze policies and program services through the lens of social justice and advocate for policies that ensure equitable distribution of resources.

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

Advanced Family Practice social workers understand when to use qualitative and quantitative research to advance social work practice and evaluate their own practice. They understand how to use principles of scientific inquiry and incorporate culturally informed and ethically based approaches to knowledge building. They understand the need to learn from other disciplines and sources of knowledge. They are able to evaluate this research and to translate research findings into effective, evidence-based practice to improve family functioning. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 4.1: Identify and use evidence informed practices in work with clients;
- Behavior 4.2: Demonstrate ability to evaluate own practice or that of an agency; and
- Behavior 4.3: Translate research evidence to inform and improve their clinical practice, policy, and service delivery.

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.** Advanced Family Practice social workers recognize the role of policy development and implementation within their practice settings. They realize that human rights and social justice are mediated by policy at the federal, state, and local levels and understand their role in policy development and practice. They work actively to make changes in policy that affect the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of advanced family social work practice. They use their understanding of the history and current structures of family social policy and services that impact their clients' well-being, service delivery, and access to social services. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 5.1: Identify agency, community, state and federal policies/laws that impact client well-being, and analyze their impact on clients;
- Behavior 5.2: Will communicate with stakeholders or others the implications of policy and/or policy changes for clients; and
- Behavior 5.3: Engage in and advocate for political action to inform legislators and policy makers about the ways in which unjust policies/laws affect marginalized and other populations whom they serve.

**Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.** Advanced Family Practice social workers utilize engagement as necessary for working with, or on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities. They critically evaluate and apply family practice models to understand engagement and relationship building across systems. They also understand the clinical communication skills needed to engage diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may influence their engagement with clients, and they are able to use this awareness to modify their behavior when interacting with clients. Advanced Family Practice social workers recognize and value the importance of human relationships, particularly the use of inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 6.1: Uses empathy, active listening and other interpersonal skills to develop relationships with clients and constituents;
- Behavior 6.2: Applies culturally sensitive practices when developing therapeutic relationships with clients and constituents;
- Behavior 6.3: Are aware of and can modify affective reactions that may impact their relationships with clients; and
- Behavior 6.4: Identify ways to enhance collaboration with clients, promote their empowerment, and encourage them to provide feedback to other members of the inter-professional team as appropriate.

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

Advanced Family Practice social workers understand that data gathering, and assessment are important components of social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand and use methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies. They use family practice models and other frameworks to understand the data they have obtained and inform application of evidence-based practices. They recognize the larger practice context in the assessment process and participate in inter-professional collaboration when appropriate. Social workers also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their decision-making and response to clients in assessment interviews. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 7.1: Use a multi-dimensional approach to collect and organize information received from clients and other constituents; and
- Behavior 7.2: Work with client/s to develop mutually agreed on goals and objectives based on assessment tools utilized by the organization, client values and preferences, observations by the inter-professional team (if applicable), and knowledge of clinical intervention.

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

Advanced Family Practice social workers understand that intervention is an on-going component of the dynamic and interactive social work process with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Advanced Family Practice social workers are knowledgeable about family practice models and critically apply these frameworks to clinical intervention with individuals and families while recognizing the importance of groups, organizations, and communities in individuals' lives. Advanced Family Practice social workers

critically appraise and select evidence-informed interventions taking into account clients’ diversity and values when selecting interventions. Advanced Family Practice social workers apply appropriate evidence-informed interventions and monitor and modify interventions as needed. Social workers understand the importance of interdisciplinary, inter-professional and inter-organizational collaboration when planning and delivering any intervention. Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 8.1: Through research, critically appraise family practice models and evidence-informed interventions;
- Behavior 8.2: Select appropriate evidence informed interventions based on the assessment and knowledge of clinical interventions, values and preferences of clients and constituents, and with input from the inter-professional team;
- Behavior 8.3: Collaborate with inter-professional and inter-organizational teams to implement interventions; and
- Behavior 8.4: Monitor interventions and program processes and modify as needed.

**Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.** Advanced Family Practice social workers understand that evaluation of practice is necessary for working with, or on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities. They recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand the importance of evaluating and applying knowledge of family practice models when evaluating practice outcomes. Social workers are cognizant of how diversity affects evaluations, how practitioners’ values may skew interpretation of measures, and when to use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating practice outcome and effectiveness.

Advanced Family Practice social workers:

- Behavior 9.1: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of practice, keeping in mind how diversity and other factors may affect outcome results; and
- Behavior 9.2: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes, using qualitative and/or quantitative measures.

**Leadership and Social Change Concentration**

Students wishing to work in human service agencies and organizations as program planners, policymakers, supervisors, administrators, or community development specialists may elect the Leadership and Social Change concentration.

The following tables are samples of the Leadership and Social Change concentration curriculum for full-time and part-time students. Three to six hours may be taken in the summer. Students with advanced standing may complete the program in a shorter timeframe. Due to varying start dates and advanced standing options, students matriculate through the program at various rates.

SAMPLE PLANS: Leadership and Social Change

Full-Time Students (Non-Advanced Standing)

Year 1	Year 2
<i>Fall</i> (15 credit hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> </ul>	<i>Fall</i> (15 credit hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5300 Community Practice &amp; Social Change (3)</li> <li>• SW 5350 Social Work &amp; Human Service Organizations (3)</li> <li>• SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)</li> <li>• SW 5700 Diversity &amp; Social Justice (3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6250 Social &amp; Economic Development Policy or SW 6200 Family Policy (3)</li> <li>• SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) 300 hours</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5200 Social Policy &amp; Social Services (3)</li> <li>• SW 5150 Perspectives on Trauma and Crisis for Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4)</li> <li>• SW 5801 Foundation Field Practicum Seminar (2)</li> <li>• SW 5450 Research Methods &amp; Analysis II (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6300 Leadership &amp; Management in Non-Profit Organizations (3)</li> <li>• SW 6380 Advanced Community Development Theory &amp; Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 6400 Practice &amp; Program Evaluation (3)</li> <li>• SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) 300 hours</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>

Part-Time Students (Non-Advanced Standing)

<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5350 Social Work &amp; Human Service Organizations (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5300 Community Practice &amp; Social Change (3)</li> <li>• SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6250 Social &amp; Economic Development Policy or 6200 Family Policy (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5200 Social Policy &amp; Social Services (3)</li> <li>• SW 5150 Perspectives on Trauma and Crisis for Social Work Practice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5450 Research Methods &amp; Analysis II (3)</li> <li>• SW 5700 Diversity &amp; Social Justice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6300 Leadership &amp; Mgmt. in Non-Profit</li> <li>• SW 6380 Advanced Community Development Theory &amp; Practice (3)</li> <li>Organizations (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6400 Practice &amp; Program Evaluation (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Summer</b> (6 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4)</li> <li>• SW 5801 Foundation Field Practicum Seminar (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer</b> (6 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>	

The core competencies that students in the Leadership and Social Change concentration are expected to achieve are listed below.

Year 1	Year 2
<p><b>Fall</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5300 Community Practice &amp; Social Change (3)</li> <li>• SW 5350 Social Work &amp; Human Service Organizations (3)</li> <li>• SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)</li> <li>• SW 5700 Diversity &amp; Social Justice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6250 Social &amp; Economic Development Policy or SW 6200 Family Policy (3)</li> <li>• SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) 300 hours</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5200 Social Policy &amp; Social Services (3)</li> <li>• SW 5150 Perspectives on Trauma and Crisis for Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4)</li> <li>• SW 5801 Foundation Field Practicum Seminar (2)</li> <li>• SW 5450 Research Methods &amp; Analysis II (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6300 Leadership &amp; Management in Non-Profit Organizations (3)</li> <li>• SW 6380 Advanced Community Development Theory &amp; Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 6400 Practice &amp; Program Evaluation (3)</li> <li>• SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) 300 hours</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>

Part-Time Students (Non-Advanced Standing)

<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3)</li> <li>• SW 5350 Social Work &amp; Human Service Organizations (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5300 Community Practice &amp; Social Change (3)</li> <li>• SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6250 Social &amp; Economic Development Policy or 6200 Family Policy (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5200 Social Policy &amp; Social Services (3)</li> <li>• SW 5150 Perspectives on Trauma and Crisis for Social Work Practice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5450 Research Methods &amp; Analysis II (3)</li> <li>• SW 5700 Diversity &amp; Social Justice (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6300 Leadership &amp; Mgmt. in Non-Profit</li> <li>• SW 6380 Advanced Community Development Theory &amp; Practice (3)</li> </ul> <p>Organizations (3)</p>	<p><b>Spring</b> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6400 Practice &amp; Program Evaluation (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Summer</b> (6 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4)</li> <li>• SW 5801 Foundation Field Practicum Seminar (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer</b> (6 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul>	

The core competencies that students in the Leadership and Social Change concentration are expected to achieve are listed below.

## **MSW Leadership and Social Change Competencies**

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.** Social workers in macro practice understand and ascribe the values and ethics advanced by NASW and CSWE for professional conduct. Macro practitioners recognize the distinction between personal and professional values, and also respect the varied value systems that are present within and between communities and organizations. Social workers engage in ongoing reflection of the relationship between their values, and their ability to engage in ethical practice with communities and organizations. Social workers must also be knowledgeable of materials designed to inform ethical decision making such as the IFSW/IASSW Ethics in Social Work: Statement of Principles for arriving at principled decisions concerning social justice and human rights. Social workers in macro practice know the historical roots of social work in community and organizational practice, recognize the importance of professional behavior, ongoing personal and professional development, and value the role of the community, organizations, and other professions when working in community and organizational settings. Social workers:

- Practice Behavior 1.1: Employ and document the use of a framework for ethical decision-making to anticipate and clarify conflicting values, ethical dilemmas, and decision options; and
- Practice Behavior 1.2: Identify the need and process for seeking supervision and consultation, as well as engaging in self-reflection to guide professional judgment and behavior.

**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.** Social workers in macro practice recognize and value diversity and the role that it plays in shaping individual and collective identities. Dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, race, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, religion, political ideology, immigration status, sex and sexual orientation; and tribal sovereignty status. Social workers critically assess the impact that diversity and difference have on communities including oppression, discrimination, privilege and power. Social workers engage in practice that acknowledges and appreciates diversity and uses the strengths of diverse life experiences to build inclusive communities and multicultural organization. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 2.1: Understand and describe the dynamics of cross-cultural and inclusion related conflicts, tensions, misunderstandings, or opportunities;
- Practice Behavior 2.2: Develop a plan for continuous learning/improvement in diversity, inclusion, and cultural humility; and
- Practice Behavior 2.3: Seek and utilize feedback from diverse sources to strengthen practice.

**Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.** Social workers in macro practice have knowledge of historical and contemporary forms of oppression and exclusion, their root causes and the mechanisms that reproduce them. They strategically use their expertise in organizational and policy analysis, management, community development or community mobilization to effectively counteract oppression, advocate for human rights and promote social, economic and environmental justice. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 3.1: Develop an advanced understanding of current policy pertaining to social, economic, and environmental justice; and
- Practice Behavior 3.2: Demonstrate an advanced understanding of service delivery in a specialized area of practice through actions that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers in macro practice use quantitative and qualitative research to understand the nature of policies, organizations and communities. They also continuously search for existing best practices that improve the ability of these macro systems to promote well-being, inclusiveness and social justice. Social workers seek to expand the profession's understanding of culturally informed and ethical macro system interventions by using outcome evaluation approaches and meaningful involvement of communities and organizations. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 4.1: Critically apply practice experience to the conceptualization of the SW6400 research project;
- Practice Behavior 4.2: In conjunction with SW6400 develop appropriate research designs and/or generate research to inform practice/policy/service delivery; and
- Practice Behavior 4.3: Critically apply research to social work practice with individuals, families, groups, families, groups, organizations and communities.

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.** Social workers in macro practice understand how a vast array of policies at the local, state, national, and global levels influence the design and delivery of services, as well as how policy shapes the extent to which environments are supportive and inclusive of diverse groups. They apply critical thinking to analyze the effects of social policy on interconnected domains of well-being, with special attention to clients from marginalized groups and facing cumulative disadvantages. Social workers value the profession's role in enhancing the capacity of individuals, families, organizations and communities to expand access to the intended benefits of social policies. Social workers are skilled at formulating arguments in support of evidence-informed policymaking, and they know how to engage with coalitions addressing key policy issues that affect individuals, families, organizations and communities. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 5.1: Apply practice experience to the implementation of social policy for diverse clients, systems and constituencies;
- Practice Behavior 5.2: Assess how specialized policies and social delivery initiatives across systems of care affect social service provision; and
- Practice Behavior 5.3: Understand the historical and current contexts that have influenced the development and implementation of social policies in a specialized area of practice.

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

**Communities.** Social workers in macro practice engage with organizations and communities and the groups, families and individuals that are part of those macro systems to ensure that the worth and dignity of all persons are considered. Social workers understand participatory methods and utilize them to ensure that authentic participation occurs throughout all organizational, community, and policy processes, including assessment, planning, and implementation. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 6.1: Demonstrate an **engagement** strategy based upon: knowledge of relevant theoretical perspectives; empirical evidence; clients' and constituents' preferences; and practice contexts; and
- Practice Behavior 6.2: Identify and utilize personal and professional strengths and skills, and address barriers to **engagement** with diverse constituencies.

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

Social workers in macro practice utilize the systems theory and a strengths-based framework to conduct assessments. They select appropriate assessment tools, methods and technology, and evaluate, adapt, and modify them, as needed, to enhance their validity in working with diverse clients. They develop skills in assessment and communication with key constituencies to choose the most effective practice strategies. Social workers understand how their own experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 7.1: Demonstrate an **assessment** strategy based upon: knowledge of relevant theoretical perspectives; empirical evidence; clients' and constituents' goals and preferences; and practice contexts; and
- Practice Behavior 7.2: Identify and utilize personal and professional strengths and skills, and address barriers to **assessment** with diverse constituencies.

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

Social workers in macro practice identify policies, organizations and communities as targets of change (client) planning and applying interventions through a variety of models, methods, strategies, and tactics identified as appropriate to the local, regional, national and international contexts. Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships and design interventions that promote connections between people and places as well as those between people and social systems. Cultural and political contexts are considered in planning and implementing interventions and all stages of intervention development and implementation engage communities, organizations and their constituencies to leverage their strengths and address needs. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 8.1: Demonstrate a strategy to **intervene** based upon: knowledge of relevant theoretical perspectives; empirical evidence; clients' and constituents' goals and preferences; and practice contexts; and
- Practice Behavior 8.2: Identify and utilize personal and professional strengths and skills, and address barriers to **intervention** with diverse constituencies.

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

Social workers in macro practice integrate sources of knowledge—including social work theories and research, input from constituencies, and awareness of broader societal trends—within evaluation processes. They value the role of various stakeholders as contributors to evaluation and adapt research designs and measurement tools to fully include them across diverse practice settings. Social workers communicate evaluation findings and implications for improvement across all levels of practice and policy. Social Workers:

- Practice Behavior 9.1: Demonstrate a strategy to **evaluate** practice, process, or outcomes based upon: knowledge of relevant theoretical perspectives; empirical evidence; clients' and constituents' goals and preferences; and practice contexts; and

- Practice Behavior 9.2: Critically analyze, monitor, and/or **evaluate** intervention processes, outcomes, or barriers to improve practice effectiveness.

**Focus Area (optional)**

Students may – but are not required to – select a Focus Area. There are two Focus Areas.

- Health and Behavioral Health
- School Social Work

Focus Areas can be earned within 60 credit hours. They will typically take all a student’s elective options. Some focus areas may require specific policy or practice courses from the core concentration. **Students must complete at least one graduate concentration practicum (300 clock hours) in a selected focus area.**

Focus on Health and Behavioral Health

This focus area is designed to prepare MSW students for clinical social work practice in health, behavioral health or integrated care settings. To qualify for the Health and Behavioral Health focus area, students will complete:

- Family Policy (SW 6200) or Social and Economic Development Policy (SW6250)
- Integrated Health Care (SW 6444)
- Diagnosis & Related Pharmacology for Social Work Practice (SW 6630)
- Elective courses: 6 credits. Select electives with approval from the advisor

A “B” or better is required in each course. Students in this focus area must complete a practicum in a setting that provides physical and/or mental health diagnosis and treatment (inpatient, outpatient, or community-based).

Focus on School Social Work

This focus area is for students interested in acquiring the theory, knowledge, and skills required of social workers who work in school settings. School social workers work with children, youth, parents, teachers, school administration, and community partners to help students be as successful as possible in school. Through case management, crisis intervention, counseling, and prevention and intervention programs, school social workers help young people manage and/or overcome social, emotional, physical, or psychological challenges.

To qualify for the School Social Work focus area, students will complete and receive a grade of B or better in each of the following courses:

- Family Policy (SW 6200) or Social and Economic Development Policy (SW 6250)
- School Social Work Practice in Public Schools (SW 6640)
- Foundations of Inclusive Education (SPC-ED 6412)
- Elective courses: 6 credits. Select electives with approval from the advisor

Students in this focus area must complete a two-semester practicum (600 hours) in a public-school setting working with a range of ages. (Note: if a student is interested in certification in Illinois, 1000 hours of practicum - 400 foundation and 600 concentration - are needed.)

## Certificates (optional)

In addition to selecting one of the two concentrations, students may also choose to complete a certificate in a related area such as Gender Studies, Non-Profit Management and Leadership, or Bioethics. A complete listing of certificate programs and requirements can be found at [http://www.umsl.edu/bulletin/degree\\_programs.html](http://www.umsl.edu/bulletin/degree_programs.html). [Contact the MSW program director for additional information.](#)

### **Organization of MSW Practicum Experience**

The field practicum is an integral part of both the foundation and concentration curriculum of the MSW program. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) refers to field education as the “signature pedagogy” in social work education (Educational Policy 2.2). The practicum provides students the opportunity to draw upon the theories and practice skills they learn in the classroom and apply them to the practice setting. Students are offered social work experiences at increasing levels of complexity as they move through the practicum course sequence. By demonstrating specific practice behaviors, students are challenged to master the 9 core competencies outlined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Some general field placement goals include:

- integrating social work theory at all levels of practice (micro, mezzo and macro)
- deepening understanding of social work ethical principles, concepts, and values
- refinement of social work practice and critical skills
- increasing self-awareness
- learning to use supervision and feedback constructively
- developing an understanding of agency functioning and organizational dynamics
- beginning the professional socialization process by observing and interacting with social work professionals
- learning to perform a social work role in a human service agency
- expanding understanding of how social policy applies to specific practice situations and target populations
- increasing knowledge of the social service delivery system
- refining oral and written communication skills
- providing opportunities to work with diverse populations
- acquainting students with research and evaluation methodology
- identifying areas of interest and areas for professional development

The foundation practicum (**SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I**) is designed to provide students with a generalist social work practice experience. This is a 300-clock hour practicum (including a minimum of 50 hours of direct client contact), which requires two and one-half days per week of work during one semester. Typically, full- time students will take this course in the spring semester of the first year and part-time students will take this course in the spring term of their second year. In exceptional situations part-time students, with the approval of the Director of Field Education, may be granted the option of completing the foundation field experience over two semesters, beginning in the spring semester, and extending into the following summer, or beginning in the summer semester and extending into the following fall semester. (Students must

work a minimum of 12 hour per week at the practicum site). Shifts are limited to a maximum of 12 hours in any one day. Students receive four graduate credits for successful completion of the foundation field practicum. Students choose their foundation practicum from among agencies that have agreed to provide this generalist experience to MSW students.

**Students must have completed, or be concurrently enrolled in, all foundation courses (except for SW5450) and have a GPA of 3.0 or better to register for the foundation field experience. Students on academic probation or on restricted status will not be permitted to begin Graduate Field Practicum I.**

In addition to taking the foundation field practicum, students take a 2-credit practicum seminar course (**SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar**) designed to examine the ethical and practice issues of the student placement. This course is taken concurrently with the foundation practicum. The course meets eight times during the semester for two hours. Students must begin practicum no later than one week following the first seminar class. Any student who has not secured a practicum in this time frame must drop the seminar course and wait until the next time SW5800 is offered to begin practicum and seminar.

The advanced concentration field practica (**SW 6800: Graduate Field Practicum II and SW 6850: Graduate Field Practicum III**) are selected by students to complement their career objectives. **Before entering advanced field practica students must have: a) completed all foundation courses and; b) completed or be concurrently enrolled in, at least one advanced practice course in their respective concentrations (Family Practice—SW6150 or SW6160 and Leadership and Social Change—SW6250, SW6300 or SW6380); c) a GPA of 3.0 or better.**

**Students on academic probation or on restricted status will not be permitted to begin Graduate Field Practicum II or III.** Students choose their concentration practica from among agencies that have agreed to provide these specialized experiences to MSW students. These practica reflect the student's choice of one of two possible concentrations:

- 1) Family Practice
- 2) Leadership and Social Change

Students work at the practicum site three full days per week for two semesters. Full-time students will typically complete their advanced field practica in the fall and spring terms of their second year, part-time students will typically complete these practica in the fourth year of their studies. By working three days per week in an agency for two semesters, students will have accrued 600 clock hours in practicum. A minimum of 50 hours per semester must be in the form of direct client contact. (In situations where working three days per week at the practicum site is not feasible, students may extend the practicum experience into the following semester). **The entire concentration field experience must be completed in one calendar year.** Typically, students complete both advanced practica at the same agency. They are given 6 graduate hours for completing the two semesters of practicum: 3 hours per semester. Students seeking optional areas of emphasis in Health and Behavioral Health or School Social Work must complete at least 300 hours of practicum in these specialized areas.

**Block placements** (completing both practica in one semester) **are allowed only in exceptional situations.** Students considering block placements should first speak with their advisor about their intentions. With the advisor's permission, the student should make this request in writing to the Director of Field Education. The student should outline the reasons for requesting the placement option. Permission to take a block field placement will only be granted in situations where it is determined by both the student's advisor and the Director of Field Education that such an arrangement is in the student's educational best interest.

**Students are expected to select a site for the concentration practicum that differs from the foundation practicum.** This is to ensure that students have exposure to a variety of learning experiences. **Students may request an exception to this policy by submitting a proposal in writing to their advisor the semester prior to enrollment in the concentration practica (SW 6800 & 6850).** The proposal must include: a rationale for remaining at the same site, explaining how the concentration experience will differ from the foundation experience, an explanation of why the student would not be able to get the same experience at another agency and how staying at the same site is in the student's best educational interest. Students' requests to remain at the same site will be reviewed by the advisor, as well as by the Office of Field Education, and approval will be granted only in exceptional circumstances and only if there is a compelling educational reason to do so.

**Students complete a total of 900 hours in practicum, 300 in foundation and 600 in advanced practicum.**

Students and departmental faculty use the practice-theory, policy and specialized research courses within their concentrations to discuss and review practicum issues to ensure integration of classroom content during the advanced practicum experience. For example, the practice-theory course of each concentration draws on examples from student practica to illustrate the concepts and skills taught in the course. Similarly, the policy courses use current issues that surface within the agencies to highlight the development, implementation and consequences of policies that affect clients. In the concentration-year research course, each student is expected to develop and implement a research study within her/his practicum setting. This experience integrates the content from the first-year research courses into the reality of agency-based research and program evaluation.

All graduate students in practicum must have an MSW supervisor with two years of post-master's experience. *Additionally, field instructors must be in their current position for at least one year before supervising a student.* Students must have passing grades in the field placement and must be ranked on average as "proficient" by the field instructor on the 9 core competencies outlined by the Council on Social Work Education during their final semester in practicum to graduate from the program. **Students who lack either the intellectual or emotional aptitude for professional practice, or who violate the code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers in field practica, will be reviewed for possible dismissal from the program.**

## ***Administration of Practicum***

### **Responsibilities of the Field Education Office**

The Director and Assistant Director of Field Education are responsible for the administration of the field practicum for MSW and BSW students, respectively. Their duties include:

- Identifying prospective practicum opportunities that meet the needs of BSW and MSW foundation and/or concentration students
- Identifying prospective practicum instructors within health and human service agencies in the metropolitan St. Louis area who are qualified to provide supervision of students.
- Providing orientation and on-going professional development in practicum-related issues to agency instructors. Orientation sessions for new instructors, Field Instructor certification sessions and professional workshop are held each year.
- Evaluating agency instructors using formal student feedback instruments as well as site evaluations by the Director and Assistant Director of Field Education. In instances in which problems of supervision are found, the field education faculty will document the problems and steps taken to remedy the problem. If problems cannot be resolved, the Field Instructor and/or agency will be removed from the approved list of practicum agencies and/or Field instructors.
- Helping students secure a practicum experience by providing orientation meetings, organizing an annual practicum fair, and providing individual advising sessions.
- Mediating problems between students and their practicum agencies, as necessary.

### **Practicum Site Selection Criteria**

The Director and Assistant Director of Field Education are responsible for negotiating practicum-site agreements with agencies that meet the following criteria:

- A clearly articulated agency mission and purpose that is compatible with the philosophy and purpose of social work.
- Agency functioning that is consistent with the [NASW Code of Ethics](#).
- Identification of agency staff who meet the requirements for practicum supervision of BSW and/or MSW students and who are willing to serve in this capacity.
- Provision of learning opportunities that meet the educational competencies of the BSW, MSW foundation and/or MSW concentration curriculum.
- Provision of staff time for planning student learning experiences, orientation to the agency (including safety training as appropriate) instruction, and evaluation of students.
- Facilitate research activities by students designed to evaluate professional practice.
- Administrative stability and staffing that assure continuity of instruction for students.
- Physical facilities that permit students adequate space for activities related to practicum objectives.

### **Field Instructor Qualifications**

The qualifications for instructors supervising students at the University of Missouri-St. Louis include:

- Possession of the BSW degree (for BSW students) or MSW degree (for BSW or MSW students). *Additionally, field instructors must be in their current position for at least one year before supervising a student.*
- A minimum of three years of post-degree experience (for a BSW supervising a BSW student) or post-master's social work practice for a minimum of two years (for an MSW supervising a BSW or MSW student).
- Demonstrated competency in the field of practice being used for the practicum.
- Interest in mentoring and supervising students and a willingness to make reasonable adjustments to their schedule to meet the learning needs of students.
- Active participation in or completion of an 18-hour field instructor certification program.
- Previous field instruction or supervisory experience is preferred.

In some cases, students are approved to receive task supervision from a person with a degree in a field related to social work, such as counseling. This individual would be designated as the 'task instructor' and would be responsible for the day to day tasks the student is working on. In these cases, the student still meets weekly with his/her/their Field Instructor who is ultimately responsible for the student's placement.

### **Evaluation of Students in Practicum**

The educational learning agreement is the mechanism by which the students, their supervisors and the faculty monitor and assess students' progress in the field. It clearly specifies core competencies, behaviors, and activities that the student will engage in to demonstrate those behaviors and methods for evaluation. The learning agreement is completed by the student and field instructor and must be approved by the Office of Field Education. For MSW students who are completing their concentration field experience, the students' faculty advisors must also approve the agreements. Field Instructors are encouraged to review learning agreements with their students during regular supervisory sessions. In addition, the faculty liaison meets with each student and their Field Instructor at least once during the first semester of placement. The faculty liaison reviews the learning agreement during this visit to assess progress towards completion of outlined tasks. If the learning agreement needs revisions or modifications, the faculty liaison will document and approve the changes. For students BSW or MSW students in two semester placements at the same site, the faculty liaison will phone the Field Instructor for an update on the student's continuing progress. A site visit will be schedule only at the request of the student or Field Instructor, or if the student did not perform satisfactorily during the first semester in practicum.

Regarding evaluation and grading, the following process will occur:

- Upon approval of the Student Learning Agreement by the Office of Field Education, each Field Instructor will receive a packet of information by e-mail that will contain three forms; the signed Learning Agreement; a mid-semester evaluation form; and a final evaluation form. These forms should be kept on file.
- Agency field instructors should meet with students weekly to provide ongoing feedback to the student about their progress. Periodic review of the student's learning agreement to assess progress towards mastering the competencies is recommended.

- At least once during the first semester in field (more often if necessary), the student's faculty liaison will meet with the Field Instructor and the student to assess the student's progress and address any concerns raised by any party involved. (For students BSW or MSW students in two semester placements at the same site, the faculty liaison will phone the Field Instructor for an update on the student's continuing progress. A site visit will be schedule only at the request of the student or Field Instructor, or if the student did not perform satisfactorily during the first semester in practicum.)
- At the mid-term point or when the student has completed approximately half of their field hours, the agency Field Instructor completes the mid-term evaluation form. The mid-term evaluation should be reviewed with the student and returned to the Office of Field Education.
- At the end of the semester, the agency Field Instructor completes and reviews with the student the final evaluation form. This form signed by both the student and field instructor should be e-mailed to the Office of Field Education by the date listed on the instructions received at the beginning of the semester. In order to graduate from the BSW program, students must achieve on average a level of 2.5 (on a 4 point scale) or better on the end of semester evaluation for the 9 core competencies outlined by the Council on Social Work Education. MSW students must achieve a level of "proficient" or 3 (on a 4-point scale) or better on the end of semester evaluation.

The student grade, assigned by the student's faculty liaison, is based on the agency Field Instructor's written mid- term and final evaluation of the student, and the mid-semester conference between the agency supervisor and the faculty liaison. Students will receive a grade of S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory).

### **Policy for Practicum Placement in Agency in Which Student Works as an Employee**

Students who wish to explore the possibility of using their place of paid employment as a field practicum assignment must submit the "Place of Employment Practicum Application" to their faculty advisor. This form must be completed the semester prior to the placement. Individual requests will be carefully reviewed using these five standards:

1. The agency must be approved as a field placement site based on the criteria established by the School of Social Work at UM-St. Louis. If the agency has not been previously utilized as a field placement, the agency will be reviewed as would any other potential setting.
2. The student must list all the positions they have held in the agency, including a description of employment responsibilities, schedule of work hours, and name of supervisor(s).
3. The student must be assigned --as their practicum—to a department, unit or program that differs from all prior or current employment units. This is to ensure that the student has exposure to new methods, client populations, and other new experiences for learning.
4. The agency must agree to provide a field instructor who has not supervised the student in previous employment responsibilities. As in other settings, the designated supervisor must meet the criteria for approval as a Field Instructor.
5. The schedule of hours that are designated for the field assignment must be clearly delineated from the employment schedule.

### **Withdrawing from Practicum**

The practicum is distinct from most other social work courses in that a field placement in the community entails not only the educational objectives of the student and faculty, but also professional responsibilities to clients, social service agencies and the community. When students engage clients and assume service responsibilities, they have ongoing professional, educational and ethical responsibilities to consider. Considerable effort is spent on the part of the faculty and field instructor planning and orienting the student to the placement. For this reason, students should only consider withdrawing prematurely from a field placement site under extenuating circumstances.

Should a student desire or be requested to terminate a placement prior to the completion of the total hours required, the student's field faculty liaison should be contacted immediately to discuss the situation. Such a situation may occur as a result of: insufficient resources and/or experiences to provide for an adequate learning experience; agency restructuring; a personality or ideological conflict between the student and Field Instructor and/or agency; personal crises; a serious illness; or other educational considerations.

Only after consultation with the faculty liaison and the agency Field Instructor may the student terminate the practicum. The faculty liaison, in consultation with the Director of Field Education or Assistant Director of Field Education and the student, will determine whether the student will be permitted to resume a practicum at a new site, and whether credit will be awarded to the student for hours completed at the first practicum site.

### **Termination from Field Practicum and/or the BSW or MSW Program for Non-Academic Reasons**

A student enrolling in the School of Social Work at the University of Missouri-St. Louis assumes an obligation to behave in a manner that is compatible with the University and School educational enterprises. This applies not only to the student's behavior on campus, but to the field practicum as well. The Collected Rules and Regulations for the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Section 200.010, [Code of Student Conduct](#) and the School of Social Work BSW and MSW student handbooks clearly delineate conduct for which a student can be sanctioned or disciplined. In addition, sanctions (including but not limited to termination from the field placement) may be imposed on any student in the School of Social Work who has been found to have violated the professional expectations and standards described in the [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#).

Special efforts are made in the School's two academic programs to identify problematic student performance as early as possible. In most instances, the review of a student's academic and/or professional performance begins in the classroom. If the instructor has concerns, these are shared with the student and the student's advisor. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, the BSW/MSW program director will become involved and finally, the School's Personnel and Policy Committee (PPC) may be asked to review a student's academic and/or professional performance. The Dean of the School of Social Work and at least two other tenured faculty members constitute the permanent membership of the PPC. In those instances where the student's performance review is regarding performance in the field practicum, the Director of Field Education, Assistant Director of

Field Education and if appropriate, the Field Instructor will be invited to meet with the PPC. In this context, the field representatives may be asked to participate in the decision-making process.

When there are questions about a student's ability to perform professionally as a BSW/MSW social worker in the practicum, the student will be notified and asked to meet with the Director of Field Education, the Assistant Director of Field Education and when appropriate, the faculty advisor, and/or the Director of the BSW/MSW program. If the problem is not resolved, the student may also be asked to meet with the PPC. In most cases, a plan to remedy the problem will be developed and shared with the student, who will be allowed to respond to the plan. The remediation plan generally will include a requirement that the student seek help for those problems that affect the student's ability to engage in professional social work behavior. If appropriate, the student may be asked to repeat practicum hours that were not successfully completed. Students who are terminated from their practicum experience will be required to drop the corresponding seminar course and will not be allowed to count any practicum hours that have been accrued. The earliest the student may return to practicum and seminar is the following semester and after successful completion of the remediation plan. If, after review by the PPC, the student has been unwilling or unable to complete the agreed upon plan, the student may be dismissed from the program.

An exception to the above would be an egregious violation of professional behavior as defined by the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics. In these cases, the student may be dismissed from the practicum and the social work program by the PPC. The student can appeal through the PPC, however, the committee's decision will be final.

### **Responsibilities of Agency Field Instructors**

The agency Field Instructor plays a vital role in the education of students. It is important that those who take on this role have a good grasp of practice theory, significant experience in the field of social work, a good measure of patience, a desire to teach, and a sense of humor.

Field Instructor responsibilities include:

- Assuming instructional and administrative responsibility for the student in the field setting.
- Orientation of the student to field placement.
- Informing students of potential safety risks associated with the practicum.
- Providing safety training to students if appropriate.
- Providing students with safety guidelines for working with clients in an office or in clients' homes.
- Assisting the student with preparation of the learning agreement.
- Provision of regularly scheduled individual supervision with each student (at least one hour per week), and where feasible additional group supervision.
- Providing the student with ongoing feedback about their performance.
- Meeting with the faculty field liaison from the University at least once during the practicum, or as needed, regarding the student's progress.

- Informing the faculty liaison of all concerns relative to the student's fieldwork progress, activities, and any other issues that might affect the placement.
- Informing the Office of Field Education of significant changes at the agency (i.e. agency moves, changes in phone number, resignation of Field Instructor, etc.)
- Completing and submitting all necessary paperwork within the timeframes outlined.
- Attending an orientation and completing an 18 hour certification program for new Field Instructors.
- Updating affiliation materials every three years.
- Completing 15 hours of continuing education in their areas of practice every three years.

### **Responsibilities of Faculty Liaison**

Before beginning practicum, each student will be assigned a faculty liaison. The responsibilities of the faculty liaison include:

- Helping the student plan their field experience.
- Assisting students with preparation of the practicum learning agreement.
- Consulting with the agency Field Instructor and student to review progress and assess performance.
- Informing students of potential safety risks associated with the practicum.
- Providing safety training to students if appropriate.
- Providing students with safety guidelines for working with clients in an office or in clients' homes.
- Assisting students with any concerns they have relating to the agency Field Instructor, integration of classroom work with the field placement, or other issues related to field.
- Acting as an educational consultant to Field Instructors to enhance their teaching skills.
- Informing the Office of Field Education of any problems relative to students' performance in practicum
- Assigning students, a grade in practicum.

For students enrolled in SW4800 (BSW Supervised Field Experience I), SW 4850 (BSW Supervised Field Experience II) and SW 5800 (Graduate Field Practicum I), the student's seminar instructor serves as the faculty liaison. Students in SW 6800 and SW 6850 (Graduate Field Practicum II & III) are assigned a faculty liaison (generally the faculty advisor) from their concentration areas.

### **Students' Responsibilities at Practicum Agency**

Students are to consider themselves as potential practicing social workers, visiting members of the social work staff, and are to perform assignments in a manner consistent with accepted BSW/MSW social work practices. The best guide to general agency customs and expectations will be the behavior of supervisors and the other professional social workers within the agency.

When in doubt, students should discuss questions such as mode of dress, ways of addressing clients and colleagues, appropriate use of social media and electronic communication tools, and resources within the agency with the Field Instructor.

Students are expected to arrive on time, follow the scheduled hours meticulously, and practice good time management skills. All students should maintain a time sheet recording the hours spent at the practicum site. They are expected to observe provisions of the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) and other generally acknowledged guidelines for professional social workers. Students are also expected to comply with the [UMSL Policy on Sexual Harassment](#).

Students are expected to participate actively in the assessment of their performance. Students experiencing problems at the practicum site should go first to the agency Field Instructor. If the problem is not resolved at that level, the student should next go to the faculty liaison for further consultation and direction. If the problem is not resolved with the intervention of the faculty liaison, the student and liaison should go directly to the Director or Assistant Director of Field Education.

### **Social Media and Technology Use**

Students are expected to inquire about and comply with the agency's policies regarding the use of technology and social media.

### **Student Evaluation of the Field Experience**

At the conclusion of the practicum, all students complete an evaluation of the field experience. Students evaluate the practicum agency, the Field Instructor, the field liaison and the Office of Field Education. The Office of Field Education reviews the evaluations after grades have been submitted. Students may also choose to share the evaluation with other students and/or the Field Instructor.

### **Practicum Planning Process**

Before students contact social service agencies to inquire about field placements, they participate in a planning process designed to help clarify their goals and interests. Two mandatory practicum planning meetings are held during the semester prior to the first practicum. These meetings are intended to assist the student in the selection of the practicum site and in the development of the learning agreement. Then, each student completes an application for a practicum and meets with the assigned faculty advisor to ensure that all academic requirements have been completed and to discuss practicum site possibilities.

The step by step process for practicum planning is as follows:

1. First practicum planning meeting.

*Highlights:*

- a. Overview of the practicum process (including review of the practicum manual, forms and policies)
  - b. Selecting a practicum site
2. Student completes practicum application, reviews it with their advisor, and submits it to the Office of Field Education.
  3. Field faculty review applications and approve requests to interview at practicum sites.
  4. Student contacts approved agencies, interviews and secures practicum. (At the initial meeting, both the student and the agency explore the possibility/desirability of participation in the practicum at the agency. Either the student or agency can decide against the placement).

5. Second practicum planning meeting to learn how to complete the learning agreement.
6. Student, in consultation with agency Field Instructor, drafts a learning agreement.
7. Learning agreement is reviewed by either the Director or Assistant Director of Field Education, and if necessary, suggestions for revisions are made. Once revisions are complete the agreement is approved by the Office of Field Education and signed by the student, the Field Instructor, the task instructor (if applicable) and either the Director or Assistant Director of Field Education.
8. For MSW concentration students, the faculty advisor must also approve and sign the learning agreement. Electronic copies are distributed to the student, faculty liaison, and Field Instructor. The original remains on file with the Office of Field Education.

**Students must have learning agreements approved within 4 weeks after the start of the semester in which the student is seeking practicum credit. Each semester students are provided with the specific dates when learning agreement drafts and final agreements are due to the Office of Field Education. Students who do not have an approved learning agreement by the deadline provided by their faculty liaison are required to suspend practicum activities until approval is secured.**