



St AMBROSE UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

MSW FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL 2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

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**This field education manual is provided with appreciation for
Agency Field Instructors who have mentored our MSW students.
The St. Ambrose University School of Social Work faculty recognizes their
invaluable contribution to the school, our students, and the profession.**

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[HTTP://WWW.SAU.EDU/DEAN OF STUDENTS/STUDENT HANDBOOK.HTML](http://www.sau.edu/dean_of_students/student_handbook.html)

CSWE EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
WWW.CSWE.ORG

NASW CODE OF ETHICS
HTTPS://WWW.SOCIALWORKERS.ORG/ABOUT/ETHICS/CODE-OF-ETHICS

ST. AMBROSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL

PART I: INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of Social Work

For more than one hundred years, the social work profession has advanced a dual focus on meeting human need and promoting social change to redress social injustice and inequities. Social work professionals simultaneously direct their activities at improving human and social conditions and alleviating human distress and social problems. Social work, thus, supports a synchronized focus on human systems and the environment, intervening at the points of interaction between them.

The Council on Social Work Education defines the purpose of social work in their Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2015):

The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally.

To achieve these purposes, social workers work with people in ways that strengthen their sense of competence, link them with needed resources, and promote organizational and institutional change so that the structures of society respond to the needs of all societal members. Social workers also engage in policy analysis and formulation and conduct research to contribute to social work theory and evaluate practice methods.

Pedagogy for Professional Social Work

Pedagogy for professional social work is competency-based education. The Council on Social Work Education, the accrediting agency for professional social work education, requires social work programs to prepare graduates for advanced practice through mastery of nine core competencies enhanced both by knowledge and behaviors specific to a program concentration. Students demonstrate integration and application of nine identified competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The nine core competencies are listed as follows:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.

3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
5. Engage in policy practice.
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Field Education as Signature Pedagogy

Education for the professions employs central forms of instruction whereby students are socialized to perform the roles of the profession. Defined as signature pedagogy, this is the method by which students integrate theory and practice and learn to perform the roles of a professional social worker. Field instruction is the signature pedagogy in social work education. The Council on Social Work Education makes clear the essential value of field education:

The intent of field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies (CSWE EPAS, 2015).

The MSW program at St. Ambrose advances a robust curriculum where the classroom and the field agency setting each contribute to the development of student competencies. Field placements in community agency settings provide the student with a range of practice experiences to promote the integration of theoretical learning from class work to further knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes for professional social work practice.

The generalist field placement experience places emphasis on the application of skills for generalist social work practice in an agency setting. The field placement prepares students for generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Field Education in the specialization year builds on the generalist social work practice perspective of the generalist year curriculum and field work as students specialize in advanced empowerment practice.

PART II: MISSION AND GOALS OF ST. AMBROSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

School of Social Work Mission Statement

It is the mission of the St. Ambrose University School of Social Work to prepare competent and ethical social work professionals who advocate a just society.

Consistent with the purposes of social work and Catholic Social Teaching, the St. Ambrose University School of Social Work seeks to advance the well-being of people, to promote social and economic justice and to protect human rights. Emphasizing client system empowerment, the School prepares graduates to practice competently, ethically and with critical understanding of diversity, human behavior and social contexts.

Students acquire a comprehensive knowledge base, practice skills, and ethical standards for professional practice. These competencies enable graduates to provide resources and opportunities for people to live with dignity and freedom in their transactions with each other and social institutions locally, nationally, and globally.

Master of Social Work Mission Statement

The SAU Master of Social Work program prepares empowerment social workers to use a life-long praxis process in order to ensure collaborative, client-centered, multi-level, contextualized practice.

Empowerment social workers promote professional social work and advocate for social, economic and environmental justice.

Program Goals and Curriculum Objectives

The idea of empowerment guides all aspects of the St. Ambrose Social Work Program. Program goals reflect an awareness of community context and a commitment to partnership throughout the ecosystem including the program's relationships with the university, with the social work profession, with allied professions, with students in the program, and with the local social work practice community. The program views itself as a resource to meet the university mission, contribute to the social work profession, influence community perspective and functioning, and educate students to carry forward a social justice mission.

Goal 1. Provide a quality educational program in empowerment social work practice designed to assure the acquisition of advanced knowledge, skills, values, cognitive/affective processes, and ethics necessary for professional social work practice by maintaining accreditation of the MSW program by the Council on Social Work Education.

- The competencies proposed by CSWE and the behaviors subsequently developed by MSW Program faculty serve to guide the professional training of students in competent and ethical directions.
- Graduates of the MSW program show strengths in these skills due to intensive focus on these competencies and the program's commitment to empowerment practice.
- In collaboration with other health science programs at St. Ambrose and CSWE, the MSW program provides multiple contexts for Interprofessional education promoting team-based client care.

Goal 2. Prepare social work practitioners with generalist and empowerment specialization skills to enable them to engage in multi-level interventions with diverse populations in a range of social service settings.

- Explicit goals of empowerment social work practice are multi-level systemic practice including impact on individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Components of empowerment practice including multi-level intervention, promotion of diversity, politicized practice, and systemic analysis combine to allow for understanding and applicability across practice settings.

Goal 3. Nurture University-Agency partnerships by facilitating an educational and scholarship presence in the local, national, and international communities.

- Education, scholarship, leadership and service in these communities utilize an empowerment stance. MSW Program faculty provide training to agencies regarding empowerment practice, ethics, and diversity. In addition, some faculty hold board membership positions in local, national, and global organizations.
- Field education processes and orientations seek to strengthen relationships and build bridges between the School and regional social service and health service providers.
- Continuing education offerings by the MSW program focus on needs of communities. All conference offerings exemplify an explicit empowerment perspective. These trainings also enhance the mission of the Program to produce competent and ethical social workers.

Goal 4. Contribute to the knowledge base of the social work profession by engaging in scholarship for publication and presentation at professional conferences.

- Using a broad model of scholarship including: scholarship of discovery, of integration, of application, of teaching and learning, and of engagement, faculty collect and share information in order to best serve populations which social workers serve.

- Social Workers advocate changes in society through these endeavors. Contribution to the knowledge base of the social work profession is key to the MSW Program.
- Empowerment Scholarship has an explicit goal to positively impact the greater society.

Goal 5. Contribute to the mission of the university: “St. Ambrose University-independent, diocesan, and Catholic-enables its students to develop intellectually, spiritually, ethically, socially, artistically, and physically to enrich their own lives and the lives of others.”

- The mission of the MSW Program is clearly aligned with the mission of the larger university, with its focus on both individuals and society. In course offerings, co- curricular events, and informal interaction, the MSW Program seeks to model the missions of both the Program and the University.

Unifying Themes of the St. Ambrose MSW Program

The St Ambrose MSW program articulates EPAS competencies into behaviors reflecting themes and theoretical underpinnings supporting an empowerment method, including – (1) collaborative and reflective processes, (2) the ecosystems perspective, (3) the strengths model, (4) integration of the personal and political, and (5) the ethic of social and economic justice.

Collaborative & Reflective Processes – The empowerment method attends to power dynamics present within each human interaction. Empowerment-based practitioners work to construct and maintain their relationships with clients as partnerships to ensure client privilege and preferences. Achieving and maintaining such collaboration requires open reflection between social workers and clients to evaluate the relationship, the plan, and the progress. Students at St. Ambrose learn to reflect on their work using introspection, self-observation, client input, and professional consultation.

Ecosystems Perspective – The central focus on person: environment transactions defines the social work profession. Social work professionals facilitate beneficial adaptation between individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and their particular environments. To implement this core purpose, a theoretical orientation emphasizing system interaction is essential. An ecosystems perspective provides such a view, revealing the nature and impact of interaction among human systems. Students learning an empowerment method require an ecosystems perspective for use in identifying problems and solutions at each level of human functioning.

Strengths Model – The strengths model assumes that clients have abilities and that environments contain resources. A social worker’s responsibility is to discover and activate these abilities and resources to achieve client goals. Practicing from a strengths model, social workers acknowledge challenges, yet shift emphasis to the strengths that

people accumulate over a life of learning, experience, and adaptation. Particularly relevant are the diversity of strengths based in various racial, ethnic, cultural and social identities. By focusing on competence rather than deficits in individual and social functioning, students become empowering practitioners and see the power inherent in activating people's existing strengths and resources.

Integration of Personal and Political – “The personal without the political is not social work” is the mantra of the empowerment based social worker. Personal troubles are mired in social issues. Regardless of practice context, empowering social workers recognize the socio-political underpinnings of all human relationships: they consider solutions at the political level even for initially perceived individual problems. St. Ambrose MSW students learn to critically analyze how social/cultural location impacts client experience, the worker-client relationship, and available opportunities.

Ethic of Social and Economic Justice – A social justice ethic reinforces the social work mandate to serve the most vulnerable of society, to enhance the caring capacity of society, to end discriminatory practices, and to expand resources to those in need. As an integral part of a Catholic institution, the School of Social Work spearheads the university's stance favoring social justice and economic equity. The political focus of the empowering social worker consistently focuses on the re-distributive needs of disadvantaged people subjected to discrimination based on poverty, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, oppression, and lack of available community resources. Students at St. Ambrose learn to be activists in shaping the practice context.

PART III: FIELD EDUCATION WITHIN THE MSW PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Competency Based Curriculum

The St. Ambrose University Masters of Social Work program embraces competency-based education and has intentionally constructed its foundation and specialization curricula around measurable learning outcomes in both classroom and field. In doing so, the MSW program has concretely articulated behaviors representing the nine core competencies to reflect the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes that define the social work profession and indicate competent social work practice. Student competencies acquired at the generalist foundation level are further refined and synthesized at the specialized level of practice to prepare students with the expertise to critically apply an interdisciplinary knowledge base, integrate research and evidence from multiple sources, and shape engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation processes to fit the unique circumstances of the situation at hand. Graduates of the St. Ambrose MSW Program demonstrate their abilities to implement an empowerment method of social work practice that furthers a social justice agenda, honors human diversity, and promotes individual and community well-being.

Location of Field Education

As signature pedagogy, field education is one of two interrelated components and is of equal importance with classroom instruction in contributing to the development of the requisite competencies for professional social work practice. The St. Ambrose University MSW field education program is designed as a seamless two-year program coordinated by the Director of Field Education, with placement activities supervised by program faculty, and student outcomes evaluated based on the criteria by which students demonstrate achievement of core competencies for the generalist foundation and the empowerment specialization.

The purpose of field instruction is to provide students with opportunities to develop competence for professional practice. Field experience provides students with an ever changing and intentional learning environment for the facilitation of competency development. In applying concepts and theories learned in the classroom, students test knowledge, apply values, and practice skills in order to develop program competencies for professional practice. This provides a basis for an evidence-informed practice, where students consider relevant research and integrate this information with client preferences and values, ethical principles, available resources, policy considerations, and overall feasibility.

The St. Ambrose University Masters of Social Work Program has a single specialization of advanced empowerment social work practice. In preparing students to implement an empowerment method, the MSW program teaches the fundamentals of social work as described in the core competencies of the Council on Social Work's Educational and

Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS, 2015) and advanced knowledge and skills required of a practitioner using an empowerment method. As such, the program's curriculum design incorporates all of the core competencies for the foundation augmented by the knowledge and observable behaviors specific to the empowerment specialization.

Generalist Foundation Pedagogy

The generalist foundation curriculum prepares students to undertake a broad range of social work interventions to support the social well-being of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students acquire theoretical frameworks that are evidence-informed and applied through Field Education. Knowledge of ethics and values, diversity, human rights and social and economic justice support skill development in practice, policy, research, and human behavior. The generalist foundation curriculum builds on the liberal arts preparation of the students and develops the students' capacity for generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in an education program based on the ecosystems construct, an empowerment method and strengths model, the integration of the personal and political, and the ethic of social and economic justice. The generalist foundation curriculum also builds a base of the necessary knowledge and values for critical thinking and intervention skill development for the advanced practitioner. Students have the opportunity to engage in didactic, affective, and experiential learning to build capacity in core competencies during the generalist foundation year. Students are expected to explore their own belief systems, to experience the dynamics of change, and to be open to diversity of opinion, status, and condition.

The Council on Social Work Education (2015) defines generalist practice in the following way:

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

This definition of generalist social work practice is supported by the following assumptions:

- Generalist practice provides the basic helping strategies and competencies which underlie social work practice at its beginning level of competence
- Generalist practice considers the interplay of personal and collective issues and works with a variety of human systems – societies, communities, neighborhoods, complex organizations, formal groups, informal groups, families, and individuals – to create changes which maximize social functioning
- Generalist social work practice views problems in context using different skills to intervene at multiple system levels and integrate a combination of methods as required by a particular situation.
- Generalist social work addresses the solution and/or prevention of problems at levels of intervention – personal, familial, interpersonal, organizational, community, institutional, and societal.
- Generalist social work practice looks at issues in context and finds solutions within the interactions between people and their environments.

Required Generalist Foundation courses include the following:

- MSW 510 - Generalist Practice I (3)
- MSW 610 - Human Behavior Theories (3)
- MSW 710 - Social Work Research Design (3)
- MSW 810 - Social Welfare Policy (3)
- MSW 591 - Field Instruction & Seminar I (3)
- MSW 520 - Generalist Practice II (3)
- MSW 620 - Diversity and Social Systems (3)
- MSW 720 - Social Work Program Evaluation (3)
- MSW 820 - Social Policy Analysis (3)
- MSW 592 - Field Instruction & Seminar II (3)

Competencies and Associated Behaviors for the Generalist Foundation Year

COMPETENCY 1: DEMONSTRATE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

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

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

COMPETENCY 2: ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE

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

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

COMPETENCY 3: ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

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

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

COMPETENCY 4: ENGAGE IN PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH AND RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE

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

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

COMPETENCY 5: ENGAGE IN POLICY PRACTICE

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

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

COMPETENCY 6: ENGAGE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

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

COMPETENCY 7: ASSESS INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

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

COMPETENCY 8: INTERVENE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

- 8.1 critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;

- 8.2 apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- 8.3 use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- 8.4 negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies;
- 8.5 facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

COMPETENCY 9: EVALUATE PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

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

Empowerment Specialization Pedagogy

The St. Ambrose University School of Social Work defines advanced empowerment social work practice in the following manner:

The St. Ambrose University Master of Social Work program has a single specialization of advanced empowerment social work practice. This advanced practice method incorporates all of the core competencies of the generalist foundation augmented by knowledge, skills, values, cognitive/affective processes, and behaviors of the empowerment specialization. As *generalists*, students learn knowledge and develop skills to practice at all system levels including interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. They also learn to recognize that the divisions of the core content

areas of social work education into policy, research, human behavior, and practice are merely academic and that the fusion of this knowledge and skill base is necessary for competent and ethical empowerment social work in everyday practice. As *advanced practitioners in the empowerment method*, students never relinquish their generalist core foundation, seeing the contextual in the personal, recognizing the social policy influence in the individual challenge, and acknowledging the social issues and political reality in the assessment of any human problem and condition.

As stipulated by the Council on Social Work Education EP M2.1 (2015) definition of specialized practice, the empowerment practice specialization teaches students to advance and refine social work practice and the social work profession. Students learn to synthesize multidisciplinary knowledge and skills with a clear vision toward individualization of clients and situations to ensure both cultural competence and cultural humility, ensure basic human rights, demonstrate client respect, and develop creative solutions arising from unique circumstances. The advanced empowerment curriculum sets students on a life-long praxis process of action, reflection, evaluation, and informed action to ensure competent client-centered practice, promote their own professional development, and contribute to the social work profession.

Empowerment is an advanced social work practice method applicable to any level of human system from individuals to communities and across fields of practice. Economic, social, racial, and environmental justice are the worldview with which empowerment social workers advocate for and with client systems. Empowering practitioners engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate client systems in ways that honor client privilege, promote client strengths, and develop client power in a community context. Students build their understanding of the empowerment method on the foundational theories and skills of generalist practice and the knowledge that the personal is political. Within the empowerment specialization, students learn to apply complex social work theory, to critically analyze power issues within worker-client relationships, and to implement strategies for re-shaping both interpersonal experience and the context of practice. The empowerment method draws on the skills of critical thinking, complex decision-making, and systems analysis. To sustain an empowering practice requires continual worker introspection, self-evaluation, and feedback in order to develop professional abilities and increase comfort with the ambiguity inherent in working in a multi-systemic context.

Empowerment as a social work practice method has been articulated in the social work literature since the 1980s. Key themes distinguish the empowerment method:

- Collaboration. First, empowerment-based social workers collaborate with clients, emphasizing client experience and strengths over expert diagnosis and treatment. Workers require an astute understanding of human diversity and the ability to differentiate the unique experience of each client.

- Context. Second, empowering workers think broadly about possibilities for change, operating with clients to change situations rather than operating on clients to adapt to oppressive conditions. A social justice ethic frames the thinking of an empowering social worker who readily recognizes the social/political roots of individual experience and sees opportunities for change in clients and their environments.
- Multi-level intervention. Third, the empowerment method directs practitioners to intervene across system levels. Workers bridge individually-oriented methods with group, organizational, and community efforts to help clients ally with others, broaden the participation of clients in defining service priorities, and involve clients as key constituents in systems of service delivery.
- Reflection. Finally, empowerment practice is reflective practice. Practitioners thoughtfully apply scientific knowledge to practice situations, construct practice processes to generate practice-based evidence, engage clients as active partners in critically evaluating the work, and reflect on their own values and skills.

Empowerment Specialization courses include the following required and elective courses:

FALL SEMESTER

- MSW 530 Empowerment Practice I (3)
- MSW *** Empowerment Elective (3)
- MSW *** Empowerment Elective (3)
- MSW 593 Field Instruction III (4)
- MSW 603 Field Seminar III: SW Ethics (2)

SPRING SEMESTER

- MSW 540 Empowerment Practice II (3)
- MSW *** Empowerment Elective (3)
- MSW *** Empowerment Elective (3)
- MSW 594 Field Instruction IV (4)
- MSW 604 Field Seminar IV: Ethical Decision-Making (2)

EMPOWERMENT ELECTIVES*

- MSW 550 Empowerment Social Work in Mental Health (3)
- MSW 870 Management (3)
- MSW 560 Empowerment Social Work in Child Welfare (3)
- MSW 910 Mental Health Policy and Practice in India (3)

- MSW 570 Couple and Family Therapy (3)
- MSW 920 Empowerment SW with Substance Using Disorders (3)
- MSW 580 Empowerment Social Work in Aging (3)
- MSW 930 International SW & Social Welfare (3)
- MSW 940 Feminist Social Work (3)
- MSW 850 Empowerment Social Work in Schools (3)
- MSW 950 Empowerment Social Work in Health Care (3)
- MSW 990 Spirituality and Social Work (3)
- MSW 980 Trauma Informed Care in Social Work (3)
- MSW 860 Economic and Social Justice (3)
- MSW 99* Special Topics (3)

* Electives are offered on a rotating basis according to student/faculty interest. Not all electives are offered annually.

Course Competencies and Associated Behaviors for the Empowerment Specialization Year

The student is expected to demonstrate the following generalist foundation and *empowerment specialization* competencies and associated behaviors:

COMPETENCY 1: DEMONSTRATE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

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

- 1.6 make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- 1.7 use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- 1.8 demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- 1.9 use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;
- 1.10 use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Implementing an empowerment approach to ethical social work practice requires a social worker's extensive self-awareness. This awareness is based on self-reflection; information from clients, colleagues, and supervisors; scientific knowledge; and ethical analysis of all practice decisions and behaviors. Essential areas of ethical analysis for empowering social workers emphasize the worker's socio-cultural location and its impact on practice, as well as the extent to which the worker-client relationship facilitates empowerment. A praxis process incorporating sources of self-awareness and ethical analysis cycles through phases of reflection, action, and further reflection and steers empowerment-oriented workers toward accountability to clients, community, and the social work profession. Empowerment social workers:

- 1.11 evaluate professional actions utilizing a praxis process of reflection-action-reflection informed by clients, colleagues, supervisors, and scientific knowledge;
- 1.12 resolve ethical dilemmas inherent in the empowerment method.

COMPETENCY 2: ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE

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

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

Empowerment social workers understand collaboration with clients and communities representing diverse identities is an essential aspect of implementing an empowerment method. To build collaborative partnerships that respect, invite, and ensure voice from all disempowered clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders, empowerment-oriented practitioners require relationship abilities and communication expertise. The relationship skills of social workers are grounded in the knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive and affective processes derived from the cultural competency model and the importance of contextualizing this competency for each individual through cultural humility.

Empowerment-based practice builds on these cultural models and implements a strengths perspective that respects each client's privilege and expertise. A strengths perspective moves empowering social workers to emphasize the strengths of diverse clients and views each client as having potential to meet their individual challenges.

Empowerment social workers:

- 2.4 collaborate effectively with diverse client, colleague, and community populations;

- 2.5 demonstrate an understanding of cultural competence and cultural humility in acknowledging the strengths and inherent power of client populations from diverse backgrounds.

COMPETENCY 3: ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

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

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

Empowerment social work professionals are committed to advancing human rights and social justice. An empowerment-oriented practitioner understands the impact of environmental power dynamics on the identity, development, well-being, and opportunities of individuals and groups. Empowering practitioners analyze the ways in which people's experiences of power is shaped by social and cultural systems, social policy, agency protocols, and global dynamics. In keeping with the goal of empowerment, practitioners act on this knowledge to contribute to a more just society. In addition to their understanding of the sociocultural forces that impact justice and human well-being, empowerment professionals recognize the significance of the natural environment and its impact, globally and locally, upon both human and non-human species. Practitioners understand an ecological perspective that reveals the interdependence of all life on earth. Empowerment social workers:

- 3.3 effectively challenge in self and others the disempowering attitudes and behaviors that contribute to social injustices, oppression, and discrimination;
- 3.4 work individually and collectively to advocate policies at multiple levels which support social justice, protect human rights, and promote well-being of non-human species, habitats, and ecosystems.

COMPETENCY 4: ENGAGE IN PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH AND RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice.

Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

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

A distinguishing quality of empowerment practice is the use of “evidence” from a client’s perspective in balance with knowledge and evidence generated through social work research. “What constitutes valid evidence?” is a critical question in the use of evidence to guide social work practice, prompting workers to critically evaluate new knowledge and its sources for credibility and applicability in each unique practice situation. Empowering workers continuously evaluate their practices through the lens of new knowledge and by accessing voices from clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders. Empowerment social workers:

- 4.4 tailor evidence-supported strategies to fit unique client situations;
- 4.5 design, implement, and analyze program evaluations that access stakeholders’ views.

COMPETENCY 5: ENGAGE IN POLICY PRACTICE

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

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

All effective social work practitioners actively engage in policy practice. They recognize the role of policy in service delivery and the effects of social policy on a client's experience. To implement an empowering process, workers acknowledge the pervasive influence of domestic and global social policy in every practice endeavor and use this understanding in their consciousness-raising efforts with clients. Empowering practitioners work individually and collectively to influence service delivery, policy formulation, and legislative change. Empowerment social workers:

- 5.4 challenge unjust social and economic policies in all practice activities;
- 5.5 engage in collective action to influence political and economic forces that contribute to individual and community problems.

COMPETENCY 6: ENGAGE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

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

An empowerment method builds upon the generalist foundation in understanding and acting on the dynamic interplay between clients and multiple systems including social, cultural, and political contexts as well as physical environments. Collaboration in engagement elevates subjugated knowledge, activates energy to achieve goals, and exemplifies the value stance of an empowering social work professional in actualizing the principles of self-determination, individualization, the personal as political, and acceptance. Empowerment social work practitioners engage with clients in forming purposeful partnerships, balancing client strengths with challenges, and in recognizing client expertise, experience, and resources. To facilitate engagement, empowerment

social workers require an astute understanding of human diversity and consistently practice with an understanding of cultural humility. Empowerment social workers:

- 6.3 use self-awareness and feedback to construct empowering relationships in collaboration with clients;
- 6.4 facilitate client system engagement at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

COMPETENCY 7: ASSESS INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

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

An empowerment method builds upon the generalist foundation in understanding and acting on the dynamic interplay between clients and multiple systems including social, cultural, and political contexts as well as physical environments. Collaboration in assessment elevates subjugated knowledge, activates energy to achieve goals, and exemplifies the value stance of an empowering social work professional in actualizing the principles of self-determination, individualization, the personal as political, and acceptance. Empowerment social workers comprehensively assess client situations utilizing a social justice ethic in order to recognize social and political roots of individual experience and assess opportunities for change with clients and in their environments. Empowerment social workers:

- 7.5 practice cultural responsiveness by using assessment tools in ways sensitive to client diversity;
- 7.6 assess factors of risk and resilience that hinder or promote client system competence.

COMPETENCY 8: INTERVENE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

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

An empowerment method builds upon the generalist foundation in understanding and acting on the dynamic interplay between clients and multiple systems including social, cultural, and political contexts as well as physical environments. Collaboration in intervention elevates subjugated knowledge, activates energy to achieve goals, and exemplifies the value stance of an empowering social work professional in actualizing the principles of self-determination, individualization, the personal as political, and acceptance. The empowerment method directs practitioners as an ethical mandate to intervene across system levels. Workers bridge individually-oriented methods with group, organizational, and community efforts to help clients ally with others, broaden the participation of clients in defining service priorities, and involve clients as key

constituents in systems of service delivery. This multilevel intervention is signature to empowerment practice, whereby the way in which the social worker intervenes with clients is never separate from the multiple contexts which reinforce the oppressive problem-maintaining environment. Empowerment social workers:

- 8.6 use strength-oriented empowerment processes to heighten efficacy, competence, and political consciousness;
- 8.7 demonstrate practice skills necessary to achieve change through integrated clinical and political social work strategies.

COMPETENCY 9: EVALUATE PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

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

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

An empowerment method builds upon the generalist foundation in understanding and acting on the dynamic interplay between clients and multiple systems including social, cultural, and political contexts as well as physical environments. Collaboration in evaluation elevates subjugated knowledge, activates energy to achieve goals, and exemplifies the value stance of an empowering social work professional in actualizing the principles of self-determination, individualization, the personal as political, and acceptance. Empowerment practice is reflective practice. Empowerment practitioners thoughtfully apply scientific knowledge to practice situations, construct practice processes to generate practice-based evidence, engage clients as active partners in critically evaluating the work, and reflect on their own values and skills. Empowerment social workers:

- 9.4 continuously monitor and measure their own practice effectiveness incorporating the client's perspective;
- 9.5 actively involve clients in all steps of program evaluation and practice research.

PART IV: FIELD ORGANIZATION

Overview of Field Education Expectations

The purpose of Field Instruction is to provide students with opportunities to develop competence for professional practice. As signature pedagogy, field experience provides students with an ever changing and intentional learning environment for the facilitation of competency development. In applying concepts and theories learned in the classroom, students test knowledge, apply values, and practice skills in order to develop program competencies for professional practice. This provides a basis for an evidence-informed practice, where students consider relevant research and integrate this information with client preferences and values, ethical principles, available resources, policy considerations, and overall feasibility. The field experience and the classroom mutually reinforce one another. The following Field Education courses and field seminars run concurrently with theory and practice classes:

- MSW 591 Field Instruction & Seminar I: Generalist Foundation
- MSW 592 Field Instruction & Seminar II: Generalist Foundation
- MSW 593 Field Instruction III: Empowerment Specialization
- MSW 594 Field Instruction IV: Empowerment Specialization
- MSW 603 Field Seminar III: Social Work Ethics
- MSW 604 Field Seminar IV: Ethical Decision-Making

Students are expected to complete Field Education in the generalist sequence with a range of generalist practice experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. In the specialization year students' Field Education assignments are consistent with advanced empowerment practice.

Advanced standing students who hold a BSW degree from a CSWE accredited undergraduate program have one field placement in the specialization year. Each student, other than the advanced standing student, has two different field placements during the course of study.

Field experiences are designed to educationally build upon one another. They are also intended to give the student an opportunity to learn about more than one agency's organization and culture so that the student might gain a more comprehensive perspective of social work practice. The student works under the supervision of an Agency Field Instructor with possible additional support provided by an agency task supervisor. In certain cases, there may also be an offsite MSW instructor. The Faculty Field Liaison supports the student and the Agency Field Instructor throughout the field placement.

Field placements are confirmed by the Director of Field Education on the basis of student interest, learning needs, and agency resources. A pre-placement interview between the student and the Agency Field Instructor is required. The pre-placement interview allows the student and the Agency Field Instructor the opportunity to determine the appropriateness of the placement for that individual student.

Decisions regarding field placement rest solely with the Director of Field Education.

Selection Criteria for Field Placement Sites

Every effort is made to recruit a wide range of agency placement sites that reflect the diversity of services and client populations served by the Quad City regional area. Recommendations for the development of specific placement sites maybe initiated by agencies, students, faculty, advisory board members, and other interested parties. The Director of Field Education contacts the agency, reviews the Field Education model and requirements, and discusses the agency's interest in affiliation with the school. Prospective field agencies are asked to work with the Contract Coordinator for Health Sciences to complete a Field Practicum Affiliation Agreement or external agency contract as needed.

Student placement in a field agency setting is a shared decision and is dependent on the needs of the School of Social Work and the ability of the agency to provide an educational experience consistent with the objectives of the field placement. Field Agency placement sites:

1. embrace a philosophy of service that is congruent with social work values and ethic
2. are willing to expose or involve the student in diverse and appropriate agency learning activities to support student development in social work competencies
3. accept students without discrimination related to race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical disability, or political belief, except where such discrimination permitted for employment under federal statutes that govern the facility
4. provide qualified Agency Field Instructor(s) with interest and professional competence to assume an educational role in providing for agency-based learning experiences consistent with field education course objectives.

Selection Criteria for Agency Field Instructors

Agency Field Instructors are selected for the quality of their field instruction, attention to professional ethics and values, and commitment to the educational standards of the MSW program. The Master's level social work Agency Field Instructor must possess their MSW degree from a school accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and have minimum of two years full time post MSW professional practice experience.

To ensure competence, they may be required to complete the *Field Instructor Information Form* or submit a copy of their current resume detailing their education, professional experience, certifications, and licensure.

In exceptional cases where an agency is able to offer an extraordinary learning opportunity but is unable to provide the student with an agency-based MSW supervisor, the Director of Field Education may appoint an Outside MSW Instructor. The Outside MSW Instructor works with both the Agency Field Instructor and the student to ensure that a social work perspective is maintained in the placement and in the learning activities of the student.

Components of the Field Education Program

The roles and responsibilities of field entities are conceptualized and defined in order to promote student competency development and to support field agency sites and Agency Field Instructors. The success of the Field Education component rests in part on collaboration and integration of the various entities that take part in this educational endeavor. Each plays an integral role in the development of quality field placement experiences.

Field Education Advisory Board

The Field Education Advisory Board is a committee of the MSW program faculty. Membership includes representatives from placement agencies and the student body appointed by the Director of Field Education and approved by the Director of the School of Social Work. The Director of Field Education chairs this committee. The Field Education Advisory Board advises the Director of Field Education on field-related matters and recommends curriculum policy changes to the Director of Field Education for submission to the program's Curriculum Committee.

Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education has primary responsibility for the overall direction of the field education curriculum; preparing manuals and forms; securing approved field placement sites; coordinating student placement activities; planning the orientation for students, Agency Field Instructors, and faculty field liaisons; and mediating any field-related problems encountered by students and/or instructors. The Director of Field Education, utilizing input from the Field Advisory Board, faculty, Agency Field Instructors and students, conducts evaluation of the field education component of the curriculum.

Responsibilities of the Director of Field Education include:

1. Securing and approving agency-based field sites and instructors.
2. Coordinating the placements of students in the field agencies.

3. Scheduling and planning the annual fall field orientation for students and Agency Field Instructors.
4. Meeting as needed with Agency Field Instructors throughout the academic year.
5. Planning and collaborating with faculty in the delivery of the foundation and specialization field experiences.
6. Preparing field instruction forms, manuals and evaluation tools.
7. Mediating disputes between the student and the Agency Field Instructor when requested by the faculty field liaison, the Agency Field Instructor, or the student.
8. Chairing the Field Liaison Committee.
9. Chairing the Field Education Advisory Board.

Faculty Field Liaison

Faculty field liaisons are full time faculty members or adjunct faculty members who work with the Director of Field Education to coordinate issues between the MSW program and the field instruction agency. Ongoing communication takes place between the faculty field liaison, Agency Field Instructor, adjunct MSW field instructors and the student. The faculty field liaison serves as an educational consultant to the Agency Field Instructor and provides information on curriculum relevant to the student's educational experience. This includes contact with the Agency Field Instructor and the student to review agency activities in relation to the field experience learning objectives, the selection and sequencing of assignments, the individualizing of learning goals and objectives, and the evaluation of the level of competence achieved.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Field Liaison include:

1. Conduct planned contacts with the student and the Agency Field Instructor at the agency site during the academic year to provide consultation and formal evaluation of the student's performance in the agency.
2. Approve the Learning Agreement for the student, hold periodic conferences with both the student and Agency Field Instructor, evaluate the student's educational learning, and recommend a grade.
3. Consult with the Agency Field Instructor and the student to reconcile problems in the field placement.
4. Serve as an educational resource person to the Agency Field Instructor.
5. Serve on the Field Liaison Committee.

School of Social Work

It is the responsibility of the Director of Field Education and the social work faculty to assess student readiness for Field Education. It is the responsibility of the Director of Field Education to facilitate the placement of the student in an appropriate field agency

setting. The School of Social Work is also responsible for providing an orientation to Agency Field Instructors and involving them in the ongoing development of the MSW program. The School of Social Work seeks to enlist Agency Field Instructors for membership on curriculum review and policy development committees and to engage in university-agency partnerships for consultation and training.

Responsibilities of the School of Social Work include:

1. Referring students for agency pre-placement interviews and follow up with the agency to make a placement decision.
2. Disseminating the course syllabi, learning agreements, timesheets, evaluation forms, and other materials relevant to the Field Education experience to both participating students and agency personnel involved in field instruction.
3. Assigning a faculty field liaison who will make planned contacts; for the purpose of assisting the Agency Field Instructor and student in facilitating the Learning Agreement and evaluating student performance and learning opportunities in the agency.
4. Providing an annual field orientation conference to review curriculum and field placement expectations for both student and Agency Field Instructors and to provide training opportunities for Agency Field Instructors.
5. Providing student malpractice insurance coverage in the amount of \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000.
6. Providing the following academic privilege for Agency Field Instructors:
 - Agency Field Instructors who are currently supervising a student may attend St. Ambrose University School of Social Work CEU events at no fee.
 - Advise field students of professional expectations (*See Field Student*).

Field Agency

The field agency is the setting for the field placement. Field agencies are selected for their ability to provide quality instruction, commitment to collaborative participation in professional education, and commitment to client and community service. Field agency administrative support is a valued and necessary component of the field placement and represents a significant commitment to professional education. Field agency administrators demonstrate their commitment by ensuring that the setting meets the MSW program standards, the Agency Field Instructor's job responsibilities are adjusted to make available time for student instruction and supervision, and resources such as space, clerical support and field transportation are provided.

The field agency agrees to:

1. Provide field instruction placements for students from St. Ambrose University School of Social Work. Student placements will be mutually agreed upon and will be dependent on the needs of the School of Social Work and the ability of the agency to provide an educational experience consistent with the objectives of the field placement.
2. Provide qualified Agency Field Instructor(s) with interest and professional competence to assume an educational role in providing for agency based learning experiences consistent with field education course objectives.
3. Orient field education students to policies, forms, schedules, safety procedures and risk management aspects of the organization.
4. Comply with principles of confidentiality and privacy regarding students.
5. Make time for the Agency Field Instructor to engage in weekly educational supervision of at least one hour's duration for each student regarding the learning activities, planned meetings with the faculty field liaison, and the annual field orientation meeting.
6. Provide an evaluation of student performance to the school within the format provided by the school.
7. Contact the faculty field liaison if concerns arise with a student's performance or significant events occur within the agency which have an impact on the completion of the Learning Agreement.
8. Insure that students placed in the agency have adequate physical facilities and clerical support to complete agency work.
9. Discuss with students agency policies regarding background checks and health/immunization requirements.
10. Maintain ultimate responsibility for client services.

Agency Field Instructor

The Agency Field Instructor is the student's teacher and supervisor in the placement site. The Agency Field Instructor instructs, supervises, provides ongoing feedback, and assesses student acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values. This person or a designated agency field coordinator has overall responsibility for planning and directing the learning experience for the student in the agency. Direct supervision may come primarily from another staff member, mutually agreed upon. Unless other arrangements have been made with the Director of Field Education, Agency Field Instructors must have an MSW degree from a CSWE-approved School of Social Work with at least two years post-MSW experience.

Responsibilities of the Agency Field Instructor:

1. Interviews students for field placement consideration.
2. Arranges learning activities including orientation to the agency and community, and assigns tasks and readings.

3. Serves as a professional role model for the student in developing professional behaviors and identifying with the social work profession.
4. In collaboration with the student, develops a student Learning Agreement based upon the criteria established by the MSW Program.
5. Completes evaluation on the student's performance each semester that is discussed with the student and the faculty field liaison.
6. Schedules one-hour weekly supervision conferences with the student to provide feedback and discuss practice issues.
7. Attends orientation and educational workshops sponsored by the School of Social Work.
8. Submits a Field Instructor Information Form or current resume to the Director of Field Education as requested.

Agency Task Supervisor

The Agency Task Supervisor serves as an additional support person for the student in the field placement. The Agency Task Supervisor supports the Agency Field Instructor to instruct, supervise, provide ongoing feedback, and assist with assessment of student's acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values.

Responsibilities of the Agency Task Supervisor:

1. Assists the Agency Field Instructor with completion of evaluation on the student's performance each semester
2. Serves as a professional role model for the student in developing professional behaviors.

Offsite MSW Instructor

The School of Social Work may provide an offsite MSW instructor in cases where an agency is able to provide an exceptional placement opportunity but does not have an agency staff member with a MSW degree. The offsite MSW instructor works with the Agency Field Instructor and student to ensure that a social work perspective is maintained in the design of the placement and the learning activities of the student. The offsite MSW instructor will facilitate a weekly one-hour group social work supervision session for the entire academic year for students needing the required social work supervision.

Responsibilities of the Offsite MSW Instructor:

1. Supports the Agency Field Instructor and student in selecting learning activities to meet social work competencies.
2. Provides one hour of weekly contact with the student for MSW educational supervision.

3. Tracks attendance and participation of students in weekly MSW educational supervision.
4. Serves as a resource person to the Agency Field Instructor.
5. Reports placement issues to the faculty field liaison.

Field Student

Students participate in the selection of the field agency placement by consulting with the Director of Field Education about their professional interests and interviewing with Agency Field Instructors for placement consideration. Students set regular hours for field work and may need to be flexible in their regular schedule to respond to clients outside that time frame or to be available to attend staff meetings, consultations, and required staff development. While efforts will be made to locate a placement that fits with the student's schedule, preferred geographical area, and professional interests, the Director of Field Education cannot guarantee accommodation of all student preferences. Students are expected to demonstrate flexibility in considering placement options. As adult learners, graduate students should be proactive in maximizing learning opportunities by seeking out challenging experiences that enhance their repertoire of professional knowledge and skills.

Responsibilities of the Field Student:

1. Follow administrative policies, standards and practices of the agency.
2. Conform to the standards and practices established by the School for the Field Instruction course including adherence to the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers and the *Behavioral Standards for Professional Social Work*. Behavior consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics in classroom, community, and Field Education include but are not limited to:
 - a. basing professional practice, relationships, and interactions on the social work values of respect for human dignity, cultural differences and human diversity; client self-determination; confidentiality and privacy rights; and social justice
 - b. developing constructive professional relationships with clients and others
 - c. avoiding dual relationships and conflicts of interest with agencies and clients
 - d. working constructively and cooperatively with supervisors, peers, instructors and other professionals
 - e. complying with field agency policies and MSW program standards and procedures
 - f. maintaining client, agency, and classroom confidentiality

- g. disclosing any dual relationships, conflicts of interest, legal issues, or criminal justice issues that may affect their performance or admissibility to a particular field setting
 - h. applying established social work methods and skills as well as research and theories of human behavior to social work situations
3. Respect the confidential nature of agency files and client information.
4. Be present at the field agency according to the school's requirements and the timetable set up with the Agency Field Instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students must notify the Agency Field Instructor when they will be late or absent from the agency and must formulate a plan to make up the time lost.
5. Assume an active role in the learning process including preparation for and openness to supervision conferences with the Agency Field Instructor and faculty field liaison.
6. Demonstrate a readiness to learn and to become appropriately involved in the field experience. This includes, but is not limited to, continual self-evaluation in identifying learning needs, development of the Learning Agreement, maintaining a Reflective Field Journal, and completing the Mid-Semester and End-of-Semester Student Self-Evaluations.
7. Complete all records according to agency, Agency Field Instructor, and faculty field liaison expectations.
8. Advise the Faculty Field Liaison regarding any significant events or changes in status in the field placement.

The Field Practicum Affiliation Agreement

The Field Practicum Affiliation Agreement clarifies for parties the essential expectations regarding the field placement for the field agency, the School of Social Work, and the student. Affiliation agreements and/or external agency contracts are facilitated by the Contract Coordinator for Health Sciences.

Required Field Hours

All field students are expected to complete required weekly field hours in person each week according to the schedule listed in their Learning Agreement and articulated in the *Field Education Calendar*. Field students are expected to keep pace with this schedule and are not permitted to bank hours to adjust the Field Education Calendar or end their field placement early. Compliance with this field schedule provides students with the following total number of field hours:

- Generalist level- 12 hours per week for a total of 400 field hours
- Empowerment Specialization level- 15 field hours per week for a total of 512 field hours

What can be counted towards placement hours:

- Time spent at the agency, participating in agency-related activities
- Travel from field agency to meetings, other agencies, trainings, and other placement related activities, with approval by Agency Field Instructor
- Professional development sessions, trainings, staff meetings, shadowing opportunities, etc. with approval by Agency Field Instructor

What cannot be counted towards placement hours:

- Travel to and from home to field agency
- Seminar sessions and field coursework related to seminar
- Meal breaks

In the event a student will be absent, they must contact the Agency Field Instructor and the faculty field liaison as soon as possible. The student is responsible for making up the missed field hours as soon as possible with a plan shared with the Agency Field Instructor and the faculty field liaison. The make-up field hours must occur within the current semester.

Though a small number of agencies have evening or weekend hours available, students should plan to complete their placement activities on weekdays during regular business hours. This may require restructuring of the student's employment or other activities. The Director of Field Education cannot guarantee accommodation of student preference for alternative placement hours.

Field Seminar

Field Seminar in both the generalist foundation year and the advanced empowerment specialization year is intended to provide integration and support to students' field learning activities. Designed as a continuum, these seminars provide support and information concurrent to agency-based field instruction. The field seminar also serves as a professional support group and provides an opportunity for practicing group leadership skills.

The Generalist Field Instruction and Seminar I and II courses (MSW 591 and 592) provide an introduction to the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics. Students will also learn to apply foundation skills, values, and knowledge; to develop an awareness of self; and to discuss practice issues.

The Advanced Empowerment Specialization Field Seminar (MSW 603 and MSW 604) supports students in developing knowledge and skills in the advanced empowerment method. Core components of this seminar include social work values and ethical principles in social work practice and research; program evaluation and outcomes measurement; and consideration of future issues in social work practice.

PART V: ORIENTATION AND TRAINING FOR AGENCY FIELD INSTRUCTORS

Overview

Agency Field Instructors provide an essential role in the education and development of professional social workers. To this end, Agency Field Instructors need to understand the educational objectives of the school and their agency-based role in working with the student and field education faculty.

The School of Social Work is committed to providing program orientation and continuing education opportunities for Agency Field Instructors. Orientation to the field education program occurs through contact with the Director of Field Education, in reviewing written or electronic materials on the School of Social Work website, and through attendance at the Annual Fall Field Orientation. All prospective and current Agency Field Instructors are referred to the Field Education Manual, available in its entirety on the website. Furthermore, Agency Field Instructors are provided information about the curriculum and the CSWE Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards (2015).

Educational events, such as the Fall Ethics Event and the Social Justice Conference, provide participating licensed Iowa and Illinois social workers with continuing education units. These training events and conferences sponsored by the School of Social Work provide practice-orientated information for professional social work competencies in ethical practice, human diversity and social and economic justice. In this way the school contributes to the continuing education for agency-based social workers and furthers the program's goal to develop university-agency partnerships with the social service delivery system.

Annual Fall Field Orientation

The School of Social Work sponsors the Annual Fall Field Orientation in August of each year for Agency Field Instructors and field students. Keynote presentations anchored to the curriculum with field applications are offered by faculty of the school. Students meet in small groups with their faculty field liaison to discuss the development of the Learning Agreement and plan for initial agency visits.

Ethics Workshop

This workshop fulfills the three-hour continuing education ethics requirement to meet licensure requirements.

Social Justice Conference

The school sponsors an annual Social Justice Conference each year for Agency Field Instructors, students, and the regional social work community. The *Outstanding Field Instructor of the Year Award* is presented at this conference and all Agency Field

Instructors are formally recognized for their contribution to student competency development with the Field Instructor Appreciation Luncheon. This conference features keynote presentations by experts locally and nationally-recognized for their work in furthering social justice through social work practice.

PART VI: FIELD EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, STUDENT SCREENING AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

Student Eligibility for Field Education

Students who have been admitted to the MSW program have reflected a level of professional readiness to be successful in Field Education. Students must complete the required steps of the field placement planning process to be successfully placed in a field agency (detailed below). If significant issues are noted at any time during the MSW program and/or in the field placement planning process that pose questions about the student's suitability for practice, the Director of Field Education, in consultation with program faculty, will address these concerns directly with the student through Steps of Remediation detailed in the MSW Student Policy Manual.

Placement Process

The successful completion of the field placement planning process requires students to follow procedures as they are specified in this manual. The School of Social Work articulates an Affiliation Agreement with agencies identifying the conditions and process by which student will be placed in approved agency settings. Students preparing for their field placement must adhere to these placement guidelines. All field placement experiences are for the academic year and begin in the fall semester. The Field Placement Planning process begins early in the preceding spring semester.

Students and the Director of Field Education collaborate in the following ways:

1. The student completes the Student Placement Interest Form and submits an updated resume in the MSW Field Education BlackBoard site prior to the scheduled pre-placement planning meeting. This Student Placement Interest Form asks students to identify three areas of social work practice they are interested in and their preferred geographic location. Students who do not complete the required Field Placement Planning steps as instructed may experience interview and placement delays or reduce chances for placement in a preferred field of practice or geographic area.
2. The Director of Field Education will contact the agency to determine its interest and appropriateness as a field placement site. While students may request specific agency placements, they are not to initiate contact with an agency to seek a placement within that agency without the prior approval of the Director of Field Education.
3. The student schedules an individual pre-placement appointment with the Director of Field Education. The purpose of this appointment is to discuss the student's educational and professional goals to assist in determining suitable field placement agency opportunities.

4. The Director will address School of Social Work Program Requirements, consisting of health and training requirements that must be met before the placement begins. The student will establish an account with CastleBranch, Inc. in order to begin tracking completion of the Program Requirements.
5. Following this pre-placement meeting, the Director of Field Education provides the names and contact information of 1-2 Agency Field Instructors the student must contact for pre-placement interviews.
6. The student contacts the prospective Agency Field Instructor and arranges for a pre-placement interview at the field agency in a timely manner. The student should dress professionally and bring an updated resume to the interview. The following topics may be addressed:
 - the student's educational goals
 - the student's career goals
 - the student's preferred learning style
 - the student's expectations for the field placement
 - the student's relative strengths and considered areas for growth
 - the kinds of experiences the agency is able to offer
 - the agency's expectations of the student
 - agency resources available to the student
 - the format for supervision
 - field placement scheduling
 - additional expectations and requirements of the agency, e.g., criminal and/or other background checks, physical exams, immunizations, waivers of liability, drug screening, liability insurance, etc.
7. After the pre-placement interviews are completed, the student informs the Director of Field Education regarding their interview feedback and placement preference. The Director of Field Education follows up with the agency for their feedback and a placement decision is made.
8. Placement confirmation letters are emailed to students and Agency Field Instructors by the office of the Director of Field Education. The student will be notified of any additional health and training requirements of the field placement agency that must be met before the placement begins.
9. The office of the Director of Field Education will notify students and Agency Field Instructors of the date and time for field orientation. In addition, the Field Calendar and Field Education Manual are provided to students and Agency Field Instructors.
10. Field students contact their Agency Field Instructor to establish the date and time to begin placement activities according to the Field Education Calendar and to receive any reading or other preparatory recommendations.

11. All field students are required to attend the Annual Fall Field Orientation provided by the School of Social Work before the field placement begins.
12. Faculty field liaisons will be assigned and will meet with students at the Annual Fall Field Orientation.

Requirements for Field Students

The MSW program requires that all students entering field placement must provide documentation and have approval of the following in CastleBranch:

- Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR) immunization series
- Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (TDaP) Vaccination (within the past 10 years)
- Completion of online trainings for Mandatory Reporter, HIPAA, and Bloodborne Pathogens.
 - Mandatory Reporter training for child abuse and dependent adult abuse- available through the Iowa DHS website
 - The HIPAA and Bloodborne Pathogens training will be offered through Get Inclusive, an email will be sent out to all students to access these trainings.

Students must also complete and sign the following forms in CastleBranch:

- Student Consent Form
- Student Field Education Agreement
- SAU MSW Health Form
- Receipt of Information Acknowledgement (acknowledges receipt and review of both NASW Code of Ethics and Field Education Manual).

The field agency may have additional requirements for field students, such as a background check, drug screen, physical, other immunizations/testing, training, etc. Following confirmation of the field placement, students will be notified as soon as possible of additional requirements.

CastleBranch Document Tracking System

All students seeking foundation and specialization field placements will be required to participate in the CastleBranch Document Tracking system. A one-time fee for this service is payable by credit or debit card to CastleBranch. This system is managed directly by students to verify satisfaction of all School of Social Work and field agency requirements. Documentation of immunizations, certifications, and other forms required by the School of Social Work are to be uploaded and housed in the Document Tracker system, which is available to the student indefinitely.

Criminal Background Check and Child Abuse Registry Check

Some field agencies require students to pass a criminal background check and abuse registry check prior to beginning the placement. Most agencies complete these checks themselves, but some do not. Students whose field agencies require a criminal background check and child abuse registry check but do not provide these services are able to order background/registry checks for a fee through CastleBranch. This process is managed directly by the student with CastleBranch. Once the checks are complete, the Director of Field Education will view the results and report to the field agency.

Employment-based Placement

Field education is the signature pedagogy of social work education, where students develop their professional identity and integrate the skills and concepts learned throughout their coursework. The current best practice for field education requires students to engage in learning activities that allow for the attainment of Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies. The Council on Social Work Education standards address the need to preserve an educational focus within the field placement experience. Students who work in social services are permitted to submit an employment-based placement application. Please read the process and expectations below.

When a student chooses to apply for an employment-based placement, it is the student's responsibility to manage the process. This includes completing the application, making sure the necessary parties agree and gathering signatures. An employment-based placement requires more responsibility on the part of the student.

Employment-based Placement Criteria

The following criteria must be met for the student to be approved for an employment-based placement. Please note, many agencies have different policies regarding employment-based placements. Before pursuing an employment-based placement, students should first consult with their employer about employment-field placement policies and procedures. The School of Social Work requires an employment-based placement to adhere to the following requirements:

- Must meet all of the program's criteria and procedures for field instruction.
- Students must meet the educational objectives and requirements for the field placement set by the School of Social Work.
- The agency field instructor must meet all requirements and must be different from the student's employment supervisor.
 - BSW level- BSW degree from a CSWE accredited program and 2 years post degree experience
 - MSW level- MSW degree from a CSWE accredited program and 2 years post degree experience

- Learning activities must meet all of the nine social work competencies. If possible, the student should also propose some supplemental learning opportunities beyond work duties.

The agency must agree to:

- Establish an affiliation agreement with the School of Social Work if one does not already exist.
- Allow the student/employee to have an educationally focused field placement experience.
- Allow the student/employee to participate in activities that link directly to the nine social work competencies. This may or may not be in the same setting as the student's current work.
- Allow the agency field instructor to attend the agency field instructor orientation prior to the start of the field placement.
- Provide the agency field instructor with sufficient time to provide the minimum requirement one hour per week of social work supervision for the student. Supervision must focus on learning, skill development, and competency development.

The field instructor must agree to:

- Provide a social work perspective to the student's field education experience.
- Allow the student the space and permission to be a learner. In other words, the student's role as a student should be prioritized along with their learning and skill development.

The student understands and must agree to:

- First meet with the Director of Field Education to discuss their options.
- Complete and submit the Employment-based Field Placement Application and include all required documentation.
- To be eligible for an employment-based placement, the student must be in good standing with the employer and not on probation or a performance improvement plan.
- An approved employment-based placement cannot be transferred to another agency at any time during the academic year.
- Once approved, the student must remain at the agency for the entirety of the academic field placement.
- Field hours must be counted as follows: a minimum of 12 hours per week for Generalist level and 15 hours per week for Specialization level. Students remain in placement until the last day indicated on the field calendar even if they have completed the minimum number of required field hours.

- A change in their status as an employee during the employment-based placement may place their role as a field student in jeopardy. Should the student's employment status with the agency be terminated, their employment-based placement will also be terminated. The Director of Field Education will advise the Director of the School of Social Work, who will convene the faculty to conduct an academic review to determine the student's standing in the Social Work program.
 - In these cases, a suitable field re-placement may not be possible. Thus, the student would need to drop the Field Instruction along with any co-requisite courses.
 - Partial credit for the time spent in the employment-based placement will not be granted.

Items that must be submitted with the application:

1. Job description
2. Competencies Worksheet showing learning activities that meet the 9 social work competencies

Application Review Process

Once the application is returned to the Field Education Department, it will be reviewed by a committee, and a response will be given as soon as possible to indicate whether the placement has been approved. A meeting with the student and employer may be required as part of the application review process prior to determining approval. In the case of an appeal, the application will be reviewed by a Field Advisory Board member.

PART VII: FIELD EDUCATION DOCUMENTS

Documents to Monitor Student Progress

LEARNING AGREEMENT

The *Learning Agreement* provides the focus for the student field placement and is flexible to allow for opportunities offered within a diversity of settings and to promote the learning style, experiences and educational goals of the student within each area of social work competency. The Learning Agreement is completed at the beginning of the fall semester and updated throughout the field placement. Learning activities are identified to provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate capacity in all competency areas. The *Learning Agreement* for the Generalist Foundation and the Empowerment Specialization year identify the comprehensive list of behaviors comprising social work competencies. The *Learning Agreement* is designed to facilitate the development and measurement of these competencies advancing an ethical, reflective and evidence-informed practice. Development of the Learning Agreement is initiated and led by the student in collaboration with the field instructor to explore and identify the student's learning style, strengths, and personal goals.

The student and Agency Field Instructor also determine the method and evidence of assessment of identified learning activities. Assessment tools may include direct observation, simulations, case analysis, reports, Reflective Field Journal, discussions during supervision, and Mid- Semester or End-of-Semester Student Self-Evaluations. The *Learning Agreement* is reviewed with the faculty field liaison, who may offer suggestions and revisions.

Learning Agreement forms are available electronically through MSW Field Education Blackboard site. Students must complete these electronically and submit online through the MSW Field Education Blackboard site. The student will provide the Agency Field Instructor with an electronic copy of the Learning Agreement. The student will submit the Learning Agreement in Blackboard by the assigned deadlines for the faculty field liaison to review.

FIELD TIMESHEET

Students maintain a *Field Timesheet* to record the number of hours completed each week and confirm attention to weekly supervision and completion of the *Reflective Field Journal*. The Field Timesheet document is located on the MSW Field Education Blackboard site. Students submit their completed Field Timesheet in the MSW Field Education Blackboard site according to the deadlines listed in the Field Calendar. Students remain in the field placement until the last day indicated on the Field Calendar even if they have completed the minimum number of hours. The Field Timesheet is

considered academic coursework and must be an accurate representation of field hours completed at the field agency.

REFLECTIVE FIELD JOURNAL

The act of journaling involves the regular practice of recording activities and/or situations with the goal of reflecting on those experiences in order to learn from them and enhance professional competencies. Documentation of practice activities is an educational process that involves analysis, integration, synthesis, and critical self-reflection. Students are required to complete a weekly Reflective Field Journal to describe progress on learning activities and to examine how these activities promote competency development. It is expected that your Reflective Field Journal be thoughtful, substantive and demonstrate critical thinking related to integration and application of course content with your field experiences. Reflective Field Journals need to be grammatically and structurally correct, clear and succinct.

The Reflective Field Journal must be submitted in the MSW Field Education Blackboard site weekly by 8am Monday to be reviewed by the Faculty Field Liaison. It will also be used for students to share their field experiences during Field Seminar class discussion. The Reflective Field Journal is essential to success in the field placement as it informs the student in preparing for weekly supervision, contacts with the faculty field liaison, and completion of the Mid-Semester and End-of-Semester Student Self-Evaluations.

Documents to Evaluate Student Learning and Competency Development

EVALUATION OF STUDENT COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation of student capacity in social work competencies is ongoing and is shared by the Agency Field Instructor and student. A portion of the weekly educational supervision hour is spent in evaluating the following areas: the student's strengths, progress, educational needs, accomplishments, and areas in need of development. In addition to this informal and on-going evaluation, the student's demonstration of advanced practice competencies is formally evaluated by the Agency Field Instructor at the end of each semester. Finally, students complete *Mid-Semester Student Self-Evaluations*, *End-of-Semester Student Self-Evaluations*, and maintain both a *Field Instruction Log* and a *Reflective Field Journal* for each semester.

END-OF-SEMESTER AGENCY FIELD INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION

The *End-of-Semester Agency Field Instructor Evaluation* is completed by the Agency Field Instructor and shared with the student prior to the scheduled evaluation conference with the faculty field liaison.

MID-SEMESTER STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION

In this brief narrative the student is asked to consider her/his progress in addressing activities outlined in the *Learning Agreement*, as well as the strengths and challenges identified during the first few months of the field placement semester. The student should discuss these items with the Agency Field Instructor and faculty field liaison. Students submit their completed Self-Evaluation in the MSW Field Education Blackboard site.

END-OF-SEMESTER STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION

This is a narrative report completed by the student that summarizes learning experiences and progress in competency development. Students complete this evaluation at the end of both semesters. In tandem with the *End-of-Semester Agency Field Instructor Evaluation*, the student discusses this with their Agency Field Instructor in preparation for visit by the faculty field liaison. This evaluation asks students to review learning activities and describe progress in meeting them, discuss how learning activities have promoted competency development in each of the nine areas, and discuss relative strengths and identify areas for growth. Students submit their completed Self-Evaluation in the MSW Field Education Blackboard site.

ASSIGNMENT OF GRADE

Field Instruction is an academic course requirement. Educational evaluation of student learning and performance in the field agency setting is intended to be collaborative, continuous, and strength-based. The student's presentation and accomplishments in the field agency are evaluated by the student, the Agency Field Instructor, the faculty field liaison, and then reviewed by the Director of Field Education. Each semester's field experience is appraised Credit/Pass or No-Credit/Fail grades recommended by the faculty field liaison. The Director of Field Education reviews the recommended grade and determines the final grade assigned

PART VIII: PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING FIELD PLACEMENT CONCERNS

Addressing Concerns in the Field Placement

All field placements are made for the entire academic year. Students with a field placement secured are expected to fulfill the agreement made with the field agency. Agency Field Instructors likewise agree to provide a learning environment for the student for the entire academic year. In the event there are concerns with the student or the field placement, it is best to have the necessary parties involved in addressing and planning for remediation. The Agency Field Instructor should inform the student and Faculty Field Liaison of any student performance concerns and/or behaviors that cause the Agency Field Instructor to question the student's appropriate professional development. It is critical to address concerns as soon as possible. The School of Social Work is focused on and committed to addressing any concerns in a way that supports the student and the field agency while adhering to agency policy, university policy, and the Social Work Code of Ethics.

Below are the steps to address concerns:

1. Face-to-face meeting between the student and Agency Field Instructor to discuss the situation.
2. If the situation is not resolved, the student and/or Agency Field Instructor contacts the Faculty Field Liaison.
3. A face-to-face meeting will be held with the student, Agency Field Instructor, and Faculty Field Liaison to address the situation and develop a remediation plan with a mutually agreeable result to maintain the placement. The Faculty Field Liaison will document the meeting, including the identified concern(s), and the proposed remediation plan. This document will be emailed to the Director of Field Education, student, and Agency Field Instructor.
4. The Director of Field Education will notify the student's Academic Advisor and provide the remediation plan. The Academic Advisor will meet face-to-face with the student to provide additional support.
5. If the remediation plan does not address the situation, the Director or Field Education is notified.
6. The Director of Field Education will hold a face-to-face meeting with the student, Faculty Field Liaison, and Agency Field Instructor to discuss the ability of the student and agency to work together for the remainder of the placement and determine the likelihood that the placement can have a successful outcome. The student's academic advisor will be notified and updated on the situation.

Termination of Field Placement

When remediation has been unsuccessful, the student, Agency Field Instructor, and/or the Faculty Field Liaison can initiate field placement termination by submitting a letter to the Director of Field Education. The field placement termination letter must include the reason(s) for termination, summary of the events, and attempts at remediation. In addition, the Field Agency and the MSW Program have the discretion to immediately remove a student from the agency setting if either believes such removal is warranted. Situations where removal will be considered warranted include but are not limited to the following:

1. The level of performance in the field placement is determined to be far below the standards expected of an MSW student and the student is unable to remedy deficiencies. This includes lacking knowledge and skills for effective social work practice, poor interpersonal communication and relationship skills, inappropriate presentation of self, and showing a lack of commitment to investing in the field placement learning opportunities. The Agency Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison attempted to remedy performance concerns, but efforts were unsuccessful in bringing the student up to the 'Satisfactory' level for the given semester and its Competency standards. This will constitute grounds for an Academic Review to determine the student's fit and/or continuation in the MSW program.
2. Serious or repeated violations of the agency's policies and procedures.
3. Failure to disclose previous and/or new critical background information in application forms, pre-placement forms, or during the interview process.
4. Exhibiting behaviors and attitudes that are inconsistent or at odds with the values of the social work profession.
5. Violation of professional ethics and standards for ethical practice.
6. Unexcused and prolonged absences from the field placement.
7. Attempts to harm oneself or others.
8. Any sexual relationship with an agency client.
9. Reporting to the practicum site under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The Director of Field Education will notify the student of the field placement termination and provide the field placement termination letter. The MSW Director, Agency Field Instructor, Faculty Field Liaison, and the student's Academic Advisor will be included in the email notification of the field placement termination. An exit meeting will occur as soon as possible with student, Agency Field Instructor, Faculty Field Liaison, and the Director of Field Education. The Director of Field Education will ensure the termination from the field agency is conducted in a professional manner. All agency materials, keys, or other equipment provided to the student will be returned immediately to the field agency. Partial credit for the time spent in the field placement will not be granted. The School of Social Work policies require students who drop Field Instruction to also withdraw from concurrent seminar courses.

Following the field placement termination, the MSW Director will convene the faculty to conduct an Academic Review to determine the student's standing in the MSW program. (See the *St. Ambrose University School of Social Work Graduate Student Manual*). Students are not guaranteed that an appropriate alternative placement may be secured. In cases where an appropriate re-placement cannot be made, as determined by the Director of Field Education, the student may need to drop Field Instruction and co-requisite courses for the remainder of the academic year.

PART IX: EVALUATION OF THE FIELD INSTRUCTION CURRICULUM

The Director of Field Education is responsible for the comprehensive of the field education program.

Student Evaluation of Field Education Program

Students evaluate the placement site, the Agency Field Instructor, and the faculty field liaison at the end of each field placement on a form provided by the School. The evaluation includes the agency orientation, adequacy of supports, responsiveness of agency staff, contribution of professional growth, and frequency and quality of supervision from the Agency Field Instructor. Students complete this evaluation using honest and constructive feedback, and with the understanding that their responses may be shared with their respective Agency Field Instructors and faculty field liaisons.

Students complete a separate evaluation of the fall field orientation and the field placement process in the early fall, after the Annual Fall Field Orientation.

Evaluation of Field Education Program by Agency Field Instructor

Agency Field Instructors are asked to evaluate the field education program on a form at the close of the field placement. This evaluation includes the student placement process, field manual, performance of the faculty field liaison, readiness of students for field, the quality of support from the School, and their suggestions for improvement of the field program.

End of Fall Semester Report by Faculty Field Liaison

Faculty field liaisons complete an evaluation of the agency placement sites they visit at the end of the fall semester. This evaluation includes assessment of both field agency and Agency Field Instructor: available resources and learning activities, professionalism and mentoring, discussion of strengths and concerns, and the degree to which the agency and Agency Field Instructor approach to social work practice is compatible with the school's conceptualization of empowerment practice. These reports are provided to the Director of Field Education for utilization in the field placement process for the upcoming year.

PART X: SECURITY ISSUES

Personal Safety

Social workers are not immune to violence in our society. The School of Social Work provides information about risk assessment and reduction in Appendix C of this manual.

Agency Field Instructors are responsible for providing students with training on agency safety policies and procedures. Students are likewise responsible for following these agency guidelines.

Students have the right to question any field assignment considered to be potentially unsafe without repercussion from the Agency Field Instructor or faculty field liaison. Any student who feels they have been given an assignment that not safe is responsible for discussing this with the Agency Field Instructor. If the situation remains unresolved, the student and Agency Field Instructor notify the faculty field liaison who may confer with the Director of Field Education.

In the event of any threat or injury to a student while in field placement, the student and Agency Field Instructor are asked to immediately contact the faculty field liaison or the Director of Field Education.

Use of Personal Automobile in Field

Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the agency field placement site. Field students are sometimes asked to use their own cars for agency business, e.g., inter-agency meetings, home visits, attendance at case conferences, court hearings, etc. Students are encouraged to discuss with their Agency Field Instructor whether the agency has insurance to cover these activities.

Students should also check their personal automobile coverage to determine if their personal policy covers them during field activities. Students are not to use their own automobiles for agency business without sufficient insurance coverage. **In no situation are students to transport clients or agency staff in their own vehicles.**

Use of Personal Cellphone in Field

Students are discouraged from using personal cell phones for client contact as part of their field placement. Agencies that require students to be available to clients by cellphone during internship hours should provide a cellphone for this purpose at no extra cost to the student. In order to maintain healthy professional boundaries, students are not required to be available to clients outside of internship hours.

Professional Liability Insurance

The School of Social Work arranges for group professional malpractice insurance. Students may also wish to purchase individual professional liability insurance. Further information on individual professional liability insurance through the NASW Assurance Services is available in Appendix C of this manual.

APPENDIX A: RESOURCES

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FIRST THREE WEEKS IN FIELD PLACEMENT

Introduction

Social work students frequently describe their field placement experience as the most significant and powerful learning experience in their education. The field experience offers students opportunities to:

- apply concepts, principles and theories learned in the classroom to practice situations
- develop further self-awareness and to understand the influence of former life experiences, attitudes, and values on their social work practice
- identify both strengths and needed areas of growth
- integrate with the values and principles of the profession

St Ambrose School of Social Work endeavors to provide students with field agency settings that are rich and diverse in learning possibilities. Many of our Agency Field Instructors are highly experienced in working with graduate interns and are very familiar with our curriculum. In other cases, Agency Field Instructors and agency placement settings are in their first year of collaboration with the School. Nonetheless, Agency Field Instructors have not only committed themselves to the social work student's professional development, but they also seek to learn from students and to become familiar with what they are reading and learning in theory and practice classes.

Social service agencies and social welfare organizations are necessarily adaptive in responding to client populations and changes in funding streams. It is likely that programs, services, and personnel will change during your field placement. Understanding what policies contribute to these changes, a commitment to flexibility, and active role in identifying and making use of learning opportunities in the agency setting will promote a positive field experience. Some of the most meaningful field experiences for students have occurred in agencies undergoing changes that were not anticipated by the agency, field student or the Director of Field Education at the time of placement.

Guidelines for Self- Expectations*

1. Take responsibility for your own learning by exploring the agency and surrounding community and seeking new experiences and feedback. Ask questions, observe, and participate in diverse agency activities.
2. Familiarize yourself with agency emergency and safety policies and professional

liability issues and risks.

3. Complete an ongoing self-evaluation regarding your professional interests, the manner in which you receive feedback, your comfort level regarding diversity, your strengths and needed areas of development.
4. Engage in regular self-reflection and professional growth using your Reflective Field Journal and other tools suggested by your Agency Field Instructor.
5. Plan and complete a needed project for the agency as a legacy.
6. Prepare for supervision sessions and follow up with suggestions from your Agency Field Instructor.

Adapted from: Berg-Weger, M., & Birkmaier, J. (2000). *The practicum companion for social work: Integrating class and field work*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

CARE OF SELF IN THE FIELD EDUCATION

Field education students quickly find out that the field experience heightens self-awareness, may be stressful, and is demanding in time. Students actively involved in field learning will be exploring their attitudes, values and beliefs in addition to learning more about the social work profession and skills inherent in the placement setting.

Additionally, their role as a field education student demands sixteen hours a week. Caring for oneself involves the practice of proactive behaviors designed to maintain emotional, physical, and social health. What follows are some strategies for balancing multiple roles. This list provides some general ideas - but the development of your personal list is also important.

1. Plan ahead, pace your activities, and ensure regular work hours with breaks for snacks and lunch.
2. Work to your strengths and know your limitations.
3. Prioritize your physical and mental well-being.
4. Develop both a personal *and* professional support system.
5. Know and pay attention to your personal signals of being stressed. What are they?
6. Discuss field situations and interactions that result in personal distress with your Agency Field Instructor or another colleague to further understand your reactions. Some students may find additional support from a therapist to be helpful.
7. Develop relationships with persons who can challenge and support you.
8. Avoid procrastination.
9. Maintain your sense of humor.
10. Be cautious in your use of artificial methods to maintain your energy (e.g., alcohol, excessive caffeine, drugs, diet aids, stimulants, etc.).

Adapted from: Berg-Weger, M., & Birkmaier, J. (2000). *The practicum companion for social work: Integrating class and field work*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon

GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL SAFETY

A heightened awareness for the potential of violence provides an opportunity to assess the likelihood of its occurrence. To promote personal safety, social workers scan the environment, assess the person with whom they are working, and pay attention to internal cues. It is critical to be familiar with and adhere to the agency's policies and procedures regarding security issues. Social workers are encouraged to pay attention to their own feelings in field and to discuss any feelings of being unsafe with the Agency Field Instructor.

Factors most frequently associated with violence include a history of violence, substance abuse, and weapons possession. Social workers who assume an authoritarian manner have a greater probability of encountering a violent reaction from persons with whom they work than those social workers who endeavor to work in collaboration with clients.

The primary goals of risk prevention are to protect all parties and to help the person to gain control of his or her behavior. Helping the client to focus on the source of his anger or frustration and finding ways of expressing these feelings verbally are secondary goals.

General Personal Risk Reduction Guidelines

1. Discuss agency safety procedures and protocol with your agency instructor.
2. Advise agency personnel of your schedule and carry a cellphone.
3. Consider the time of day and day of the week in the neighborhood you are entering.
4. Be alert to persons around you and to safe places in the neighborhood.
5. Be wise in your communication of your appearance. Dress in a non-threatening manner wherein you do not call attention to yourself. Comfortable clothes and shoes will allow you to move quickly. Carrying a purse, heavy notebooks, or briefcase may also restrict your movement and make you a target for theft.
6. Assess buildings you enter for safety. Consider using the stairs instead of the elevator.
7. Respect and evaluate any hesitancy a client has in opening the door to his or her home as this may signal a less safe environment.
8. If there is any suggestion of a threat to safety, postpone the home visit and discuss the situation with the Agency Field Instructor.
9. Stay alert. Note where exits are and chose a location to sit close to an available exit.

10. In talking with clients:

- Encourage talking about feelings and thoughts
- Respond briefly and to the point
- Make eye contact carefully and mirror body language
- Relate with sensitivity to diversity
- Stay calm and keep thinking
- Retreat and/or enable the person with whom you are working to retreat

Adapted from: Weinger, S. (2001). Security risk: Preventing client violence against social workers. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

LGBTQAI+ STUDENTS AND FIELD EDUCATION

Where We Stand

Field Education is an integral part of our social work program and we are committed to making the experience as positive as we can for all students. This section is designed specifically for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQAI+) students to provide basic information about where we stand on supporting our sexual and gender minority students and challenging homophobic, heterosexist, and transphobic attitudes and behaviors within the context of Field Education.

While we select agencies that match our commitment to social justice and equity, we also recognize we live in a society with both subtle and overt discrimination toward LGBTQAI+ people. As such, we want to provide a clear picture of how we can support LGBTQAI+ students and model social work values.

In the field of social work, we are guided by the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2021) which states:

- Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people.
- Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person, treating each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

St. Ambrose University affirms that all forms of discrimination and harassment diminish the dignity or impede the academic freedom of members of the university community.

The University is committed to providing and maintaining a positive learning and working environment for all students, staff, faculty, and other members of the university community, free of discrimination and harassment. The university will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment that is based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap, disability, military status, or any other unlawful basis.

Self-Disclosing Sexual or Gender Identity in Field Education

While deciding when and where to self-disclose or “come out” as lesbian, gay, queer, and/or transgender is a personal choice, working in a safe and comfortable field environment is a right for all students. As individuals who identify as LGBTQAI+, we

may withhold personal information about our lives (i.e. our sexual orientation, gender identity or expression), because we fear discrimination, rejection or isolation. We may withhold personal information because disclosure seems irrelevant or inappropriate in our work environment. Not knowing when and what to reveal about who you are is potentially a question for all professionals. If you identify as a sexual or gender minority, you may have additional questions and need for support.

Finding Support

Be proactive! Please do not hesitate to discuss concerns you may have.

Talk to Field Education Faculty

If you have any concerns about your placement, please contact your Faculty Field Liaison or the Director of Field Education. Regardless of your sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, please contact us if you have questions or concerns about:

- Experiences of heterosexism, homophobia, or transphobia within your field agency
- Support for disclosure of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression within your field placement

Talk to Your Agency Field Instructor

You could ask your agency field instructor if your agency has:

- A nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression
- Staff who openly identify as sexual and gender minorities
- LGBTQAI+ cultural competency/cultural humility training or professional development opportunities for staff

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Flickr, Second Life and various blog sites are just a few examples of new and exciting ways to connect with others and share information. However, the rapid growth of social media communication tools and their ease of accessibility can also have unintended and potentially damaging consequences to users if basic guidelines are ignored.

Students are expected to adhere to social work values, ethics, and engage in professional conduct as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics when using social media communication tools, whether using a personal site or an agency site. Common issues that students need to understand and manage when utilizing social media include, but are not limited to, privacy and confidentiality (Section 1.07), conflicts of interest and dual relationships (Section 1.06), and informed consent (Section 1.03) in our relationships with clients, colleagues, and in our practice settings. Utilizing social media communication tools as a social work professional requires ongoing attention to these ethical challenges.

As a social work professional it is important to consider whether you are using social media channels for professional activities such as advancing social justice issues, advocating for vulnerable populations and promoting your professional identity versus using these sites to maintain contact with friends and family. Your **professional image**, that is, the professional self you develop that is guided by social work values and ethical standards, extends beyond the field agency and physical setting of an office. As social workers we must be cognizant of the legal, ethical, and clinical responsibilities we have as professionals and that those obligations extend to the virtual world of the internet and include the use of social media communication tools. As with the Hippocratic oath to “first do no harm,” it is imperative to consider how to be connected within the context of social media while protecting yourself, your field site, your clients, the School of Social Work, and the profession.

As you get started in your field placement, it may be helpful to explore the following questions with your Agency Field Instructor(s):

1. Does your field site have a policy on the use of social media communication tools? If so, review the policy with your Agency Field Instructor. If not, what expectation does the agency have regarding the use of social media during field hours?
2. How much personal information is shared with clients and former clients as well as agency staff and professional colleagues?
3. What are the most common ethical concerns you should be aware of when using social media as a professional social worker?

To help facilitate these conversations, consider the following topics for discussion with your Agency Field Instructor(s):

What are the agency guidelines regarding the use of Facebook and who can you friend?

Managing friend requests and maintaining privacy settings is critical regardless of whether you use social media for personal and/or professional reasons. Allowing clients, former clients, or others in your professional circle to cross into your personal life may complicate and blur your professional boundaries. This is particularly tricky when managing Facebook accounts. As a professional, you must fully consider the extent of your privacy settings, how you will manage friend requests, your level of self-disclosure, and how you will monitor wall posts or other interactions on your site. Be aware that if you do not employ any privacy settings on your social media site, your profile is public and anyone can see what is on your page. Additionally, people can see when you are tagged in photos, view comments made by others, note your status updates and see who you've friended. All professionals must evaluate the scope of their social media connections. Since this is still an emerging professional topic, some professionals may be cautious and guarded in their use of social media while others may be more open and exposed. It is your responsibility as a professional social worker to abide by the Code of Ethics, including your virtual communications and use social work values and principles to guide your interactions.

What privacy and confidentiality concerns should I consider when texting, emailing and/or using Twitter?

With the proliferation of hand held devices such as smart phones, iPods and Blackberries, accessing the internet and connecting with others is literally in the palm of our hands. Text, email and Twitter are quick and effective ways to communicate with others. However, many ethical, legal, and clinical issues must be addressed when using these communication tools. There is a huge potential for unintentionally sharing protected information so always use good ethical judgment. Be cautious about discussing information about your field placement, classroom work, or agency staff. Do not discuss confidential or private information about clients, colleagues, or agency practices even if you are disguising the information. In general, consider the security, privacy, and confidentiality of all communication methods and when in doubt, seek consultation and supervision before embarking into unfamiliar or uncertain areas.

Can I check my personal social media accounts during field hours?

In general, your time in field and the resources provided to you in your field placement are to be used for field related matters. Before using social media communication tools on behalf of your agency, be sure to seek approval of any messages or posts. Be careful not to endorse or promote a product, cause, or position without prior approval. If

you have personal sites, it is best to maintain them on your own time using your own computer.

I can't find anything in the Code of Ethics that specifically mentions social media, so does that mean the Code of Ethics does not apply?

Absolutely not! The NASW Code of Ethics provides a variety of standards that social workers should consider when engaging in the use of social media. Here are a few examples of the Code's applicability to social media.

- Standard 1.06 states that “social workers ***should not engage in dual or multiple relationships...***in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client...and social workers...are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries” (1.06c). The Code goes on to note that “dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively” (1.06c). Our ethical obligations to clients, colleagues and other professionals are no different when using Facebook, Twitter or other social media channels as well as communications via our cell phones such as texting or email.
- Standard 1.07(i) states that “social workers ***should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured.***” We all know there is no such thing as privacy on a social media site or the Internet. Comments can be forwarded or copied, posts and pictures can be found on search engines years after the initial publication, and archival systems save information even after you delete it. Always consider the image you are portraying by the photos and comments you post. Understand how privacy settings work and review them regularly. Refrain from providing too much personal information such as your home address or full birthdate. Don't post in advance when you plan to be on vacation or away from home for an extended period of time. Be sure to project the image you want potential faculty members, future employers, advisors and friends to know you by.
- Standard 4.03 states that “social workers ***should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities.***” Social media channels provide an excellent means to build community; however, as you navigate these channels, do no harm to yourself, your field site, your clients, the School of Social Work or to the social work profession in the process. Do not pretend to be someone else or hide your identity when using social media. Be clear if you are sharing personal views and use good judgment regarding sensitive issues. Verify information before you post it, correct mistakes in a timely manner, and be aware of legal liability issues such as copyright infringement, defamation, and posting proprietary information.

What should I do next?

Take some time to review these guidelines with your Agency Field Instructor(s) and seek to identify other ethical standards that are applicable in your practice setting. As a social work student, you are continually developing a professional identity and you must be cognizant that your private world has a greater likelihood of becoming public when using social media. Agency Field Instructors, colleagues, and even clients may have access to information via the internet that you would otherwise limit to your friends and families so we encourage you to consider the personal versus professional role of social media in your life and your field setting.

Adapted with permission from: University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill School of Social Work (2012). *Guidelines for the use of social media*.

DOCUMENTATION AS A TEACHING TOOL

Documentation of practice activities is an essential educational process that involves analysis, integration, synthesis, and critical self-reflection. Historically, process recordings and recorded role plays have been used in the social work Field Education. These formats are useful to student learning to better understand client interactions and context, sort out the student's feelings, and to review skill development. However, documentation might include an articulation of learning goals, recording information to learn agency convention, or general Reflective Field Journaling about the field education placement.

All BSW field students in the School of Social Work at St. Ambrose University are required to keep a Reflective Field Journal to serve as a tool for learning in the field placement. Students will use this journal to describe progress on learning activities and to examine how these activities relate to outcomes and competency areas. They may also express reactions to field experiences, reflect on emerging competencies, and discuss how field experiences relate to classroom learning. Two formats are provided here as potential examples.

Rogers and Thomlinson's Narrative Reflection of Practice

Purpose:

To understand the meaning of a particular practice intervention.

Exercise:

Write a narrative account of a recent practice event. In addition to reporting the details of your assessment and intervention, reflect on the meaning this piece of practice had for you and those with whom you were involved. This might accompany a taped recording of this event for discussion in supervision.

Bogo and Vayda's ITP Loop Model

Purpose:

Social workers can deconstruct practice situations into component parts.

Exercise:

Write responses using the following guidelines:

- *Retrieval*: Recall the most prominent facts of a recent practice experience. This might be an interpersonal encounter with an individual or family, or your role in a meeting, or drafting a policy.
- *Reflection*: Recall your thoughts and feelings about the situation. Your focus here is on beliefs, attitudes, experiences and world views from your own social

location.

- *Linkage*: Identify the actions you took and how you chose those actions. Reflect on the degree to which you considered concepts from social work models, theories supporting social work practice, skills learned in field or in class, and practice wisdom.
- *Professional Response*: Consider your example again. Did you respond deliberately or intuitively? Was your response effective and appropriate?

Adapted from:

Bogo, M., & Vayda, E. (1998). *The practice of field instruction in social work: Theory and process*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kenyon, G.L. & Power, R. (Eds.). (2000). *No magic: Readings in social work field education*. Toronto, Canada: Canadian Scholars Press.

SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE

Licensing tests throughout the United States are created and administered by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB). The examinations are designed to measure and establish a minimum level of practice competence and to protect the public from incompetent or poorly prepared practitioners. Both Iowa and Illinois have licensure laws and require both BSW and MSW graduates to pass the Intermediate Examination to be licensed as a social worker. The type of exam and level of supervision post-degree required varies depending on the level of degree earned. Students are encouraged to consider your career goals (plans to complete your MSW) before settling on which license to obtain.

In Iowa, there are three different levels of licensure available to those with either a BSW or MSW degree.

- **Bachelor Social Work** – has passed the basic examination of the ASWB
- **Master Social Work** – has passed the intermediate level examination of the ASWB (requires MSW)
- **Independent Social Work** – has passed the clinical level examination of the ASWB (requires MSW)

More information is available from the Iowa Board of Social Work Examiners:

Bureau of Professional Licensure
Iowa Department of Public Health
Phone (515) 281-0254

<https://idph.iowa.gov/Licensure/iowa-Board-of-Social-Work>

In Illinois, there are two different levels of licensure available to those with either a BSW or MSW degree. A BSW graduate may apply for LSW. An MSW graduate applies for licensure as a Licensed Social Worker (LSW).

More information on the regulations and procedures for application for licensure is available on the Social Work Examination and Disciplinary Board:

Social Work Examining and Disciplinary Board
IL Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation
Phone (888) 473-4858

<http://www.idfpr.com/profs/SocialWorker.asp>

Additional Web Resources:

Association of Social Work Boards:

www.aswb.org/

National Association of Social Workers – IA:

www.nasw-

heartland.org/?page=NASWIA_home

National Association of Social Workers – IL
Social Work licensure in the US:

www.naswil.org

<https://socialworklicensure.org/>

MANDATORY ABUSE REPORTING

As a social worker, you are a mandatory abuse reporter in both Illinois and Iowa. Discuss child and dependent adult abuse reporting laws and agency policies/procedures with your Agency Field Instructor.

Ten categories of child abuse are defined under Iowa law when a child under the age of 18 is harmed as a result of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for the care of the child. The ten categories of abuse include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Child prostitution
- Denial of critical care, neglect
- Mental injury
- Presence of illegal drugs
- Manufacturing or possession of a dangerous substance
- Bestiality in the presence of a minor
- Allows access by a registered sex offender
- Allows access to obscene material

Six categories of dependent adult abuse are defined under Iowa law when a person age 18 or over (who is unable to protect her/his own interests or unable to adequately perform or obtain services necessary to meet essential human needs as a result of a physical or mental condition) is harmed as a result of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for the care of the dependent adult. The six categories include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Exploitation (physical or financial)
- Deprivation of the minimum food, shelter, clothing, supervision, physical or mental health care (by the caregiver)
- Deprivation of the minimum food, shelter, clothing, supervision, physical or mental health care (by the dependent adult)
- Sexual exploitation of a dependent adult who is a resident of a health care facility

Retrieved from <http://dhs.iowa.gov>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest and most recognized membership organization of professional social workers in the United States.

The Association strives to improve the quality of social work practice and to promote public policies that improve society. NASW social workers are engaged in legislative advocacy, community development, continuing education, media outreach, and policy development year- round.

NASW is instrumental in assuring that the social work perspective is incorporated into pending legislation before Congress and in state legislatures. NASW's legislative agenda targets the association's lobbying efforts at legislation and regulations that will provide support to vulnerable groups and advance professional practice training and research opportunities for social workers. NASW's political action committee, known as PACE, works to elect officials that best represent social workers.

NASW promotes the quality and effectiveness of social work practice. This mission encompasses the maintenance of ethical conduct and fair personnel practices.

Membership in NASW entitles social work students and professional social workers to state and local chapter membership, ten issues of *NASW News*, and four issues of the journal *Social Work*. The Association also provides member benefits including JobLink and notification of continuing education opportunities.

Individual professional liability insurance is available through the **NASW Assurance Services**. Individual coverage protects the student directly as the policy holder. In order to apply for this coverage, students must be members of NASW and complete the application form. Further information is available at:

<http://www.naswassurance.org/malpractice/>

Students may join NASW at reduced rates. Membership applications are available at the School of Social Work or online at <https://www.socialworkers.org/>

Information about the NASW Code of Ethics is found at the following link:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics>

ST. AMBROSE UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS

<https://www.sau.edu/DeanofStudents>

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AIDS AND HIV POLICY

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG POLICY DIVERSITY

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

CSWE EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

www.cswe.org