

Social Work Field Instructor Manual

The University of Missouri-St. Louis

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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 2008, 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 central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner.” We agree 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 UM-St. Louis collaborates in delivering services to field instructors with field education faculty and staff at Saint Louis University, Washington University and Fontbonne 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 <http://www.fieldedu.com/index.html>.

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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University of Missouri-St. Louis (<http://www.umsl.edu/~socialwk/>)

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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 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 George Warren Brown School of Social Work 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 joint field instructor orientation, continuing education events, an advisory board, a collaborative web site and database, and selected common forms. Last year we welcomed Fontbonne University to our collaboration. 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 For New Field Instructors

In an effort to support quality field education experiences for students and field instructors, the St. Louis Field 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 four St. Louis area programs. The Certification Program consists of a half-day “Introduction to Field Instruction” session and five subsequent educational sessions. Field Instructors are eligible to begin supervising students after they attend the introductory session. The remaining sessions focus on such topics as values and ethics and cultural competence 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 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 session of the Certification Program, “Introduction to Field Instruction”. This process can occur prior to or simultaneous with the first experience of providing field instruction for a student. To remain certified, field instructors must apply to be renewed every three years and provide verification of continuing education.

Resources

Agency Agreements

Agencies/organizations and field instructors complete the affiliation process online through the St. Louis Field Collaborative webpage.* All organizations and field instructors must complete the affiliation applications to be considered for approval.

1. **Organizational Application for Field Education Site form** – Each site must complete the Organizational Profile, located at <https://apps.umsl.edu/webapps/TTS/socwork/field/fieldforms/login.cfm>. Applicants will have the opportunity to select those programs (UMSL, SLU, WU, Fontbonne) and levels (BSW and/or

- MSW) with which they wish to affiliate. Each university has its own approval process. Organizations must be approved by the program(s) with which they wish to affiliate.
2. **Field Education Instructor Application form** – Each MSW or BSW Field Instructor must complete the Field Instructor Application located at <https://apps.umsl.edu/webapps/TTS/socwork/field/fieldforms/login.cfm>. Field Instructors must be approved by the program(s) (UMSL, SLU, WU, Fontbonne) with which they wish to affiliate and be invited to attend the new field instructor orientation and advanced education seminars prior to or during their first year of field instruction.
 3. **Affiliation Agreement form** – Each site must complete an Affiliation Agreement for each individual university (UMSL, SLU, WU, Fontbonne).

Information on the Field Instruction Certification Program and account set up instructions can be found on the UMSL School of Social Work site under the Field Education tab or by clicking this site: <http://www.umsl.edu/~socialwk/Field%20Education/FI-Collaborative-information.html>

Each site must have an approved organizational and field instructor application and a signed affiliation agreement on file with the Office of Field Education before a student can begin practicum. **Please note-** applications submitted directly to WU cover only WU students. Full Collaborative participation requires an application to the database through the link above.

Practicum Forms

Necessary practicum forms for students and field instructors are available at <http://www.umsl.edu/~socialwk/Field%20Education/index.html>

Social Work Code of Ethics

The National Association for Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics* is available from the NASW website located at: <http://www.naswdc.org/>

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 at: <http://www.cswe.org/>

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 field education office verifying the field instruction provided. This certificate may be used for continuing education requirements for social work licensure.

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. The practicum agency may require students to obtain pre-

practicum health and/or criminal background checks. While the social work programs do not collect this information, students are informed that the agency may require such information. Should a student elect not to provide the required information, he/she is informed that a practicum at that agency may not be an option.

Agency Reimbursement for Student Services

Students shall follow agency policy regarding the collection of fees and accepting gifts. While in practicum, students may personally 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 and should avoid activities expressly prohibited by their programs. Questions regarding appropriate practicum activities can be directed to the Office of Field Education at the social work program.

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 Records

Students should inform the field education administrator of any information regarding felony convictions and/or other information that may impact the student's ability to secure and complete a practicum. The UMSL School of Social Work does not conduct criminal background checks on students. If the program is aware of criminal conviction or other pertinent information, the student may be asked to sign a release of information authorizing the program to discuss this information with approved practicum sites.

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.

Liability

UMSL provides professional liability insurance for students' supervised practicum related activities at the practicum site and can provide verification of such coverage. Agencies/organizations shall maintain adequate general liability and professional liability insurance. Students have the option to purchase additional coverage at their own expense through the National Association of Social Workers Insurance Trust (800/638-8799 ext. 387) or another insurance carrier.

Lobbying Activities

Students who engage in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the practicum agency and his/her 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: http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm,

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 organization/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 intern 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 and would like to have students each semester, offering a stipend can be a very effective incentive in recruitment efforts.
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. An additional possibility for a paid practicum exists if the student works at a practicum site. While practicum activities need to be new experiences for students, some students are able to successfully negotiate the completion of practicum activities while on work time within a social service agency. Place of Employment practica need to be individually negotiated with the Office of Field Education.

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. In addition, students are encouraged to take a one credit seminar course in non-violent crisis intervention. 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, cellular telephones).

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, 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 at the following Internet addresses:

University of Missouri-St. Louis –

<http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/policy/sexualharrassment.html>

Sharing Sensitive Information

The Offices 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 field instructor interview each other to assess if the opportunities of the site and the role and skills of 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. MSW students with a BSW degree may discuss the breadth and level of practice experience they are seeking, given their previous practicum experience. 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 student and field instructor 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, 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 the success of the field placement for many students. 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. The student, field instructor and task instructor (if applicable) should 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 literature belonging to other staff.
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.

University of Missouri-St. Louis School of Social Work Program Information

Mission of the School of Social Work

The School of Social Work engages students and faculty in professional education, research and service, advancing knowledge and competence to promote human and societal well-being.

Within a collaborative learning environment, students are prepared as culturally competent, critically thinking leaders committed to social and economic justice and professional values and ethics.

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.

Generalist practice is the basic conceptual approach for the BSW degree and forms the foundation for the MSW 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.

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. Students develop advanced knowledge and skills in family practice, gerontology or social work leadership and management. The choice of these particular concentrations was based on several years of background study, which included analyses of (a) the St. Louis region's needs; (b) existing St. Louis area social work programs; (c) advice from field instructors and the School's Advisory Board; (d) a scan of two dozen MSW programs around the nation; (e) an internal scan of UM-St. Louis curricular and faculty strengths; and (f) student interest.

Finally, 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

Program Description

The Social Work program offers courses leading to a bachelor of social work (BSW), a master of social work (MSW), and a minor in social work. The BSW and the MSW programs are fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The programs stress the critical, empirical, and applied aspects of social work, incorporating a liberal arts perspective throughout the curriculum. There is a strong accent on community and agency field work as an integral part of the program. Professional social work education enables students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession into competent practice.

Goals of the BSW Program

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 effective practice 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 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 understands 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 members are productive researchers working with agencies and communities to understand social problems and to improve lives and social work practice. Students engage in practica 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. General education requirements, University requirements, and College of Arts and Sciences requirements
2. School of Social Work requirements

BSW Core Requirements

Social Work 2000, Social Work and Social Issues

Prerequisites: Sociology 1010 or Psychology 1003 (may be taken with social work 2200 & 2001), but must have completed sociology 1010 & psychology 1003.

Social Work 2001, Social Work and Social Issues Lab

(Must be taken concurrently with Social Work 2200)

Prerequisites: same as for SW 2200.

Social Work 2200, Social Welfare as a Social Institution

Prerequisites: Social Work 2000 or consent of instructor (may be taken with social work 3100)

Social Work 3100, Introduction to Strategies for Social Work Practice

Prerequisites: Social Work 2200/2001, Psychology 1003, and Sociology 1010, or permission of the instructor. (May be taken with social work 2200 & 2001, but must have completed psychology 1003 & sociology 1010)

Social Work 3210, Social Issues and Social Policy Development

Prerequisites: Social Work 2200/2001, Political Science 1100, and Economics 1000 or 1005. (Must complete prerequisites, before taking this course)

Social Work 3410, Research Design in Social Work

Prerequisite: Sociology 3220 and satisfaction of math proficiency. (Students should not take this course concurrently with statistics)

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: Sociology 1010 or equivalent.

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

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

Social Work 4300, Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities

Prerequisites: Social Work 3400 (may be taken concurrently), senior standing.

Social Work 4350, Social Work Organizations

Prerequisites: Junior Standing.

Social Work 4800, Supervised Field Experience in Social Work I

Prerequisites: 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. Social Work 3300 must be taken concurrently or prior to Social Work 4850. 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. The workshop is usually scheduled during the early weeks of the preceding fall or winter semester. The dates are announced in social work classes and posted in various locations. Students who are not enrolled in core social work courses during the semester prior to their planned practicum must inform the social work support staff to ensure that they receive notification.

Two semesters (each consisting of 285 hours) of practicum are required in order to graduate. Under special circumstances and with the approval of the Office of Field Education and agency supervisor, one semester block of 285 hours may be extended and completed in one academic year. Further exceptions will be considered only upon receipt of a physician's letter stating the reasons why the student is unable to fulfill requirements during this time period.

Related Area Requirements

Biology 1010, General Biology or equivalent. Students are encouraged to take one additional Biology course which will fulfill the Natural Sciences and Mathematics requirement.

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, Sociological Statistics (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 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. Students are encouraged to work closely with an advisor to plan their academic program. This will ensure that students move through the university system in a timely manner.
2. A student who begins to experience problems with classes should seek assistance from his or her advisor immediately. Students must have a 2.0 overall grade point average, a 2.5 grade point average in required social work and related area courses, and a satisfactory grade in practica in order to graduate.
3. Each student must contact his/her advisor before applying for the practicum program. This is generally done immediately prior to entering the senior year. After the faculty advisor signs the practicum application form it should be turned into the Office of Field Education (121 Bellerive Hall). The Assistant Director of Field Education will review each application before final approval is given.
4. A student will not be allowed to enroll in a practicum if he or she:
 - A. Has any incomplete or delayed grades
 - B. Has not completed the mathematics proficiency requirement
 - C. Has fewer than 90 credit hours by the time practicum begins
 - D. Less than a 2.5 GPA in social work and related area requirements
1. No student is allowed to enroll in the practicum program without the Office of Field Education consent and participation in the special pre-practicum workshops. In order to register for the class students **must** obtain a special consent form from the Office of Field Education.

Academic credit for life experience and previous work may not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of courses in the professional foundation areas.

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 of the degree requirements.

Sample Four Year Program

Freshman Year

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Humanities	3.0
Psychology 1003	3.0
Sociology 1010	3.0
Biology 1012	3.0
Math workshop if needed,	No credit
English 1100-Freshman Composition	3.0

TOTAL-15 Hours

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Humanities	3.0
Economics 1000 or 1005	3.0
Human Biology 1102	3.0*
Cultural Diversity	3.0
Elective	3.0

TOTAL-15 Hours

Sophomore Year

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 2000	3.0
Soc. Work 2001	1.0
Pol. Sci. 1100	3.0
Math 1020 or 1030	3.0
Humanities	3.0
Elective	3.0

TOTAL-16 Hours

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 2200	3.0
Psych. 2160	3.0
Soc. Science Elective.*	3.0
Elective	3.0
Science	3.0

TOTAL-15 Hours

Students transferring in with an AA degree should use the following sample two-year program to guide them in selecting courses.

Junior Year

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 3100 (apply to SW program)	3.0
Soc. Work 3510	3.0
Sociology 3220	3.0
Advanced Expository Writing (English 3100)	3.0
Soc. Science Elective	3.0

TOTAL - 15 Hours

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 4110	3.0
Soc. Work 3700	3.0
Soc. Work 3210	3.0
Soc. Work 3410	3.0
Soc. Science Elective	3.0

TOTAL-15 Hours

Senior Year

First Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 4800	4.0
Soc. Work 4801	2.0
Soc. Work 4300	3.0
Soc. Work 4350	3.0
Elective	3.0

TOTAL - 15 Hours

Second Semester

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Soc. Work 4850	4.0
Soc. Work 4851	2.0
Elective	3.0
Elective	3.0
Elective	3.0

TOTAL - 15 Hours

Students need 120 hours to graduate.

Organization of BSW Practicum Experience

The field practicum is an integral part of the BSW program. It is administered under the auspices of the Assistant Director of Field Education.

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 and critical thinking skills
- 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

Students perform 570 hours of practicum (285 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, practice behaviors, and methods used for evaluation. Although all students must achieve the same core competencies and demonstrate the same practice behaviors. Tasks may vary considerably depending on the site. 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 are required to keep a journal of their learning in which they are asked to link class work with the practicum experience and engage in self-reflective reporting so that they are learning about themselves in the process of working 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 to their field placement.

BSW Competencies

The mission and goals of the BSW program support the following competencies suggested by the Council on Social Work Education as the components that comprise effective generalist social work practice. The competencies are underlined. The behaviors that will demonstrate students are able to use the competencies in practice are bulleted under each competency. These behaviors guide the BSW curriculum and are measured in every required course. In the practicum, students demonstrate their ability to use the practice behaviors with clients on all levels.

* Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth.

- Students evidence the skills of advocacy by ***advocating for client access to the services of social work***. This is operationalized through students' recognition of the role of social workers as advocates, their ability to identify social movements, key figures/leaders, and major themes in the development of community practice, and apply knowledge of policy advocacy to empower vulnerable populations.
- Students ***practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development*** developing an understanding of the self and the use of self in the context of practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Students learn to ***attend to professional roles and boundaries***, developing a sense of professional awareness in working with individuals, families and groups.
- Student ***demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication***, while working in communities and in organizations.
- By demonstrating the ability to extrapolate knowledge from the professional literature for ongoing professional development and commitment to the social work profession, the program believes that students will comprehend and internalize the expectation they should ***engage in career-long-learning***.
- The effective ***use of supervision and consultation*** are necessary for continued professionalism and development, and students are expected to understand the function of supervision and utilize it to maximize the quality of their practice.

EP 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards and relevant law. Social workers

- Students become sensitive to their own values and biases and understand the need to adhere to professional standards of practice in work with individuals learning to ***recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice***.
- Students are able to describe and ***apply major components and standards of the NASW Code of Ethics*** to ethical decision making in social work practice. They are able to demonstrate an understanding of ethical dilemmas facing social work practitioners and researchers and are able to take decisions based on ethical principles.
- Students will understand the complexities involved in the application of ethical principles to social work practice in real-world situations, ***and applying strategies of ethical reasoning*** they will learn to ***tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts*** as they seek to ***arrive at principled decisions***.

EP 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information.

- Students will gain the skills needed to identify, synthesize, critically assess, and analyze relevant information to inform social practice by ***distinguishing, appraising, and integrating multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.***
- Students will ***analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation*** and utilize assessment findings to develop appropriate interventions across all practice levels.
- Students will ***demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups and organizations communities and colleagues*** through oral presentations and, written assignments in classes and in field.

EP 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate 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.

- To ***recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power***, students will be able to analyze the effects of age, race, gender, social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical and mental ability on a individual's life course and the relevant implications for social work practice. They will develop an understanding of how the forces of oppression and inequality work through societal forces, including social policies, to weaken the power of disadvantaged and oppressed people and their access to resources.
- Students will discuss and explore community demographics and resources that may reflect a culture's structure and values and social influences on their own perceptions, developing a self-awareness of their attitudes and values that affect their practice with diverse groups. They will ***gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.***
- Students will be able to assess the impact of life-span issues on social and economic opportunities and vice versa, demonstrate an awareness of how intersecting diversity factors affect world-view and life experiences, ***and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.***
- Students view their clients as experts about their own life situations and view ***themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.***

EP 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers

- ***Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination*** by demonstrating an understanding of social and political forms of oppression and discrimination, developing a fundamental understanding of the social histories and current status of diverse groups and the

institutions that influence diverse groups' experiences in the United States and/or contribute to the inequitable distribution of resources.

- Students will increase awareness of social justice issues, develop skills and knowledge that will facilitate effective practice, and become allies to oppressed groups in advocating ***to advance human rights and social and economic justice.***

EP 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

- Students will develop the ability to formulate and investigate research questions to identify risk factors and intervention approaches ***and use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.***
- Students will become familiar with the process of dissemination of research findings for the development of evidence-based practice models and will ***use research evidence to inform practice.***

EP 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development.

- Students will gain a basic understanding of major theories of development as well as of social systems theory, the strengths perspective, and a person in environment approach, and will ***utilize such conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.***
- Students will critique the range of theories of human development to assess and critically apply the knowledge gained through them to ***understand the person and the environment.*** Utilizing the knowledge acquired through the liberal arts perspective, and the influence of biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual factors, students will understand the relationship of micro, mezzo, and macro variables in human functioning

EP 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know 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.

- Students will ***analyze*** major social and welfare policies, discuss how these have changed over time, and be able to ***formulate and advocate for policies that advance social well-being.***
- Students will view themselves and learners and engage those with whom they work as informants, ***collaborating with colleagues and clients for effective policy action*** and practice skills that advance social and economic justice.

EP 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively.

- Students will use relevant information and frameworks to critically assess the context of client functioning and funding, ***continuously discovering, appraising, and attending to changing***

locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.

- Students will evidence leadership in managing organizations, working in communities, and engaging in policy practice to *promote sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.*

EP 2.1.10(a)–(d) Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances, evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

EP 2.1.10(a)

- Using social work knowledge and with self-awareness, students will understand the unique considerations for engagement to *substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.*
- Students will evidence *empathy* and utilize skills of empathic communication, authenticity, active listening and *other interpersonal skills* in relationship building with client systems.
- Working with clients, students will *develop a mutually agreed on focus of work and desired outcomes*

EP 2.1.10(b)

- Students will develop multidimensional assessment skills including the *assessment of strengths and limitations within client* systems.
- Students will work with client systems to identify areas of concern or need to be explored in the social work helping process, *developing a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes*
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical basis and scope and methods of design in conducting social work research, *collecting, organizing, and interpreting client data* to effectively inform practice.
- Students will work with client systems to identify and *develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives* and *select appropriate intervention strategies*

EP 2.1.10(c)

- Students will identify needs and *initiate actions to achieve organizational goals*
- Students **will identify appropriate models and/or methods to implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities**
- Students will be able to implement appropriate intervention strategies that *enhance client capacities to resolve problems* and will allow them to
- *negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients.*
- Students will be able to demonstrate skills that *facilitate transitions and endings* as they terminate relationships with clients.

EP 2.1.10(d)

- Students will learn the various approaches to *critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions* that can be applied within varying practice settings.

MSW Program

Program Description

The Master of Social Work (MSW) Program in the School of Social Work at 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, families, or older adults, or the knowledge, skills and values to effectively manage and lead non-profit and public human service agencies. Social justice principles will guide graduates in their practice at all levels of intervention particularly with persons who are oppressed because of their color, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation or physical or mental ability.

The MSW must be completed in four years. Full-time students will be able to complete the program in two years. Part-time students can complete the program in four years.

The MSW program requires 60 hours of graduate coursework. However, a student who has earned a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) within the past five 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.

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 three *concentrations* offered in the MSW program at UM-St. Louis are:

- Family Practice
- Social Work Leadership and Management
- Gerontology

Full time students complete practicum in their first and second years of study, although students entering with a BSW are exempted from the first-year practicum. Each practicum requires 300 hours or approximately two and one half days per week in an agency for one semester. The MSW program curriculum at UM-St. Louis 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 M.S.W. 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 aging), 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

In the first year of graduate study, the curriculum emphasis is on 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 are able to 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 specialization based on their career interests. Students cannot proceed to their concentration choice without having successfully completed most foundation courses. Full-time students will complete the foundation in one year; part-time students will complete the foundation coursework in two years.

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

EP 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth.

- Students evidence the skills of advocacy by ***advocating for client access to the services of social work***. This is operationalized through students' recognition of the role of social workers as advocates, their ability to identify social movements, key figures/leaders, and major themes in the development of community practice, and apply knowledge of policy advocacy to empower vulnerable populations.
- Students ***practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development*** developing an understanding of the self and the use of self in the context of practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Students learn to ***attend to professional roles and boundaries***, developing a sense of professional awareness in working with individuals, families and groups.
- Student ***demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication***, while working in communities and in organizations.
- By demonstrating the ability to extrapolate knowledge from the professional literature for ongoing professional development and commitment to the social work profession, the program believes that students will comprehend and internalize the expectation they should ***engage in career-long-learning***.
- The effective ***use of supervision and consultation*** are necessary for continued professionalism and development, and students are expected to understand the function of supervision and utilize it to maximize the quality of their practice.

EP 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards and relevant law. Social workers

- Students become sensitive to their own values and biases and understand the need to adhere to professional standards of practice in work with individuals learning to ***recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice***.
- Students are able to describe and ***apply major components and standards of the NASW Code of Ethics*** to ethical decision making in social work practice. They are able to demonstrate an understanding of ethical dilemmas facing social work practitioners and researchers and are able to take decisions based on ethical principles.
- Students will understand the complexities involved in the application of ethical principles to social work practice in real-world situations, ***and applying strategies of ethical reasoning*** they will learn to ***tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts*** as they seek to ***arrive at principled decisions***.

EP 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information.

- Students will gain the skills needed to identify, synthesize, critically assess, and analyze relevant information to inform social practice by *distinguishing, appraising, and integrating multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.*
- Students will *analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation* and utilize assessment findings to develop appropriate interventions across all practice levels.
- Students will *demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups and organizations communities and colleagues* through oral presentations and , written assignments in classes and in field.

EP 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate 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.

- To *recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power*, students will be able to analyze the effects of age, race, gender, social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical and mental ability on a individual's life course and the relevant implications for social work practice. They will develop an understanding of how the forces of oppression and inequality work through societal forces, including social policies, to weaken the power of disadvantaged and oppressed people and their access to resources.
- Students will discuss and explore community demographics and resources that may reflect a culture's structure and values and social influences on their own perceptions, developing a self-awareness of their attitudes and values that affect their practice with diverse groups. They will *gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.*
- Students will be able to assess the impact of life-span issues on social and economic opportunities and vice versa, demonstrate an awareness of how intersecting diversity factors affect world-view and life experiences, *and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.*
- Students view their clients as experts about their own life situations and view *themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.*

EP 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice.

- *Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination* by demonstrating an understanding of social and political forms of oppression and discrimination, developing a fundamental understanding of the social histories and current status of diverse groups and the institutions that influence diverse groups' experiences in the United States and/or contribute to the inequitable distribution of resources.

- Students will increase awareness of social justice issues, develop skills and knowledge that will facilitate effective practice, and become allies to oppressed groups in ***advocating to advance human rights and social and economic justice.***

EP 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

- Students will develop the ability to formulate and investigate research questions to identify risk factors and intervention approaches ***and use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.***
- Students will become familiar with the process of dissemination of research findings for the development of evidence-based practice models and will ***use research evidence to inform practice.***

EP 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development.

- Students will gain a basic understanding of major theories of development as well as of social systems theory, the strengths perspective, and a person in environment approach, and will ***utilize such conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.***
- Students will critique the range of theories of human development to assess and critically apply the knowledge gained through them to ***understand the person and the environment.*** Utilizing the knowledge acquired through the liberal arts perspective, and the influence of biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual factors, students will understand the relationship of micro, mezzo, and macro variables in human functioning

EP 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know 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.

- Students will ***analyze*** major social and welfare policies, discuss how these have changed over time, and be able to ***formulate and advocate for policies that advance social well-being.***
- Students will view themselves and learners and engage those with whom they work as informants, ***collaborating with colleagues and clients for effective policy action*** and practice skills that advance social and economic justice.

EP 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively.

- Students will use relevant information and frameworks to critically assess the context of client functioning and funding, ***continuously discovering, appraising, and attending to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.***

- Students will evidence leadership in managing organizations, working in communities, and engaging in policy practice to ***promote sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.***

EP 2.1.10(a)–(d) Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances, evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

EP 2.1.10(a)

- Using social work knowledge and with self-awareness, students will understand the unique considerations for engagement to ***substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.***
- Students will evidence ***empathy*** and utilize skills of empathic communication, authenticity, active listening and ***other interpersonal skills*** in relationship building with client systems.
- Working with clients, students will ***develop a mutually agreed on focus of work and desired outcomes***

EP 2.1.10(b)

- Students will develop multidimensional assessment skills including the ***assessment of strengths and limitations within client*** systems.
- Students will work with client systems to identify areas of concern or need to be explored in the social work helping process, ***developing a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes***
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical basis and scope and methods of design in conducting social work research, ***collecting, organizing, and interpreting client data*** to effectively inform practice.
- Students will work with client systems to identify and ***develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives*** and ***select appropriate intervention strategies***

EP 2.1.10(c)

- Students will identify needs and ***initiate actions to achieve organizational goals***
- Students ***will identify appropriate models and/or methods to implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities***
- Students will be able to implement appropriate intervention strategies that ***enhance client capacities to resolve problems*** and will allow them to
- ***negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients.***
- Students will be able to demonstrate skills that ***facilitate transitions and endings*** as they terminate relationships with clients.

EP 2.1.10(d)

- Students will learn the various approaches to ***critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions*** that can be applied within varying practice settings.

Concentration Options

At the time that students complete the Admissions packet they are asked to identify their career interests as they apply to the three concentrations offered in the MSW program. Each concentration requires completion of 30 hours of coursework, 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 or correctional organizations.

The following tables summarize the Family Practice concentration curriculum for full-time and part-time students. Three to six hours may be taken in the summer.

Family Practice Concentration Full-Time Students	
Year 1	Year 2
<p><i>Fall</i> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5700 Diversity and Social Justice (3) • SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3) • SW 5350 Social Work & Human Service Organizations (3) • SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice(3) • SW 5300 Community Practice and Social Change (3) 	<p><i>Fall</i> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6160 Advanced Practice Strategies Across the Life Span (3) • SW 6200 Family Policy (3) • SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) 300 hours/22 hrs/week: 3 days • SW 5450 Research Methods & Analysis II (3) • Elective (3)
<p><i>Winter</i> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5410 Research Methods & Analysis I (3) • SW 5200 Social Policy and Social Services (3) • SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar (2) • SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4) • Elective (3) 	<p><i>Winter</i> (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6150 Theory and Practice with Families (3) • SW 6400 Practice and Program Evaluation (3) • SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) 300 hours/22/wk: 3 days • Elective (6)

Family Practice Concentration			
Part-Time Students			
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<p><i>Fall</i> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5500 Social Work & Human Service Organizations (3) • SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3) 	<p><i>Fall</i> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5350 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3) • SW 5300 Community Practice & Social Change (3) 	<p><i>Fall</i> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6160 Advanced Practice Strategies Across the Life Span (3) • Elective(3) 	<p><i>Fall</i> (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) • Elective (3)
<p><i>Winter</i> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5200 Social Policy and Social Services (3) • SW 5700 Diversity and Social Justice (3) • SW 5410 Research Methods & Analysis I (3) 	<p><i>Winter</i> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5450 Research Methods & Analysis II (3) • SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar (2) • SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4) 	<p><i>Winter</i> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6200 Family Policy (3) • Elective (3) • SW 6150 Theory and Practice with Families (3) 	<p><i>Winter</i> (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6400 Practice and Program Evaluation (3) • SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) • Elective (3)

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.

COMPETENCY 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

Advanced family practice social workers recognize the importance of professional use of self in relationships, the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives, and adherence to ethical guidelines and social work values.

COMPETENCY 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

Advanced family practice social workers are knowledgeable about ethical issues, legal issues and shifting mores that affect their relationships with clients.

COMPETENCY 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

Advanced family practice social workers understand and differentiate among multiple theories and practice methods. They are able to evaluate how theories and methods relate to clients and client systems within their environmental context. They regularly reflect on their own assumptions and how those affect practice.

COMPETENCY 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice

Advanced family practice social workers are knowledgeable about many forms of diversity and difference and how these affect professional relationships and client’s presenting problems. Advanced practitioners understand how dimensions of diversity affect (a) explanations of illness, (b) help-seeking behaviors, and (c) healing practices. They understand how clinical practice can be culture bound.

COMPETENCY 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Advanced family practice social workers understand how economic, social and cultural factors challenge clients and client systems. They understand the stigma and shame that face many clients who seek help. They also understand strategies for advancing human rights and social and economic justice in many contexts.

COMPETENCY 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Advanced family practice social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-based practice interventions, best practices and the evidence-based research process.

COMPETENCY 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

Advanced family practice social workers understand how to differentially apply theories of human behavior and the social environment. They are familiar with diagnostic classification systems used in a comprehensive assessment. They understand how sociocultural contexts influence diagnoses and practice interventions.

COMPETENCY 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services

Advanced family practice social workers understand the connection between clients, practice and both public and organizational policy. They understand how legislation, policies, and program services are developed and funded and are able to advocate for effective policies that promote social well-being.

COMPETENCY 2.1.9 Respond to the contexts that shape practice

Advanced family practice social workers are knowledgeable about how relational, organizational, and community systems may affect clients. They anticipate and react to evolving cultural, technological, geographical, political, legal, economic and environmental contexts.

COMPETENCY 2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

Advanced family practice involves the dynamic, interactive and reciprocal processes of engagement, multidimensional assessment, intervention and practice evaluation at multiple levels. Advanced practitioners have a theoretically informed knowledge base that allows them to practice effectively with individuals, families and groups.

Students interested in developing expertise in working with women may elect to pursue the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies offered at UM-St. Louis in addition to their social work concentration. Students wishing to work with older adults--either in direct practice or in an administrative capacity may elect to pursue the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology, although the Gerontology Concentration is usually more appropriate, and students interested in agency leadership roles should consider taking courses in the Non-profit Leadership and Management program.

Social Work Leadership & Management Concentration

Students wishing to work in human service agencies and organizations as program planners, policy-makers, supervisors, administrators, or community development specialists may elect the Social Work Leadership and Management concentration.

The following tables summarize the Social Work Leadership and Management concentration for full- and part-time students. Three to six hours may be taken in the summer.

Social Work Leadership and Management Concentration	
Full-Time Students	
Year 1	Year 2
<p>Fall (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5700 Diversity and Social Justice (3) SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment(3) SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice(3) SW 5350 Social Work and Human Service Organizations (3) SW 5300 Community Practice & Social Change (3) 	<p>Fall (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5450 Research Methods & Analysis II (3) SW 4940 Leadership and Management in Non-Profit Organizations (3) SW 6250 Social and Economic Development Policy (3) SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) 300 hours/22 hrs/week: 3 days Elective (3)
<p>Winter (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5200 Social Policy and Social Services (3) SW 5410 Research Methods & Analysis I (3) SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar (2) SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4) Elective (3) 	<p>Winter (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 4911, 4912, 4913 (A,B,C) Management Issues in Non-Profit Organizations (1 credit each= 3 credit hours) SW 6400 Practice and Program Evaluation (3) SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) 300 hours/22hr/wk: 3 days Elective (6)

Social Work Leadership and Management Concentration			
Part-Time Students			
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<p>Fall (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5700 Diversity and Social Justice (3) SW 5100 Generalist Social work Practice (3) SW 5300 Community Practice & Social Change (3) 	<p>Fall (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3) SW 5350 Social Work and Human Service Organizations (3) 	<p>Fall (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 6250 Social and Economic Development Policy (3) Elective (3) 	<p>Fall (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) SW 4940 Leadership & Management in Non-Profit Organizations (3) Elective (3)
<p>Winter (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5200 Social Policy and Social Services (3) SW 5410 Research Methods & Analysis I (3) 	<p>Winter (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 5450 Research Methods & Analysis II (3) SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar (2) SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I(4) 	<p>Winter (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 4911, 4912,4913 Management Issues in Non-Profit Organizations (3) Elective (3) 	<p>Winter (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SW 6400 Practice and Program Evaluation (3) SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) Elective (3)

MSW students pursuing this concentration have the opportunity to complete the Graduate Certificate in Non-profit Management and Leadership, which is an 18 credit hour program. In addition, students may also consider a joint MSW/MPPA (Master’s in Policy Administration) degree. The core competencies that students in the Leadership and Management concentration are expected to achieve are listed below.

COMPETENCY 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management recognize the importance of professional conduct and of person/professional development for organizational and community practice.

COMPETENCY 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management ascribe to the values and ethics advanced by NASW and CSWE for professional conduct and, thus, engage in ethical decision-making in working with communities and organizations. They understand the use of the IFSW/IASSW Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles for arriving at principled decisions concerning social justice and human rights. They also understand that work within complex systems can generate conflicting priorities and ambiguities that require professional value-based judgments.

COMPETENCY 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management approach community and organizational problem-solving using logical, scientific and reasoned frameworks for analysis and synthesis toward intervention.

COMPETENCY 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management recognize diversity, including age, race, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, political ideology, immigration status, sex and sexual orientation; and how these differences can influence oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation, as well as privilege and power in communities and organizations.

COMPETENCY 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management are knowledgeable about the interconnections between oppression and theories/strategies to promote social justice and human rights. They adhere to the principles of human rights advanced through national constitutional laws and through international declarations of human rights, including the seven declarations and conventions listed in the IFSW/IASSW Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles.

COMPETENCY 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management utilize quantitative and qualitative research to understand the nature of communities and organizations and the best practices to improve well-being in these macro systems. They integrate members of communities and organizations in the process and outcome evaluations of macro system interventions.

COMPETENCY 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management recognize the central importance of human relationships, including the interconnection between people and place, between people and micro and macro social systems. They also appreciate the unique contributions of cultural, environmental, urban, and rural contexts to organizations and communities

COMPETENCY 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management recognize that social work is a non-partisan political profession, and that political processes and policies affect the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and organization, as well as social work practice

COMPETENCY 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management recognize and respond to the changing landscape of public, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations that comprise the social service sector, as well as to the social, economic, political, and environmental contexts that shape these organizations and community life.

COMPETENCY 2.1.10(a)–(d) Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social workers in Advanced Practice in Leadership and Management engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with organizations and communities and their constituencies. They understand participatory methods and the importance of the worth and dignity of persons in all engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation efforts. Develop mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

Gerontology

Students wishing to work with older adults—either in direct practice or in an administrative capacity—will elect the Gerontology concentration.

MSW students can focus their attention on developing direct practice skills to work with the older adults and their families as professional case managers or develop administrative skills, allowing them to work as administrators of long-term care facilities, adult day care centers, respite programs, area agencies on aging, the Division of Health & Senior Services, and others.

The following tables summarize the Gerontology Concentration Curriculum for full-time and part-time students. Three to six hours may be taken in the summer.

Gerontology Concentration	
Full-time Students	
Year 1	Year 2
<p>Fall (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5700 Diversity and Social Justice (3) • SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3) • SW 5350 Social Work & Human Service Organizations (3) • SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3) • SW 5300 Community Practice & Social Change (3) 	<p>Fall (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6443 Health Care Policy (3) • SW 6150 Theory & Practice with Families (3) • SW 5450 Research Methods & Analysis II (3) • SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II (3) 300 hours/22 hrs/week: 3 days • Elective (3)
<p>Winter (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5200 Social Policy and Social Services (3) • SW 5410 Research Methods & Analysis I (3) • SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar (2) • SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4) • Elective (3) 	<p>Winter (15 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW5620 Theory and Practice with the Older Adults (3) • SW6400 Program & Practice Evaluation (3) • SW6850 Graduate Field Practicum III (3) 300 hours/22 hr/week: 3 days • Elective (6)

Gerontology Concentration			
Part-Time Students			
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<p>Fall (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5100 Generalist Social Work Practice (3) • SW 5700 Diversity and Social Justice (3) 	<p>Fall (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5300 Community Practice & Social Change (3) • SW 5500 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3) 	<p>Fall (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6150 Theory and Practice with Families (3) • SW 6443 Health Care Policy (3) • Elective (3) 	<p>Fall (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6800 Graduate Field Practicum II, 300 hours/22 hrs/week= 3 days (3) • Elective (3)
<p>Winter (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5200 Social Policy & Social Services (3) • SW 5410 Research Method I (3) • SW 5350 Social Work & Human Service Organizations (3) 	<p>Winter (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 5450 Research Methods & Analysis II (3) • SW 5801 Graduate Field Practicum Seminar (2) • SW 5800 Graduate Field Practicum I (4) 	<p>Winter (6 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective (3) • SW 5620 Theory and Practice with Older Adults (3) 	<p>Winter (9 credit hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW 6400 Practice and Program Evaluation (3) • SW 6850 Graduate Field Practicum III, 300 hours/22 hrs/week = 3 days (3) • Elective (3)

Each of the core competencies for Gerontology is operationalized through the following practice behaviors. These are described in the section below along with where and how we measure student competency in the curriculum.

COMPETENCY 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly
 Gerontological social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Gerontological social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Gerontological social workers address personal biases regarding aging, and they work to dispel myths surrounding aging.

COMPETENCY 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice
 Gerontological social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Gerontological social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards and relevant law.

COMPETENCY 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
 Gerontological social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information including the application of concepts and theories of aging.

COMPETENCY 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice
 Gerontological social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender,

gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Gerontological social workers appreciate 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.

COMPETENCY 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Gerontological social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Gerontological social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice.

COMPETENCY 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Gerontological social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Gerontological social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

COMPETENCY 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

Gerontological social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Gerontological social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development.

COMPETENCY 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services

Gerontological social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Gerontological social workers know 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. Gerontological social workers are able to apply the skills of advocacy to mold policies that are responsive to the needs of older people.

COMPETENCY 2.1.9 Respond to the contexts that shape practice

Gerontological social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Gerontological social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively.

COMPETENCY 2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Gerontological social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with older individuals, their families, groups, organizations and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances, evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

Students wishing to work with older adults -- either in direct practice or in an administrative capacity may also elect to pursue the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology. Students interested primarily in

administering programs for older adults are encouraged to pursue a Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management and Leadership.

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 2.3). 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 10 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 and critical thinking skills
- 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, which requires two and one half days per week of work during one semester. Typically, full-time students will take this course in the winter semester of the first year and part-time students will take this course in the winter term of their second year. In exceptional situations part-time students, with the approval of their advisor, may be granted the option of completing the foundation field experience over two semesters, beginning in the winter semester, and extending into the following summer. (Students who wish to pursue this option should meet with their academic advisor to make the appropriate arrangements. Students must work a minimum of 12 hour per week at the practicum site). 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 (with the exception of 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. This course

meets bi-weekly for two hours. A syllabus for the course is available on our webpage under the Field Education/MSW tab.

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 (SW6300, SW6311-12-13, SW6120, SW6250, SW6150 or SW6160 - *it is recommended that students take 6300 prior to 6311-12-13*); 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 three possible concentrations:

- 1) Family Practice
- 2) Social Work Leadership & Management
- 3) Gerontology.

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 winter 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. (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. Students should meet with their academic advisor to arrange this. **The entire concentration field experience must be completed in one 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.

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 verbal permission, the student should make his/her request in writing to the Office 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 describing their rationale for remaining at the same site and explaining how the concentration experience will differ from the foundation experience.** 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. This proposal must be submitted the semester prior to enrollment in the concentration practica (SW6800 & SW6850).

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. Students must have passing grades in the field placement and must be ranked as "accomplished" on each of the 10 core competencies outlined by the Council on Social Work Education during their final semester in practicum in order 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.**

ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE AND PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE WILL NOT BE GRANTED IN WHOLE OR IN PART IN LIEU OF THE FIELD PRACTICUM COURSES.

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 Directors 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 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 enunciated 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 students and who are willing to serve in this capacity.

- Provision of learning opportunities that meet the educational competencies of the foundation and/or concentration curriculum.
- Provision of staff time for planning student learning experiences, instruction, and evaluation of students.
- Facilitate research activities by students designed to evaluate professional practice.
- Administrative stability and staffing that assures continuity of instruction for students.
- Physical facilities that permit students adequate space for activities related to practicum objectives.

A complete list of approved sites is available to students via an online data base..

Practicum 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).
- 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 his/her schedule to meet the learning needs of students.
- Active participation in or completion of an 18 hour field instructor certification program.

Previous practicum 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 would occur in situations, for example, where the student may be assigned part time to two programs, sites or units within the agency, with the student's MSW/BSW instructor assigned to only one of them. The student may be assigned a task supervisor within the other site or unit who is available to provide hands on supervision and respond to questions from the student. In such cases, the student still meets weekly with his/her MSW/BSW supervisor, and that supervisor is ultimately responsible for that student's placement.

Evaluation of Students in Practicum

The 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, practice behaviors, activities that the student will engage in to demonstrate those practice 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 his/her field instructor at least once during the semester. 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.

Regarding evaluation and grading, the following process will occur:

- Upon approval of the Student Learning Agreement by the Office of Field Education, each agency supervisor 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 his/her progress. Periodic review of the student's learning agreement to assess progress towards mastering the competencies is recommended.
- At least once during the semester (more often if necessary), the student's faculty liaison will meet with the supervisor and the student to assess the student's progress and address any concerns raised by any party involved.
- At the mid-term point or when the student has completed approximately half of his/her 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 mailed or e-mailed to the Office of Field Education by the date listed on the instructions received in the mail.

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 on-site 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 their written request in writing using the appropriate form entitled "Application to Use Agency of Current Employment as Practicum Site" 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 he/she has 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 his/her practicum—to a social work 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 Practicum 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 and the student, will determine whether or not the student will be permitted to resume a practicum at a new site, and whether or not 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 institution 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, Section 200.010, Code of Student Conduct (UM-St. Louis Bulletin, www.umsl.edu/bulletin), and the School of Social Work Undergraduate and Graduate Student Handbook clearly delineate conduct for which a student can be sanctioned and/or disciplined.

In addition, sanctions (including but not limited to termination from the field placement and/or the program) may be imposed upon any student who has been found to have violated the professional expectations and standards described in the NASW Code of Ethics.

The School and University processes for addressing violation of the standards outlined in the documents cited above are outlined in the School of Social Work Undergraduate or Graduate Student [Handbook](#).

Responsibilities of Agency Field Instructors

The agency field supervisor 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 supervisor responsibilities include:

- Attending an orientation for new field instructors, completing an 18 hour certification program and participating in ongoing training for field instructors.
- Assisting the student with preparation of the learning agreement.
- Orientation of the student to field placement.
- Assuming instructional and administrative responsibility for the student in the field setting.
- 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 his/her performance.
- Meeting with the faculty field liaison from the University at least once during the semester, 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 (midterm and final evaluation forms) within the timeframes outlined.
- Updating the field instructor and organizational profile on-line at least once 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 his/her field experience.

- Assisting students with preparation of the practicum learning agreement.
- Consulting with the agency field supervisor and student to review progress and assess performance.
- Assisting students with any concerns they have relating to the agency field supervisor, 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 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 agency supervisor.

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 [UM-St. Louis 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 Use

Please see guidelines for the use of social media in social work practice on the [BSW/MSW Field Education webpage](#).

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 agency supervisor, 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 his/her 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 agency supervisor, 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. 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.