



**Stony Brook**  
*School of Social Welfare*  
*Office of Practicum Education*

**GRADUATE  
PRACTICUM  
EDUCATION MANUAL  
2023-2024**

**Health Sciences, Level 2, Room 092  
Stony Brook, New York 11794-8231**

# Forward

This manual primarily serves as a resource for students but should also be read by Instructors, Liaisons, and Faculty. It includes the objectives, policies and procedures relating to the shared responsibilities of the School of Social Welfare, agencies, Instructors, and students regarding Practicum Education. It serves as a guide to the Practicum Education component of our graduate program. Forms and calendars related to Practicum Education can be found on Blackboard, BrightSpace, and Sonia.

As the signature pedagogy of social work education, integrating theory into practice in a placement setting is instrumental in the development of a professional social work identity. The School of Social Welfare has adopted policies and procedures to be supportive to students, Faculty, and community-based partners in the learning process.

The materials have been developed as a result of ongoing experience between the School of Social Welfare and the professional community in our partnership to educate students for the profession. We hope the manual will be helpful, and we value ongoing suggestions and collaboration in improving the experience for our students.

Warmly,

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# School of Social Welfare

## Mission Statement

The School of Social Welfare is committed to building a more equitable society based on the values of human dignity, inclusiveness, diversity, equality, and on economic, environmental and social justice.

By advancing knowledge, engaging in systematic inquiry, and developing professional skills, we prepare students for social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and governments. The School teaches community advocacy, therapeutic intervention, individual and group empowerment, and the affirmation of strengths as a means of promoting individual and social change. As an integral part of our student-centered pedagogy, we prepare students to identify and analyze the nature and extent of structural inequality. We focus in particular, on social welfare as a pathway to enhance emotional, psychological and social well-being. We work closely with the university and greater community to fulfill this mission.

We recognize that structural inequality exists in multiple and overlapping layers of discrimination including class, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age and disability, among others. We therefore seek to remediate the impact of interpersonal and historical trauma, to foster human relationships that are grounded in social justice, human dignity and mutual respect, to develop new and just organizational forms, to transform already existing structures to reflect values that affirm and enhance human dignity and social diversity, and to identify new ways to influence social, economic and political systems to equitably distribute power, resources, rights and freedom.

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# Introduction

A well-rounded education in social work is best obtained through the integration of theory and practice. Practicum Education and classroom learning are integral parts of the graduate education experience. The School of Social Welfare teaches social work from the strengths perspective and uses person-in-environment as a basis for working with client systems. Our curriculum is guided by the nine social work competencies, the mission of the School of Social Welfare, and the six social work values outlined in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) [Code of Ethics](#). The Practicum Education component of the curriculum integrates a focus on generalist social work practice and competencies with the development of social work skills and the integration and application of social work theories and values in working with client systems. No academic credit is given for life experience or prior work experience.

During the first year of study, the curriculum concentrates on developing generalist practice through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (2022) nine competencies; demonstrate ethical and professional behavior; advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice; engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice; engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice; engage in policy practice; engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

In the second year students extend and enhance the experiences of the first year to strengthen knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes. Students become more skilled in integrating theory, practice and social work values and develop more autonomy with a consistent ability to work with more complex situations having multiple layers of intricacy. In addition students declare a specialization that defines the coursework and desired area of practice for the second year. The three specialization options are Community, Policy and Political Social Action (CPPSA), Families, Youth and Transition to Adults (FYT), and Integrated Health: Physical, Psychological, and Social Well Being (IH).

The student's experience includes supervision with an Instructor affiliated with an agency approved by the Office of Practicum Education. The Instructor has a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree; is licensed in New York State; has previously taken or is eligible to take SIFI; is an interested, concerned teacher, and a resource available to the student. The Instructor has both administrative and educational responsibilities. Instructors are responsible for the facilitation of student learning and for assuring the quality of services available to the client systems with which the student works in addition to helping the student integrate classroom learning, the School of Social Welfare's educational goals and competencies, into professional practice.

# I. Educational Program

## A. Graduate Program Educational Goals

Graduate social work education offers students an opportunity to understand the role of the social worker and to internalize the professional base of practice. The overall goals of the graduate program are to:

- Prepare social work practitioners who demonstrate the ability to use knowledge, values, and skills to work at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice within local, national and global contexts;
- Educate graduates to utilize social justice and human rights frameworks and to embrace social action practice;
- Inspire graduates who lead efforts to improve health and wellness in the lives of all people and to create a more just and life-affirming society;
- Promote the ability of graduates to engage in critical, self-reflective and ethical practice;
- Develop practitioners who utilize strengths-based, person-in-environment and empowerment approaches work that are informed by a respect for human dignity, diversity, and inclusiveness;
- Educate practitioners who are able to engage in research-informed practice models and who are able to contribute to the creation of knowledge of the Social Work profession by engaging in practice-informed research processes.

## B. Social Work Competencies (See Appendix A)

The Council on Social Work Education has developed a competency-based outcome performance approach to social work curriculum design. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. The behaviors represent observable components of the competencies (CSWE EPAS, 2022).

The first year of the graduate program focuses on generalist practice education. As defined by Council on Social Work Education:

“Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person and environment construct. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Generalist practitioners incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.”

The advanced year of the graduate curriculum has three specializations: Community, Policy and Political Social Action (CPPSA), Families, Youth and Transition to Adulthood (FYT), and Integrated Health: Physical, Psychological, and Social Well Being (IH).

The competencies listed below are utilized both years of the program. The competencies are differentiated by behaviors per competency which are included in **Appendix A**.

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
4. Engage In Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

### **C. Academic Format**

Practicum Education and Social Work Practice courses are registered sequentially and taken concurrently. All students in the generalist year taking HWC500 and HWC501, must take HWC513: Social Work Practice I and HWC514: Social Work Practice II concurrently. Students move to the advanced year only after successfully completing both HWC500/501 and HWC513/514. In addition, first year students are required to take courses in Human Behavior, Policy, Research, and Integrating Seminar.

Advanced Standing students have been accepted into the School of Social Welfare after completing a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree. Advanced Standings students enter the program as MSW Second Year students and follow the same academic format as traditional MSW Second Year students.

### **D. Practicum Education Format**

Students have one placement for the first year and one placement for the second year. Each placement must be separate and distinct in the clients served and the tasks required. The educational experiences available at the agency and the educational needs of the student are factors that help determine the student's placement. Practicum Education begins in September and goes through the fall, winter, and spring semesters and ends in mid-May, unless the placement requires an alternative start and/or end date. Students are required to follow the calendar and are **not permitted** to begin or complete placement outside of the calendar time frame. Two year MSW students are required to complete a total of 924 hours over two years of study. Advanced Standing MSW students are required to complete 693 hours over one year of study.

## II. Planning, Process, and Requirements

### A. Basic Placement Requirements

Each new agency is evaluated individually. There are basic requirements used when considering a new agency. The Instructor is an integral member of agency staff and offers regularly scheduled weekly individual supervision lasting a minimum of 1 hour for 14 hour per week students and 1½ hours per week for 21 hour per week students. The shared supervision model may be utilized by an agency with prior approval from Practicum Faculty. This model includes weekly group supervision with individual supervision occurring every three to four weeks. It is expected that the Instructor will be available to the student at other times outside of set supervisory time. Basic requirements of each agency include:

- The agency agrees to provide a range of experiences that relate to generalist and/or specialized practice.
- Agencies participate with the School of Social Welfare in educating students for professional practice in a variety of settings.
- The agency provides the student with an understanding of fiscal policies, organizational structure, functions, and managerial systems of the agency, and legal and confidentiality mandates that apply to the agency's service parameters.
- The agency has an explicit safety protocol that addresses the agency's response to emergency situations, physical safety at the agency, physical safety in the community and emotional safety as it relates to work within the agency. Direct communication and discussion of these agency based safety protocols between the Instructor/agency representative and the student(s) placed at the agency is required.

### B. Student Tasks and Assignments (see Appendix B)

The workload of each student should include:

- Assignments that emphasize micro, mezzo, and/or macro practice and include exposure to all practice modalities.
- Assignments can include in-person, remote, and/or a hybrid opportunities.
- Assignments should provide contact with clients systems (individuals, groups, or communities) and/or constituencies.
- An adequate number of assignments that provide an opportunity to work with individuals, communities, organizations, or policy issues encompassing varying ages, cultures, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, life styles, and the historically marginalized and oppressed.
- Experience in providing concrete services in social determinants of health areas such as, employment, housing, transportation, finance, education, legal, health, etc.
- Experience in intake, collaboration, use of consultation, referrals, assessments, research, committee work, community contacts, and/or work with groups.
- Experience in identifying and/or working to develop services for unmet client and agency needs.
- Experience in long and/or short-term interventions with client systems.

### C. Student Placement Process

An offer of admission to the School does not imply a guarantee of placement in a specific area of social work or with a specific agency. Decisions regarding individual placements are made within a broad context. The learning needs of each student, placement opportunities, and the

nature of the supervision available must be considered.

The policies for the placement process for students include:

- Students must communicate directly with their assigned Practicum Faculty regarding placement interests.
- Students **are not permitted to** contact an agency or Instructor without prior approval from Practicum Faculty. \*Students who violate this policy will not be permitted to intern at the agency that was contacted.
- Students must schedule and attend a pre-placement interview with the potential agency; after instructed to by their Practicum Faculty.
- Students and/or the Instructor must submit a placement confirmation form.
- Students must adhere to agency specific requirements for placement, which can include a criminal background check, fingerprinting, medical clearances, etc.
- Students **are not permitted to** intern at an agency setting that duplicates the services and/or population currently served at a place of employment or a prior internship.
- Placement for the second year is **not permitted** to be at the same agency, with the same Instructor, or in a similar setting, program, or practice modality as the first year. This limits the students ability to build generalist skills in a variety of settings.
- The student, prospective Instructor, and Practicum Faculty engage with each other in determining the suitability of the placement after a pre-placement interview.

### **1. First Year Placement Process**

The placement process for incoming and continuing part time students begins during the spring semester with placement planning orientation. Each student receives information regarding requirements and expectations after the student confirms an intent to enroll. Each student completes paperwork on Sonia where areas of interest, availability, and an updated professional resume are provided. Practicum Faculty are assigned to each student and begin the placement process by assessing a variety of factors including the student's interests, background, education, and previous experience. Practicum Faculty then locates an agency that will provide the student with an appropriate learning environment. Practicum Faculty maintains contact with the student and the agency throughout the placement process. A pre-placement interview, conducted by agency personnel, is required. The student, Practicum Faculty, and prospective Instructor engage in determining the suitability of the placement.

### **2. Second Year Placement Process**

Second year students are required to choose a specialization which dictates the area of focus for the second year placement. The specializations are Community, Policy and Political Social Action (CPPSA); Families, Youth and Transition to Adulthood (FYT); and Integrated Health: Physical, Psychological and Social Well Being (IH). More information can be found on the [School of Social Welfare's website](#).

During the spring semester of the first year, students begin the placement planning process for the second year. Students complete the placement planning form which includes information on the student's interests, goals, the student's current placement, and requires students to attach an updated professional resume. Once the paperwork is completed, students attend a placement planning orientation with Practicum Faculty to discuss available placement opportunities. Learning needs, strengths, and the second year specialization choice are identified in the meeting so that an appropriate placement match

can be made. In order to expose students to the broad range of roles and functions of social work practice, second year students are placed in a different type of program/agency from the first year, or BSW, placement experience. Placements are explored that offer second year students the ability to work in a more complex environment with more difficult client cases and with problems that require multifaceted interventions. Once options are identified, Practicum Faculty contacts the agency and communicates as much information as is needed to secure the best possible match for each student. Students then visit the agency for a pre-placement interview with agency personnel and suitability of the match is determined.

### **3. Placement Offer/Acceptance**

Once an agency extends an offer for placement, and the student accepts the offer, the Instructor will complete the “Agency-Student Placement Confirmation Form.” At this point, the placement process is complete for the School of Social Welfare. The student may still be required to complete the agency human resources onboarding process, which can include background checks, fingerprinting, physical exams, drug tests, other medical requirements, etc.

Once an internship is accepted, students are **not** permitted to accept an offer for full time, part time, or per diem employment at the agency prior to the end of the educational requirements. Students are not permitted to complete the minimum hours prior to the official end of the semester and/or year in order to accept an offer of employment.

### **D. Procedure for Failed Placement Planning**

Students will be required to meet with Practicum Faculty for a consultation if:

- The student is offered three placements within the allowable distance and reasonable accommodations being met and the student declines to accept all three;
- The student interviewed with three agencies and were not accepted for placement;
- A combination of the above leading to three failed/rejected placements during the placement season and throughout the corresponding academic year.

The consultation meeting will include the student, Practicum Faculty, and may also include the Liaison, and will include feedback from agency personnel conducting the interview. At the conclusion of the meeting, a written summary of any recommendations and next steps will be forwarded to all parties.

### **E. Procedure for Placement Related Issues**

It is not uncommon for students to experience issues related to assigned tasks, expectations, supervision, etc. during placement. In such cases, students should take the following steps, in order:

- 1) Discuss the issues with the Instructor during weekly supervision or as needed;
- 2) If the issue(s) persist, request a meeting with the Instructor and Liaison;
- 3) If the issue(s) persist, request a meeting with the Instructor, Liaison, and Practicum Faculty.

### **F. Calendar**

The Practicum Education year for graduate students at the School of Social Welfare consists of 33 weeks beginning in September and continuing through mid-May. **Students are not permitted to start placement early, discontinue, terminate, end, or complete placement early.** Practicum Education is a year-long course that is divided into two semesters

and the transition is marked by the completion of the required minimum hours and semester evaluation.

Prior to each semester, a calendar is sent to all agencies and students. Students are in placement when the agency is open, except as indicated on the calendar. If the agency is closed on a student's regularly scheduled placement day these hours **must** be made up by the student.

### **1. Extension of Hours**

Students must complete required hours during the fall and spring semesters. Students who fall behind in accruing hours are expected to forfeit breaks in order to make progress towards completing the minimum required hours. In these situations, the student must alert the Instructor and Liaison so an educationally sound plan that preserves the integrity of the experience can be formulated.

In order for students to be approved for an extension of hours they must complete a minimum of 85% of the required hours (178.50 hours for 14 hour per week students and 267.75 hours for 21 hour per week students) no later than December 15 for the fall semester. Students must complete 85% of the required hours (392.70 hours for 14 hour per week students and 589.05 hours for 21 hour per week students) no later than May 1 for the spring semester. Students who fail to meet the hour requirements by the specified date may not be allowed to move forward in the educational program until the hours are completed.

Note: It is the policy of the School of Social Welfare that students will not progress from the fall to the spring semester until all requirements of the fall semester are complete. An extension of hours request form must be submitted if the fall and/or spring hours will not be completed by the required date. The extension request must be submitted by the student and approved by the Instructor, Liaison, and Faculty. In addition, having received an extension, students that have not completed their Spring practicum hours over the summer and will not have done so by the second week of the new, Fall semester, will not be allowed to begin their second year practicum assignment as completing the prior year's practicum while in second year, specialization classes will ensure students are out of curriculum sequence and prevent them from fulfilling 85% of their hours by the aforementioned deadline.

### **G. Required Hours**

Two year MSW students must register for a minimum of 4 credits (14 hours per week) per semester. Advanced Standing MSW students must register for 6 credits (21 hours per week). Two year MSW students must register for 6 credits when the agency requires a minimum of 21 hours per week.

A number of competitive placements require interns to complete 21 hours per week and school based placements require students to continue in placement until the school year ends; typically in June. Students are required to meet these specific expectations and the requirements **are not negotiable** at any point throughout the placement.

During the second year placement, MSW/MPH students devote 135 hours to developing a practicum proposal and two deliverables that fulfill the requirements of the MPH program. The 135 hours are counted towards **both** the MSW and MPH requirements. Students should note, in the comments section on Sonia, which 135 hours were used for the MPH practicum.

Semester Credits	Hours Per Week	Fall/Spring Semester	Weeks Per Year
4	14	210/252	33
6	21	315/378	33

Students who fall behind on hours, for whatever reason, will often increase the weekly hours in order to catch up. Completion of more than 21 hours per week requires prior approval from the Office of Practicum Education, the placement agency, and the assigned Instructor.

### H. Lunch and Dinner Breaks

**Lunch, dinner, and other breaks are not counted as part of the student’s total hours.** If students are in placement for more than six hours New York State requires that a 30 minute break be taken. Section 162 of the New York State Labor Law provides as follows:

“Every person employed in or in connection with a mercantile or other establishment or occupation coming under the provisions of this chapter shall be allowed at least thirty minutes for the noonday meal, except as in this chapter otherwise provided. The noon day meal period is recognized as extending from eleven o'clock in the morning to two o'clock in the afternoon. An employee who works a shift of more than six hours which extends over the noonday meal period is entitled to at least thirty minutes off within that period for the meal period.” (N.Y.S Department of Labor/Meal Period Guidelines)

“Every person employed for a period or shift of more than six hours starting between the hours of one o'clock in the afternoon and six o'clock in the morning, shall be allowed ...forty-five minutes for a meal period when employed in or in connection with a mercantile or other establishment or occupation coming under the provision of this chapter, at a time midway between the beginning and end of such employment. *The Department will permit a shorter meal period of not less than 30 minutes as a matter of course, without application by the employer, so long as there is no indication of hardship to employees*” (N.Y.S Department of Labor/Meal Period Guidelines).

### I. Absences

The following are the policies/procedures for student absence from placement:

- Promptness and regularity of attendance are expected of all students;
- Students are not permitted to take off to complete coursework;
- Days that a student is absent from placement due to sickness, religious holidays, agency holidays, Community Learning Day, etc. are to be made up;
- Students are required to notify the assigned Instructor in cases of unavoidable absence or lateness. If a student is going to be absent, the Instructor must be notified during business hours and confirm the Instructor received the communication. Contact should not exclusively include text messages or emails.
- Agencies are expected to respect any student's request for religious observance and school-sponsored activities.

### J. Travel by Students

Many agencies are located in Suffolk and Nassau Counties where public transportation is limited. Although there are a few placements available on, or near the Stony Brook University campus, the School **cannot** guarantee a placement that does not require access to a vehicle. The

School is unable to provide transportation or travel expenses for students. The agency **may** reimburse the student for travel expenses incurred in making visits and/or travel related to the student's assignments, this does not include travel to the agency.

The agency may request that students transport clients in a personal vehicle. The School strongly advises against such practice. The School assumes no responsibility for this practice. If students choose to transport clients in a personal vehicle, verification of insurance coverage and limits is strongly encouraged and inquiry should be made into the agency's policy regarding liability.

#### **K. Community/Home Visits**

Community/home visits are an integral component of many agencies. Agencies are expected to take appropriate measures to minimize danger and ensure the safety of students. The same safeguards of good practice provided to agency staff apply to students with additional support when needed. The School expects that Instructors provide appropriate and adequate guidelines and support to students undertaking this task. It is the students responsibility to follow up with the Instructor for training and best practices of community/home visits. Review the Safety Tips in Placement and the Safety Checklist included in **Appendix D**.

#### **L. Malpractice Insurance**

An increasing number of agencies require that students possess individual malpractice insurance and the School of Social Welfare **strongly encourages** students to consider this option. The agency's position on this matter is determined at the student's pre-placement interview. Students may purchase malpractice insurance after becoming student members of the NASW. Students can contact NASW at 800.638.8799 or [visit the NASW website](#).

#### **M. Background Checks**

Some agencies require prospective interns to undergo screening as a prerequisite to placement. Screenings may include background checks, social security trace, credit check, criminal history, drug testing, fingerprinting, child abuse screening, sex offender registries, etc. Students placed at an agency that requires screening(s) are responsible for all costs, unless the agency pays the cost. Following screenings, the agency determines acceptance of the student. The School of Social Welfare assumes no responsibility for obtaining student background checks or drug tests, paying for the background checks or drug tests, evaluating the results of the background checks or drug tests, or for providing the information to agencies.

Students may choose not to be subjected to a background check. Practicum Faculty will work with the student to identify an appropriate agency, but **cannot** guarantee referral to an agency that does not require background checks.

CastleBranch: For those referred to Stony Brook Hospital, or its affiliates, CastleBranch is the vendor used to manage, collect, and verify the screening and/or medical information. Students referred to Stony Brook Hospital will need to register and pay for a CastleBranch account.

#### **N. Accommodations/Americans with Disabilities Act**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, contact [Student Accessibility Support Center \(SASC\)](#), Stony Brook Union,, SASC@stonybrook.edu, 631.632.6748. SASC will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation are confidential. If



substantiated the student may also alert the School of Social Welfare ADA Coordinator. SASC advises the School of Social Welfare on reasonable accommodations. Practicum Faculty may discuss accommodations needed for a student with an Instructor to enhance the student's learning experience.

**O. Labor Disputes at an Agency**

The School of Social Welfare's position regarding a labor dispute/strike at an agency is that students **do not** cross picket lines. In the event of such labor action the agency and student should inform the Liaison and Practicum Faculty. The School makes the decision as to whether or not the student(s) will continue at the current agency or be replaced. Time lost because of a labor dispute does not change the total hour requirements.

## III. Placement Expectations

### A. Supervision

The Instructor must provide regular and ongoing individual supervision with the student as the minimum requirement. The weekly meeting must be at least 1 hour for students doing a 14 hour per week placement and at least 1 ½ hours for students doing a 21 hour per week placement. Group supervision is a helpful addition to individual supervision.

A shared supervision model has been instituted with a number of agencies. This model provides a group of students with a qualified Instructor who provides weekly group supervision and individual supervision every 4 weeks. The students are placed in various programs within the agency and are given a Task Supervisor. The Task Supervisor is responsible for the day to day supervision and assignment of tasks for the student and the qualified Instructor provides the integration of social work values, ethics, competencies, and perspective to the students through group and individual supervision. The Instructor approves the students' hours on Sonia, and in consultation with the Task Supervisor, submits all student evaluations. For further information regarding the shared supervision model contact the Office of Practicum Education.

The School requires Instructors to review the agency safety protocols (**Appendix D**) with student(s) as well as review anything specific the student must follow. Safety issues should be incorporated into supervision so that students may discuss any concerns and/or gain information on how to deal with a safety issue that might present in practice.

### B. Documentation

Agencies vary in the kind of documentation required for client records. Students are expected to maintain appropriate and timely records of activities and to comply with the agency's use of forms and records and to respect confidentiality. It is **required** that Instructors and students utilize process recordings as a learning tool. Graduate students complete one to three process recordings per week. Instructors determine the number required each week with additional process recordings required based upon the educational needs of the student. Instructors are expected to provide 1 hour of a student's weekly hours for the completion of process recordings. The process recording format (micro, macro, and group) that students must utilize is available on Sonia and process recordings must be submitted via Sonia.

### C. Assignment

All graduate students are required to submit an assignment on Sonia during each academic year. Details regarding this assignment will be distributed to students mid-year.

### D. Education Plan

The Education Plan is a roadmap for the academic year. It has four major purposes:

- To describe the goals that the student and Instructor have formulated regarding learning assignments, responsibilities and skill development;
- To assess the student's baseline level of competency at the beginning of the year;
- To describe the student's current and anticipated assignments; and
- To identify educational objectives for the academic year.

The education plan is completed once per year by the Instructor with the student present. The student is required to make comments and submit those comments with the education plan. The

completed education plan is submitted via Sonia. The education plan will be reviewed by the Liaison and shared with Practicum Faculty, if necessary. The education plan facilitates coordination between the School and agency by providing early identification of issues related to workload and assignments and offers an opportunity for the Instructor and student to identify any other issues.

### **E. The Evaluation Process**

The evaluation of the student's performance is an important aspect of the student's professional development. Evaluation is a mutual process between the Instructor and student and entails an ongoing process of assessment. It is suggested that Instructors plan a mid-semester evaluation conference and an evaluation conference four weeks prior to the due date of the written evaluation. The written evaluation should reflect prior discussions between the Instructor and the student and describe progress and areas for further development. It should be definitive about the boundaries of competence. The Instructor is responsible for completing an evaluation at the end of each semester. There are different evaluations for the first and second year of the program with each evaluation based on the nine competencies and reflects the depth of knowledge, skills and values expected at each level.

A grading scale, including details about pass/fail grades, is available on the evaluation. Performance expectations are provided as a tool to guide Instructors in the assessment and evaluation of student learning. This is a guide for what to look for and address, as skill development and competency integration are fluid and an ongoing process. The student should continue to develop and integrate the competencies throughout the year. The nine competency behaviors are different for each level of the MSW program. The goal is for the student to achieve the competency standards of the current year.

The student must be given the opportunity to read the evaluation. The Instructor and student then discuss it and may agree on changes. After the Instructor submits the evaluation, the student then completes the student section of the evaluation. The student's submission verifies that the evaluation was reviewed. It **is the student's responsibility** to follow up with the Instructor to ensure that the evaluation(s) are completed in a timely manner and that the hours are approved via Sonia. It is School policy not to provide copies of evaluations to any external person, entity, or prospective employer. Students should keep a copy of the evaluations for future needs.

### **F. Practicum Education Grade**

The School assumes responsibility for final decisions on all educational matters and Practicum Faculty will assign final grades for Practicum Education. HWC500/501/502/503 Practicum Education I/II/III/IV are graded as Satisfactory (S) or Fail (F). A failing grade will automatically place a student on academic probation, the matter will be referred to the Academic and Professional Progress Committee, and the student will not be allowed to advance to the next semester of Practicum Education or practice.

At the end of each semester, Liaisons review requirements to ensure that all documentation is complete and that evaluations are satisfactory. Once all documentation is received, and the evaluation is reviewed, a grade will be assigned. If the evaluation is not satisfactory, a meeting will be convened to discuss an educationally sound plan. To receive a passing grade for the fall and spring semester students must complete all items listed below:



<b>MSW Students</b>	
<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>
Orientation Attendance	Passing Grade for the Fall Semester
Education Plan	Assignment
Fall Evaluation	Spring Evaluation
15 process recordings	18 process recordings
210 (First & Second Year); 315 (Advanced Standing) Approved Hours on Sonia	252 (First and Second Year); 378 (Advanced Standing) Approved Hours on Sonia

**1. Master of Social Work/Master of Public Health (MSW/MPH) Students**

During the second year placement, MSW/MPH students must meet the requirements for the MPH practicum. 135 hours of placement are devoted to developing a practicum proposal and two deliverables. Students are assigned an MPH Practicum Advisor. Full MPH Practicum requirements are available on the [Program in Public Health website](#).

In addition to the above requirements, to receive a passing fall grade MSW/MPH students must submit a satisfactory practicum proposal to the Practicum Advisor.

In addition to the above requirements, to receive a passing spring grade MSW/MPH students must submit two satisfactory practicum deliverables to the Practicum Advisor.

**G. Performance Improvement Plans (PIP)**

There are situations when the agency or School may require the development of a PIP. Prior to a PIP it is important for the Instructor to speak with the student about all concerns, provide clear feedback, and time for the student to improve on areas of concern. If the student is still unable to meet expectations, the Instructor will contact the Liaison to explore the need for a PIP. If a PIP is needed, the student, Instructor, and Liaison meet to discuss goals, expectations, and timeframes for the student to meet all expectations. The Liaison will write the PIP with input from all parties. The PIP will be available on Sonia for the Practicum Faculty, Liaison, Instructor, and student. A followup meeting will be scheduled with the student, Instructor and Liaison to assess progress and/or need for further action or support. If a student remains unable to perform to expectations of the learning and/or behavioral goals within the PIP, the student will be referred to the School of Social Welfare's Academic and Professional Progress Committee to determine next steps.

**H. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

Prior to the first year, students are required to complete a training on HIPAA regulations. Agencies are expected to introduce students to the specific HIPAA policies and procedures that pertain to the agency.

## IV. Student Expectations

### A. Professional Behavior

Students are expected to adhere to competency one - Demonstrating Ethical and Professional Behavior and are accountable to clients, the agency, the community, the School, and the social work profession. Students are expected to embrace the [NASW Code of Ethics](#); adhere to the Stony Brook University [Code of Student Responsibility](#); the School of Social Welfare Technical Standards; the School of Social Welfare Academic Expectations; the Stony Brook University Sexual Harassment Policy Statement; and the School of Social Welfare Policy Statement Concerning Heterosexism and Homophobia. The full details of these policies can be found in the MSW Program Student Handbook.

While matriculated in the School of Social Welfare students may not engage in private therapeutic intervention (work) with clients, unless licensed by New York State to engage in such practice as a result of possession of another professional degree, license, or certificate (ex. LMFT, LMHC, etc.). Students may only engage in such professional practice for which a license or certification is held. A referral to the Academic and Professional Progress Committee will be initiated as a consequence of violation of this policy.

One of the principles enunciated in the NASW Code of Ethics is that "the social worker should not misrepresent professional qualifications, education, experience, or affiliations." A strongly suggested title for students is "Social Work Intern." Students must be honest about the limited time an intern spends with the agency. Questions that arise on such matters as the limited time in at the agency and planned termination are to be dealt with honestly.

Stony Brook University expects students to maintain standards of personal integrity that are in harmony with the educational goals of the institution; to observe national, state, and local laws and University regulations; and to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people.

While the University is a place where the free exchange of ideas and concepts allows for debate and disagreement, all classroom behavior and discourse should reflect the values of respect and civility. As an extension of the classroom, students are expected to maintain the same values in placement. Students have both the right to learn and the responsibility to participate in and respect the learning process. As Practicum Education is considered an essential part of each student's curriculum, Instructors are expected to contact the Office of Practicum Education if there is concern about a student's behavior at the agency.

#### **1. Professional use of Technology (See Appendix C)**

Students will come into contact with individuals who utilize social media for various reasons. Students must be aware of the ways individuals can obtain personal information, initiate virtual connections, and learn about family and friends on social media. It is important to look at social media from a personal and professional perspective. Clients and staff of the agency will be able to view students as presented through social media. It is important for students to maintain professional boundaries by maintaining private social media accounts for the duration of the social work program; by not initiating connection, or accepting connection requests with clients, clients' family and friends, or agency staff. Students should inform the Instructor if clients make a request to connect with social media. Students must be guided by social work values and ethics and this responsibility extends to the virtual and

technological world.

## **B. Responsibilities of the Student in Practicum Education**

### **1. Responsibilities to Clients:**

- to practice social work in a disciplined manner and at the highest level of competence;
- to work to maintain and improve social work skills, of one's own and others;
- to offer service promptly, courteously, and without prejudice, putting the client's interests first, before one's own convenience;
- to refrain from engaging in personal relationships of any kind with clients;
- to refrain from accepting gifts from clients or client's family;
- to respect the privacy of clients, the right of clients to use services, and to prevent exploitation.

### **2. Responsibilities to Agency:**

- to fully cooperate with the Instructor and other agency personnel with regard to expectations about learning and reporting responsibilities including documentation, identification of goals, problems, and needs;
- to furnish all reports and other work required on time; to devote the required number of hours in placement; to respond flexibly when hours have to be modified because of client or agency need; to notify agency of anticipated absences and/or lateness; to keep Instructor and agency informed of whereabouts on agency time;
- to help Instructors define and keep an educational focus based on student learning needs;
- to carry out service and other activities in compliance with agency policy and practice, including home visits as indicated;
- to evaluate agency policies and practices and work responsibly for improvements;
- to enhance agency efforts, when possible, through meeting of client need(s), development of new resources, public relations contacts, feedback, and sharing of new learning; and
- to discover how one's own learning experiences may simultaneously promote one's growth as a professional and augment the agency's capacity to function effectively;
- to regularly attend placement, with three absences per semester being the maximum allowable time a student can miss placement. Note: all missed days/hours **must be made up** by the student.
- disclose any prior relationships, or knowledge of, a client or service provider to the Instructor prior to engaging with them.

### **3. Responsibilities to School:**

- to maintain communication with both the Instructor and the Liaison on issues related to the placement experience;
- to provide feedback in classes from the placement experience;
- to fulfill all educational requirements including completing the minimum number of required hours;
- to participate in Practicum Education activities; and
- to responsibly budget time to allow for adequate attention to both class and placement.

### **4. Responsibilities to Self:**

- to identify learning needs and objectives;

- 
- to be ethical in all activities;
  - to complete required expectations;
  - to apply self fully to learning and services;
  - to demonstrate willingness to recognize the needs of others in the partnership system (i.e., clients, workers, Instructor, Liaison, community); and
  - to immediately discuss any issues with the Instructor; including any interpersonal issues that may be occurring in the working relationship with the Instructor.

### **C. Use of Agency Material for Class Assignments**

The student's experience in Practicum Education is an integral part of learning and case material is used in classroom education. Students must redact the material used in compliance with HIPAA so that client confidentiality is maintained.

### **D. Student Access to Files**

The Office of Practicum Education maintains an active file of student paperwork. Students have access to this file through Sonia. The record(s) are part of the student's permanent file.

# V. Agency, School, Student Relationship

## A. Affiliation Agreement

The School of Social Welfare welcomes the opportunity to establish a formal affiliation with each agency. A standard State University of New York Clinical Affiliate Agreement is available to all agencies.

## B. Communication: Agency/School/Student

Practicum Faculty and Liaisons serve as a "connecting bridge" between the agency and the School. Liaisons make contact at least three times a semester with the Instructor, student, and practice professor. As part of the monitoring process, contacts and agency visits provide an opportunity to discuss with the Instructor, student, and other agency staff the student's assignments, skill level, knowledge base and value base. This allows Liaisons to discuss the student's learning and supervisory needs with all members of the team. The School stays informed about the student experience and progress through contact with the agency, evaluations submitted by the Instructor, student discussions with Practicum Faculty, student presentations in practice courses, and student assignments.

## C. Functions of Practicum Faculty

The specific functions of Practicum Faculty include:

- Implementing Practicum Education policies and procedures established by the School;
- Selecting agencies in keeping with the established policies of the School;
- Serve as the supervisor to assigned Liaisons;
- Approving the designation of Instructors in accordance with established and approved policies and criteria of the School;
- Serving as an agency/school Liaison;
- Providing the structure and channel for discussion of student progress and concerns;
- Consulting with Instructors and other appropriate Faculty in regard to students;
- Providing the SIFI to new Instructors;
- Assigning student grades in Practicum Education.

## D. Functions of Liaison

Liaisons are representatives of the School who coordinate assigned students' experience. The Liaison's role is to monitor the student's educational growth, the Instructor's teaching, and the agency's ability to provide an appropriate educational experience. The Liaison must be available to discuss a student's placement during the academic year. The development of the relationship between the Instructor, student, and Liaison is of utmost importance to the success of the experience. If difficulties arise with any aspect of placement during the academic year, the Liaison is expected to inform Practicum Faculty immediately. Liaisons are assigned to each practice course of 20-25 students.

The specific functions of the Liaison include:

- Contacting each assigned student and agency three times per semester via visit(s), telephone, email, or arranged meetings;
- Conducting an agency visit with each student and the Instructor once per year; in person or via Zoom;
- Conducting a classroom visit during the fall semester;
- Reviewing and approving students education plan and fall and spring evaluations;
- Reading and commenting on assignments for first year, second year, and advanced

- standing MSW students;
- Completing a Liaison Progress Report Form in Sonia after each contact;
- Attending one Liaison meeting per semester, via Zoom;
- Reading the Graduate manual;
- Understanding the competencies and articulate the details to Instructors and students;
- Recommending a semester grade based on the reading of the evaluation.

## **E. Agency Selection**

The Office of Practicum Education is committed to social change and will seek new arenas of social work practice, and to extend the parameters of professional practice. One way of accomplishing this is to use new arenas for placement settings. In addition to the basic requirements listed under Section II in this manual, the School selects agencies whose orientation and practice is consistent with the mission of the School. Prior to acceptance, agencies submit information about the services provided and describe anticipated learning experiences available for students. It is the responsibility of the agency to inform the Office of Practicum Education of any changes within the agency. Agencies are evaluated to ensure that:

- The agency exhibits a professional level of practice;
- The agency provides a recognized quality of service in which the social work component is under the direction of staff having a MSW degree from accredited School of Social Work. Exceptions may be made to these qualifications for certain types of agencies such as those which offer professional services that are not otherwise available to populations identified in the School's mission, and those agencies able to provide an educationally sound experience for students.
- The agency leadership supports professional education and is willing to provide an atmosphere in which a variety of meaningful education experiences can take place.
- The agency is able to provide a variety of graduated and meaningful learning experiences through in-person and virtual micro, mezzo, and macro assignments related to the student's educational needs.
- Agencies should be open and willing to encourage students to implement practice approaches reflecting classroom learning.
- The agency offers opportunities for the student to participate in staff meetings, conferences, and the usual work of the agency whenever it is appropriate.

## **F. Agency Instructors**

### **1. Selection**

The standards for approval of an Instructor are the same whether the School places the student or the student is using the employee-based placement option. Instructors are selected on the basis of the commitment to social change and general philosophic agreement with the Mission of the School. Instructors must demonstrate an acceptable level of social work practice, an ability to supervise students, and an understanding of the conceptual framework within which social work is practiced. Instructors are expected to provide opportunities for students to try out social change activities in the professional setting, to implement practice approaches reflecting classroom learning, and to provide a supportive atmosphere within the agency for students to work. In keeping with the mission and the practice orientation of the School, interventions should include systems that impact clients' lives and problems. Instructors must have an MSW from an accredited graduate school of social work; hold a New York State license to practice social work; have at least three years of post-MSW supervised experience; and be willing to take the SIFI course.

## **2. Responsibilities**

Instructors are expected to:

- Provide an orientation to the setting including: purpose, function, policy and goals of the organization; source of funding; population and geographic area served; relationship of the agency to other community agencies; activities and services provided; agency evaluation methods used; expectations of student and role of instructor; personnel regulations and lines of communication and agency protocols; HIPAA compliance; and provide and review all safety protocols and procedures with students.
- Continue with the student throughout the academic year.
- Be familiar with the School's curriculum and objectives for Practicum Education.
- Utilize the competencies as a guide to development of assignments and teaching.
- Provide initial assignments within two weeks so the student is learning by doing and increase the complexity of the assignments in accordance with progress.
- Confer with the Liaison in relation to the student's performance and progress.
- Submit the Education Plan, Fall and Spring Evaluations, timesheets, and other forms.
- Review and provide feedback on process recordings during weekly supervision.
- Provide 1 hour of weekly individual supervision for a 14 hour per week student and 1 1/2 hours for 21 hour per week students or follow the shared supervision model, if approved.
- Establish educational goals together with the student to ensure that learning needs are considered in the assignment of cases or projects.
- Review the agency safety protocols with student(s) throughout the placement and review specifics students must follow. Incorporate safety issues into supervision so students may discuss concerns and learn about safety issues.
- Select assignments for the student and arrange for participation in activities that enhance the student's knowledge of micro, mezzo, and macro work.
- Support the student to begin to develop as a social work professional by helping students learn to communicate effectively through verbal and written means.
- Help students become aware of strengths, limitations, and areas of development.
- Support the student's examination/assessment of the impact of agency structure and function on service to clients.

## **3. Task Supervision**

Some agencies will provide supervision from someone other than an Instructor. Task Supervisors can be a social worker who doesn't meet the Instructor requirements; a non-social worker; and/or someone who has expertise different from the Instructor. Not all agencies provide this type of supervision. To have this arrangement implemented successfully, Instructors are expected to retain overall responsibility for the student's experience, remain accountable for the quality of all teaching, continue to meet with the student for supervision with the student, maintain primary responsibility for the teaching of social work, for the evaluation of the student's performance, and maintain contact with the Task Supervisor. The Task Supervisor may also meet regularly with the student and confer with the Instructor to have for the student evaluations. Task Supervisors cannot complete forms on Sonia including timesheets, education plan, and evaluations. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain clear, open, and consistent communication with Task Supervisors and Instructors.

## VI. Changes in, Discontinuance of, or Discharge from Placement

Changes in, or discontinuance of, placement prior to the scheduled completion date is a serious step involving careful evaluation. The agency, the student, or the School may initiate consideration of such a step. It is expected that in situations where this is being considered, considerable prior activity has occurred in which the problems and issues have been discussed and worked on between the student, Instructor, Liaison, and Faculty. Instructors and students should initiate and maintain contact with the Liaison as early as possible and before problems appear serious enough to consider discontinuance.

Every effort is made to arrange educationally sound placements for students, it may become apparent that a setting is not providing an adequate experience. This may be due to a variety of factors which could not be anticipated prior to placement, such as: lack of suitable assignments, agency problems, or pressures interfering with the educational experience. Students are urged to bring any problems to the attention of the Liaison **immediately**. Every effort is made to help resolve problems so the student may continue with the experience. When this is not possible, and after several meetings to problem solve, a change of placement **may** be considered.

When a student is terminated from placement for cause (the inability to meet agency expectations or perform required tasks, etc.) or if a student quits placement (and there are extenuating circumstances) the student will be referred to the School of Social Welfare's Academic and Professional Progress Committee. The outcome and recommendations from the committee meeting will determine next steps. The student and Instructor will complete a Discontinuance from Placement form on Sonia.

When a student quits a placement (and there are no extenuating circumstances) a meeting will occur between the student, Liaison, and Practicum Faculty to discuss next steps. The Liaison will complete a PIP, detailing the expectations the student must meet. The student and Instructor will complete a Discontinuance from Placement form on Sonia. When recommended, effort will be made to arrange placement at another agency. An immediate transfer to another agency is **not** guaranteed. Practicum Faculty will determine if the student will receive credit for hours completed at the first placement.

When a student begins a new placement, time is needed to become oriented to the structure, services, requirements, and expectations of the new agency. This adjustment requires time. Whatever the reason for the discontinuance, whenever a change of placement occurs, the student is required to complete an additional four weeks (56 hours for 4 credits and 84 hours for 6 credits) to the minimum required hours. **This requirement is not negotiable.**

Whatever the basis for the student's leaving an agency prior to the planned end date, students are expected to terminate agency commitments in a responsible and orderly fashion. This includes meeting with the agency to determine what termination procedures must be followed.

If a student is discharged from, or quits, two placements during the course of study, an immediate referral to the Academic and Professional Progress Committee will occur to discuss and evaluate all concerns and address continued enrollment.

## VII. Employer-Based Placement Option

Admission to the School does not imply approval of a student's request for use of a paid employment setting for a placement. The evaluation of suitability for this option is conducted after the student's admission to the School. Standards for approval of the agency and Instructor are the same whether the student is placed by the School or placed at a place of employment. This option may be utilized in the first year of the two year MSW program. Advanced standing and second year MSW students are **not** eligible for the employer-based option, even if the below criteria is met.

Students requesting use of the employer-based option for the first year experience must:

- Have three years of full-time social work agency experience acceptable to the School;
- Have the required social work agency experience within the five years prior to admission to the School;
- Have been supervised for a minimum of three years by a social worker who holds a MSW degree from a CSWE accredited school of social work; and
- Have received a bachelors' degree at least three years prior to requesting this option.
- The requested agency must be willing to outline a 14 hour per week educationally sound experience with an MSW Instructor who is licensed in New York State and is **not** the students current employment supervisor.
- The tasks outlined by the requested agency must be different from the students normal work experience. Agencies are expected to relieve students of any usual work responsibilities for 14 hours per week.

This is the only available option to complete an internship at a current place of employment. If the use of the student's place of employment is deemed unacceptable for any reason, the student must be placed at an agency by the process outlined previously.

\*This policy is not applicable to students admitted to the MSW program under certain grant funded programs.



## **VIII. Practicum Education Committee**

Student education occurs within a framework of close partnerships between the School and agencies. To continue to work collaboratively with agencies and Instructors, the School of Social Welfare has established a Practicum Education Committee. This Committee is the forum for discussing issues related to the educational needs of our students and the integration of these educational considerations into agency work.

The Committee is composed of Instructors, Faculty, and students from the graduate, and undergraduate programs. The Committee addresses issues that impact the quality of student learning in placement.

In addition, the Committee:

- Reviews policies and makes recommendations for changes and for new policies;
- Serves as a forum for resolution of issues related to implementation of policies; and
- Reviews and acts on exceptions to policy and where necessary, makes recommendations to the Faculty of the School of Social Welfare.

# Appendix A

## First and Second Year Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has identified Practicum Education as the signature pedagogy of social work education. CSWE has moved to a competency based model. Competencies assist in providing direction for designing learning experiences and assignments that will help students gain practice in using and applying the competencies in different contexts. The School has two sets of competencies, one for generalist year students and one for the advanced year students. There are nine competencies with descriptions, as well as a set of behaviors integrating the knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes that complement each competency. There are also nine advanced competencies that provide reinforcement of the core competencies but are at a more enhanced, advanced and complex level

The criteria for first year students emphasize the development of generalist practice while the criteria utilized for second year students emphasize advanced year social work practice. These experiences enhance the application of theoretical knowledge and integrate the student's academic and experiential learning. Over time, the student's practice shows increasingly effective strategies in helping client systems counteract the negative impact of previous dysfunctional transactions. In addition, a deepening understanding of the way in which society's negative valuations related to race, gender, class, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, among others, is evidenced in the student's practice.

Assessment of the student is based on performance and proven ability to meet these basic expectations. Instructors and students are reminded that all learning occurs on a continuum. During the two years of professional education the student is expected to become increasingly skillful in applying knowledge from classroom learning to practice. The student's knowledge and intellectual understanding are frequently ahead of the ability to integrate this into practice. Closing the gap is the major challenge for the two-year experience.

## First Year Competencies

Competencies & Descriptor Behaviors	Behaviors
<p><b>1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</b></p> <p>Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;</li> <li>● Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;</li> <li>● Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and</li> <li>● Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.</li> </ul>

**2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

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

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

**3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual

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

orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression. They demonstrate this competency by:

**4. Engage In Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice**

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

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



<p>understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	
<p><b>5. Engage in Policy Practice</b> Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and</li><li>● Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.</li></ul>
<p><b>6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b> Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</p> <p>Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and</li><li>● Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.</li></ul>

<p>power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	
<p><b>7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>  Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and</li> <li>● Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>  Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and</li> <li>● Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate,</li> </ul>



<p>and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<p>and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.</p>
<p><b>9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b> Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and</li><li>• Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</li></ul>

Competencies & Descriptor	Behaviors
<p><b>1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</b>            Second year students adhere to ethical standards of professional behavior extended to all levels of practice. Second year social work students articulate and advocate for social work values and ethics in practice, research and policy arenas. They consistently employ conscious self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-correction in practice. Second year students demonstrate enhanced professional judgment and behavior by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model ethical decision making by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;</li> <li>● Model professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;</li> <li>● Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice</b>            Second year students' understanding and appreciation of the importance of fundamental human rights regardless of position in society. They are knowledgeable about and able to respond to many forms of diversity and difference, power and privilege, and how these influence professional relationships and understanding of social problems at all levels of practice. Second year students have an enhanced ability to challenge the structures that perpetuate oppression and embrace the obligation to advance human rights and foster social, economic and environmental justice. They demonstrate this extended and enhanced practice by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Modifies and adapts interventions to meet the needs of diverse social, racial, and economic constituencies and challenge oppression; and</li> <li>● Use reflection and self-regulation to recognize and describe the impact of culture and diversity on one's personal and professional behavior.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice</b>            Second year students critically apply knowledge about anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion and extend it to all levels of practice. Second year students have an enhanced ability to challenge the structures that perpetuate oppression and embrace the obligation to advance human rights and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proactively challenge the structures that perpetuate racism and oppression at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels.</li> </ul>

foster social, economic and environmental justice. Second year students demonstrate an enhanced ability to apply research knowledge to enhance policy practice, human rights advocacy, client system wellbeing, and to work effectively with diverse populations including the recognition that diversity represents a source of strength among individuals and within communities that may assist in the accomplishment of social work intervention goals. They have enhanced skills to engage in community collaborations to advocate for policies to ensure that social goods, rights and responsibilities are distributed equitably. They demonstrate this extended and enhanced practice by:

**4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice**

Second year students extend their ability to critically integrate scientific evidence into social work interventions across all levels of practice. Second year students apply quantitative and qualitative methods to generate data and evidence from practice settings and demonstrate an enhanced ability to evaluate social policies and programs. Second year students have an enhanced ability to draw on practice experience to inform the development of new knowledge through research. They demonstrate this extended and enhanced practice by:

- Analytically examines practice experience to inform systemic scientific inquiry.

**5. Engage in Policy Practice**

Second year students extend their policy practice competency by analyzing, evaluating, and intervening in the relationship between social policy at the global, federal, state, and local levels and the provision of social work services in communities and organizations. To empower communities and to give voice to those who have traditionally been voiceless in the formation of policies that affect their lives, second year students have an enhanced ability to engage collaboratively with organizational and community stakeholders to assess, formulate and amend policies to

- Develops and advocates for social policies that enhance the delivery of and access to social services that adheres to an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens; and
- Develops and advocates for social policies that advance human rights.

<p>improve programs and services. They have an enhanced ability and commitment to advocate for policy initiatives based on insights and experiences gleaned from all practice levels. They demonstrate this extended and enhanced practice by:</p>	
<p><b>6. Engage with Individual, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>          Second year students routinely integrate insights from human behavior theories and research evidence to enhance engagement strategies with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities while consistently maintaining a client-centered, strengths-perspective orientation. Second year students have an enhanced ability to autonomously use interpersonal skills in relationship building across levels of practice, and to use empowering and culturally responsive approaches to engagement. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consistently identify and implement theoretically informed engagement strategies; and</li> <li>● Purposefully use differential engagement skills in a culturally responsive manner with multiple client systems.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>          Second year students have an enhanced ability to assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities using a multi-level, structural approach to identify the locus of intervention targets. Second year students have an enhanced ability to apply a complex matrix of human development, cultural, and life-cycle variables as well as relevant policy, environmental and structural issues to provide a strengths and evidence-based assessment of social change potential. Second year students have an enhanced ability to engage in assessment processes using valid assessment tools, identifying the biases, challenges and limitations of assessment frameworks in relationship to diverse socioeconomic status, racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, cultural and lifestyle factors. They demonstrate this competency by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrate the ability to autonomously collect, organize, critically analyze and interpret client and system data in complex practice situations.</li> </ul>

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

Second year students extend this competency by differentially applying multiple intervention strategies utilizing culturally grounded approaches with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Second year students use and critically analyze multiple theoretical perspectives and evidence-based practices to target obstacles encountered at multiple levels. They have enhanced ability to confront and manage individual social and behavioral determinants, family and group dynamics, and community and societal structural impediments to client health and well-being. They have an enhanced ability to autonomously choose, implement and monitor the appropriate steps and stages within intervention strategies while establishing procedures for process and outcome evaluation. They demonstrate this competency by:

- Demonstrate practice autonomy in selecting appropriate intervention strategies.

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

Second year students extend their ability to value and carry out the evaluation of practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Second year students have an enhanced ability to autonomously choose and use appropriate evaluation tools to conduct process and outcome evaluations for the purposes of determining effectiveness of applied interventions across multiple client systems. They demonstrate this competency by:

- Engage in evaluation of social work intervention using appropriate methods and strategies for process and outcome evaluation at each level of practice.



# **Appendix B**

## **Student Tasks and Assignments**

The curriculum for first year students is based upon generalist practice and therefore, student tasks and assignments should incorporate a range of modalities. In addition, micro, mezzo, and macro level assignments should be assigned to give the student the opportunity to experience a broad base of professional roles and functions. Typically this should involve some direct micro level work with clients and some work with larger client systems in the form of group work, community outreach, and/or program planning/administrative tasks.

The second year curriculum provides students with theoretical background to both micro level and to macro level interventions. Second year student placement tasks should also combine modalities within micro, group, and macro practice assignments. The amount and balance will depend upon agency capability and student learning needs. With these broad guidelines in mind, the following list provides a range of possible tasks and assignments for students within the first and/or second year placement.

**School of Social Welfare  
Stony Brook University**

**Ideas for Tasks and Assignments by Competency**

**Please Note:** Assignments should provide students with practice experiences that will augment, extend, enrich and build upon the social work knowledge, values, and skills acquired during the first year placement.

**1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behaviors - Student could:**

- Discuss the NASW Code of Ethics in relation to agency services, culture and client served;
- Demonstrate in a professional manner verbal, nonverbal and written communication skills through client notes, process recordings, letter writing, report writing, case presentations, attendance at staff meetings, work with clients, and work with staff;
- Read agency policies and discuss;
- Attend staff meetings at the agency;
- Seek feedback from other social work staff;
- Be an active member of an interdisciplinary team;
- Participate in community meetings representing the agency and its clients;
- Be responsible for case notes, meeting minutes, and other record keeping tasks;
- Interview social workers at the agency;
- Discuss the differences in social work roles from that of other human service and/or mental health professionals;
- Discuss the different social work roles within the profession;
- Discuss the differing responses to client situations depending on the type of organization a social worker is employed in;
- Discuss agency mission, goals and integrate into practice;
- Demonstrate personal reflection and self-correction in supervision and/or via process recordings;
- Attend appropriate educational seminars, trainings, and/or conferences;
- Discuss through case examples the importance of maintaining boundaries;
- Discuss case examples on all levels of practice with ethical dilemmas;
- Read/discuss agencies protocol on ethical dilemmas;
- Use a case examples in supervision to discuss the possible conflict between personal and professional values in practice;
- Employs a critical analysis of various options when exploring increasingly complex ethical dilemmas;
- Engages in ethical decision-making including anticipating potential and unintended consequences;
- Demonstrate the importance of relationships and the ethical implications of the power in those relationships;
- Discuss ethical implications of not supporting clients and communities to vote in social work practice;
- Use supervision to discuss and determine what policies may deter voter turnout;
- Use supervision to discuss and determine strategies to engage organizations and communities in voting.

**2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental**

### **Justice - Student could:**

- Be assigned a case(s) that is of different culture/gender/age/ than student;
- Discuss in supervision a client's culture, values and history and how these may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
- Discuss in supervision how an individual, group and/or community's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim;
- Do research on the special populations served by the agency;
- Review process recordings and discuss how differences in life experiences influences thoughts and behaviors of clients;
- Discuss areas of personal growth needed in terms of cultural diversity;
- Develop outreach strategies that are culturally competent;
- Review what student learned in the classroom on culturally competent practice and its relation to the clients the student serves;
- Be provided with case(s) to implement culturally competent practice;
- Use process recording(s) to discuss culturally competent practice interventions used with clients;
- Read and discuss articles/books on culturally competent practice.

### **3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice - Students could:**

- Discuss in supervision these concepts and how the concepts relate to clients, agency policy, and governmental policies;
- Identify and discuss in supervision how the role of advocacy at the agency is used to advance social and economic justice;
- Be given the opportunity to work with those from traditionally oppressed populations; to better understand issues of human rights and social and economic justice;
- Discuss in supervision the impact of social and economic injustices on the clients being served;
- Develop client/consumer participation in design, implementation and evaluation of agency programs;
- Discuss in supervision whether the agency required paperwork reflects social justice and human rights for the client;
- Discuss in supervision how prejudice, individual and institutional racism impact decision making and choices clients make;
- Discuss in supervision how personal attitudes and biases may be reflected in the work being done with clients;
- Identify and visit referral agencies and report on assessments of services offered from a human rights/social and economic justice viewpoint;
- Review an assigned or closed case to assess how being a member of a population at risk impacts the life experiences and worldviews of the client(s);
- Review and discuss required readings or provide reading material on topic and discuss in supervision;
- Invite elected officials to the agency for a meeting or forum focused on advancing human rights issues;
- Help people with prior felony conviction(s) to register to vote through public awareness and individual outreach in service delivery.

### **4. Engage in Research-Informed Practice and Practice-Informed Research -**

### **Student could:**

- Discuss practice wisdom, evidenced based practice, and theoretical frameworks in working with client population in supervision;
- Identify what framework was used when working with client system and critique;
- Attend seminars/conferences that will increase knowledge on research-informed practice;
- Review research course outline with Instructor and review how the agency's work with clients fits with classroom learning;
- Identify and discuss how research is used at the agency to support agency activities;
- Discuss evidence-based practices used at the agency;
- Discuss the role of practice wisdom in the planning and work of the agency;
- Work on agency (evaluation and/or agency) research;
- Conduct literature review on a practice area and discuss/present findings and relation to work done at the agency;
- Research allowable nonpartisan voter activities for 501(c)(3) organizations and/or requirements for nonprofits in the 1993 National Voter Registration Act;
- Identify elected officials at the local, state, and federal level and share the contact list with agency staff and/or clients.

### **5. Engage in Policy Practice - Student could:**

- Review agency's policy and procedures manual, focusing on agency mission, administrative and treatment policies and discuss in supervision the implications for service delivery;
- Identify commonly used referral agencies and become familiar with services of these agencies and appropriate referral policies and procedures;
- Discuss from a historical and structural perspective the impact social policy has had on individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities served at the placement;
- Research relevant city, state, and federal social policies and programs that impact services to agency clients and discuss in supervision implications for clients;
- Attend local governmental hearings which allocate funds for agency and discuss relevant aspects in supervision;
- Interview staff members involved in various agency programs to gain an understanding of individual philosophical approaches to the clients served;
- Review and discuss the course Foundations of Social Justice: Challenging Oppression and Social Policy & Social Determinants, and discuss implications for practice;
- Attend Board of Directors meeting and demonstrate an understanding of the organizational structure of agency and the role of the Board;
- Contact county or state legislators on key issues impacting client groups;
- Compile a list of federal, state, and local officials serving on key legislative committees to discuss policies impacting client population;
- Remain current in knowledge of laws/policies which impact agency &/or client system (ex: current events and news in the community, reading newspapers or local journals, etc.);
- Identify the key staff within the organization who are responsible for policy development and implementation;
- Develop strategies for program development which adhere to local/federal/agency policies;
- Develop program goals/objectives;
- Research, assess and identify strengths and weaknesses of policy provision;

- Participate in lobbying activities;
- Educate clients about human rights;
- Attend and actively participate on community councils, or other relevant community organizations;
- Research legislative history of an existing or proposed policy;
- Engage in advocacy at the legislative/bureaucratic level;
- Prepare and present information in support of a policy or program reform;
- Implement/change/advocate for voter engagement activity policy at the agency and/or in the community;
- Train clients and staff on advocacy, government, systems, and the importance of voting.

**6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities - Student could:**

- Be assigned a mix of micro, mezzo and/or macro assignments;
- Identify and review engagement skills used in client interactions;
- Complete process recordings and identify and review engagement skills;
- Attend to interpersonal dynamics and contextual factors that both strengthen and potentially threaten the therapeutic alliance;
- Discuss classroom readings and discussions that have relevance to the work;
- Share information on voting and elections with clients, staff, and/or communities;
- Integrate voter registration into agency services.

**7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities - Student could:**

- Conduct bio/psycho/social/spiritual/environmental assessment;
- Develop a genogram(s), eco-map(s), sociogram(s), culturagram(s), community asset map(s), and PESTLE analysis for client systems during the academic year;
- Attend community meetings to assess changing needs of community and/or gaps in services;
- Describe examples of ways to advocate for client systems;
- Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to a case situation to come to a decision for intervention/action;
- Identify and review skills used in client interactions through process recordings and discussion with Instructor;
- Develop strengths-based assessments;
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives;
- Substantively and effectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- Collect, organize, and interpret client data;
- Assess political power of the community through voter turnout statistics by district.

**8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities - Student could:**

- Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients;
- Identify developmental theory and how knowing theory impacts work with client;
- Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
- Complete process recordings and identify and review intervention skills;
- Discuss classroom learning and readings and/or assign readings that have relevance to the work the student is completing;

- 
- Discuss strategies that may be relevant for work with client system;
  - Facilitate transitions and endings;
  - Run voter registration drives at the agency or an event.

**9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities - Student could:**

- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate the social work process (engagement, assessment, interventions) used with each client system;
- Review the effectiveness of the evaluation process including evaluation tools;
- Participate in collecting feedback from clients served;
- Incorporate feedback into practice;
- Communicate and disseminate evaluation results appropriate to the intended audience;
- Assess the differential impact of voting on diverse populations;
- Use strategic planning objectives to measure effectiveness of agency voter registration drives;
- Identify measurable outcomes to voter pledge card drives (compare against public records).



# **Appendix C**

## **Technology Guidelines**

**Stony Brook University  
School of Social Welfare**

**Technology Guidelines**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century social work professionals are constantly faced with new challenges: budget concerns, elimination of client services, increased liability issues, HIPPA regulations and violations, and the increased use of social media. Social media has grown tremendously over the last 15 years with the increased use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, SnapChat, TikTok, WhatsApp, Reddit, and an ever increasing number of blogs/vlogs.

Approximately 46 million individuals, 12 years and older, now check social media several times a day. Among US adults, 69% report using Facebook and 73% report using YouTube on a regular basis. Instagram and TickTok are especially common among adults under the age of 30.

As a social work intern placed in a social service organization, students will come into contact with many individuals that utilize social media for various reasons. Students must be aware of the ways people can gather personal information on social media, connect with personal accounts, and learn about family and friends. It is important that students begin to look at social media not from a personal perspective but from a professional one. Professional image extends beyond the physical setting of agencies. Clients and staff of the agency will be able to view students as presented through social media. Students' professional self must be guided by social work values and ethics and this responsibility extends to the virtual world and technological world.

There are issues that should always be considered when using social media (Judd & Johnston, 2012);

1. Socializing with peers in a social setting may result in pictures and references taken within the context of a relaxed and friendly atmosphere that are posted by a friend who has not set his or her profile to private.
2. Identify relevant information that can be easily disseminated through social network sites and then shared with large and unknown numbers of people and groups – including clients, employees (current or future) colleagues and professional peers.
3. Sharing content and statements on-line may fall into the category of unprofessional behavior and can reflect poorly on the student, affiliated institutions, and the profession, as well as damaging client relationships.

As social work students, the NASW Code of Ethics should be followed. The Code responds to some of the issues we face as we use social media.

- Section 1.06 “*Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client.*” This may apply to “friending” or accepting friend requests;
- Section 1.07(a) “*Social workers should respect clients’ right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research.*” This may apply to conducting online searches about clients;
- Section 1.07(m) “*Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of*

computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.” Make sure there is confidentiality at both the sender and receiver end;

- Section 4.06(a) “Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker’s employing agency.” Clearly separate the professional and personal identity on social media. Protect relevant personal information that can be shared with others.

#### What Can Be Done?

Below are some suggestions that a student can do to protect clients, the agency, the school and themselves:

- Set personal information, pictures, and comments on private;
- Use a pseudonym on social media, blogs, and comments left online;
- Students should Google themselves to see what comes up;
- Recognize that inappropriate and unprofessional photos, comments and references posted online can interfere with credibility and damage reputations;
- Students should keep social work student status, agency, client population, and the School of Social Welfare in mind when commenting on any sites;
- Know all social media connections in real life and don’t connect with past or present clients and/or family members.

Social Media may also be used in exciting ways to connect with other social work students, social work professionals, social justice issues and human service causes. Agencies may have a website or blog. These websites can and should be utilized appropriately. Students should talk to Instructors about the following issues:

- Does the agency have a policy about the use of social media?
- How much and what personal information is shared with former/current clients?
- How much and what personal information is shared with agency staff and colleagues?
- Is there any type of agency related information that should not be sent by email?

#### References

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# **Appendix D**

## **Safety Tips in Placement**

## **Safety Tips in Placement For Students**

Safety is a topic that must be addressed and continuously incorporated into the supervision and practice process. Safety has various aspects: self-care, emotional and physical safety, safety in the work with clients, and safety during home and community visits. Safety discussions and agency protocols should begin during orientation and continue throughout the year.

### **Consider:**

#### **Self-Care**

- Create a self-care plan (exercise, nutrition, socialization, boundaries, etc.).
- Discuss concerns about work at the end of the day with the assigned Instructor and/or Task Supervisor.
- Learn agency safety training information.

#### **COVID-19 Management**

It is important for students to be aware of the agency's protocols for management of any type of emergency that could occur while the student is working remotely with a client. Students should process these questions with the agency:

- What do I do if I'm symptomatic?
- Who do I contact if concerned about my health?
- Who do I contact if someone violates agency policy around COVID-19 safety protocols?
- How are agencies informing students of safety measures?

#### **Home Visit Safety:**

- First, be aware of the agency's policies around preparing for and conducting home visits and ask for guidance when needed.
- Be aware that violence during visits is not a common occurrence but it is important to remain prepared even if the client doesn't have a history of violence.
- Engage clients with respect and compassion.
- Walk confidently into the home.
- Stay calm and remain professional at all times. Deep breaths help before entering a home.
- Prepare before leaving the office and be aware of all safety concerns there are about the clients.
- Respect the client's space and property.
- Show concern about the client and the client's situation.
- Get to know the police officers in the neighborhoods frequented.
- Keep a detailed calendar with addresses, names and phone numbers and file numbers at the office. Keep a copy in the car and leave a copy with the Instructor.
- Prepare the client for arrival time and ask who will be home at the time of the visit; this includes pets. Prior to home visits ask if there are any weapons in the home.
- Always check the surrounding area, drive around the neighborhood to know how to get out quickly if needed, observe the atmosphere of people in close vicinity to where the visit is, make sure there is enough gas and the car is facing the direction to exit.
- Avoid wearing jewelry or expensive items to any visit. This can be seen in a variety of ways and avoiding this is a good idea.
- Look at the size, number and kinds of shoes sitting by the door or around the apartment

- to get a sense of who is in the house.
- When knocking on the door, stand to the side of the door and have the agency ID readily available. Listen for yelling and fighting while at the door.
- Consider keeping hand sanitizer, wipes, antibacterial soap/lotion handy.
- If a safety issue arises, find something to agree about with a client, instead of escalating a situation and then leave.
- Always wait to be invited to sit and sit in a straight-backed chair close to an exit. Remain alert and observant at all times.
- Be mindful that entering a clients home can be an anxiety provoking event. There may be an agenda during a visit and deadlines that need to be met but be mindful that no one knows the client's story better than the client. The best way to help clients feel comfortable and respected is to give them time to speak.
- Set firm limits in a compassionate, respectful manner without judgment. Use specific behavioral language.
- If verbal redirection does not work, move to limit reactions in a firm but flexible manner, offering choices when possible.
- Following a visit do a debriefing with the Instructor and all involved staff.

**De-escalation Techniques - Suggestions to offer students:**

- Use observational data to recognize the signs of escalation (client posture, eye contact, facial expressions, physical gestures, muscle tone, voice and speech patterns, etc.).
- Call for backup assistance (supervisor or another clinician) when possible for direct assistance or to simply stand back and observe discreetly.
- Choose the safest possible location to talk to the client. Consider moving other clients out of the waiting area, step just outside the front door. Get assistance as needed.
- Use personal own body language (keeping a relaxed and empathetic stance, reasonable distance, lowered voice with slow speech, friendly and confident) to cue the client's body language toward calming down and self-control.
- Identify what the client's immediate goal is at the time.
- Express a desire to help without making promises that can't be kept.
- Avoid questions, statements, or information that may imply the client is to blame.

**Community Safety - Help students think about these things:**

- Know the agency's policies and procedures for safety in the community.
- Make sure the car has gas, is well maintained and has a local map available.
- Park cars facing the exit direction.
- Drive around the community prior to parking, taking note of key places - grocery stores, community centers and people.
- Carry a charged cell phone and store emergency numbers.
- Always leave a destination/daily planner in the office with contact numbers attached.
- Carry an emergency health bag in the car (latex gloves, first aid kit).

**Agency Safety - Students should know:**

- The safety related policies and procedures for the agency.
- The policies and reporting procedures related to sexual harassment at the agency.
- How to enter and leave the building safely (including before/after business hours).
- The check-in and check-out procedures.
- Any internal code for signaling the need for help.
- If it is acceptable to work with clients with the doors open.

- If staff and students ever physically hold a client, under what conditions, and what training is required.
- Procedures for handling blood related incidents.
- Where the nearest fire extinguisher, stairway, and exit is located.
- What to do and where to go in case of a fire, loss of electricity, natural disasters, including hurricane or tornado.
- What to do if another staff person or intern creates an unsafe or uncomfortable environment.
- Where emergency numbers are posted (police, fire department, poison control).
- The process for reporting injury at the agency.
- How to de-escalate angry clients.
- The agency policy in regards to clients who are under the influence of alcohol or substances.
- How to safely arrange office furniture.
- How to use building security.
- How to use the phone to access help.
- How to use supervision in regard to safety issues.
- What to do and how to document when clients make threats towards others.
- Who to contact at the agency when there is an incident or threat.
- When to inform the Instructor of an incident.
- What the procedure is if there is a suspicion that someone has a weapon.
- Where to store personal items.

### Safety Checklist

		Date
1.	Received and reviewed the Agency Program Manual.	
2.	Received and reviewed all safety protocols for the agency.	
3.	Reviewed agency policy on dealing with difficult situations.	
4.	Reviewed agency de-escalation techniques to use with clients.	
	a. Reviewed SBU SSW Safety Tips on De-Escalating Techniques with the agency.	
5.	Reviewed agency policy and procedures for remaining safe in the community.	
	a. Reviewed SBU SSW Safety Tips on Community Safety with the agency.	
6.	Reviewed agency policy and procedures on how to remain safe during home visits.	
	a. Reviewed SBU SSW Safety Tips on Home Visit Safety with the agency.	
7.	Reviewed agency policy and procedures on safety within the agency.	
	a. Reviewed SBU SSW Safety Tips on Agency Safety with the agency.	
8.	Reviewed agency policy and procedures regarding COVID-19.	

***\*Students should review this checklist with the Instructor during the first supervision.***