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Welcome M.S.W. Students and Agency Field Instructors to the School of Social Work Office of Field Instruction.

The Council on Social Work Education states: "the intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting." Essentially field education teaches future social workers "to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity." Student experiences during internships can be the most powerful and meaningful aspect of their education.

Numerous organizations and settings such as family service agencies, community mental health settings, hospitals, residential treatment centers for children, homes for the elderly, group homes, crisis hotlines, health clinics, substance abuse and rehabilitation centers, veteran centers and governmental organizations have provided exciting and challenging opportunities for students to enhance their professional growth and development through experiential learning.

The School of Social Work at Syracuse University thanks the agencies and professionals within those agencies who take on the role of teaching and mentoring students in their journey to become professional social workers. We understand the time, energy and resources that this commitment takes, and we appreciate the opportunity to work with each of you in the education and training of competent professional social workers.

This manual is intended to provide you with policies, procedures and other important information you will need during the field education practicum. Our goals are to provide an educationally sound experiences to each student, to insure each student and field instructor is provided with individualized support and consultation and to successfully and effectively facilitate the development of social work competence.

We hope your field experience will be both challenging and rewarding!

Tracy T. Walker, L.M.S.W.
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The Office of Field Instruction (O.F.I.) website is designed to assist both students and field instructors to navigate successfully through the field experience.

The following Schools of Social Work are to be credited for material in this handbook: SUNY Albany, Hunter College, University of Chicago, California State University, Michigan State University, University of Akron.

Field Instruction Overview

M.S.W. Program—60 Credit Hour

Field Instruction occurs throughout the graduate social work curriculum and is concurrent with specific coursework (see table below). Field Instruction requires two separate internships, one at the foundation level and one at the concentration level, either Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.) or Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.).

Each field placement is a minimum of 500 hours (250 per semester) and typically occurs across two consecutive semesters in one academic year. Students will intern in social work settings for a minimum of sixteen hours a week, which meets the requirements for earning three credits per semester. A field seminar is a requirement of S.W.K. 671 Field Instruction I, S.W.K. 672 Field Instruction II and S.W.K. 771 Field Instruction III. The field seminar facilitates students' understanding of the learning experience through critical reflection of field and course work.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Course</th>
<th>Co-requisites</th>
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<tr>
<td>S.W.K. 671 Field Instruction I w/ Seminar</td>
<td>S.W.K. 601 Foundations for Social Work Practice I</td>
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<td>S.W.K. 672 Field Instruction II w/ Seminar</td>
<td>S.W.K. 602 Foundations for Social Work Practice II</td>
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<td>S.W.K. 771 Field Instruction III w/ Seminar</td>
<td>Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.) Concentration</td>
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<td>S.W.K. 732 Advanced Practice with I.F.G.</td>
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<td>S.W.K. 776 Clinical Practice Evaluation (can be taken either with S.W.K. 771 or S.W.K. 772)</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.W.K. 771 Field Instruction III w/ Seminar</td>
<td>Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.) Concentration</td>
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<td>S.W.K. 743 Advanced Integrated Practice</td>
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<td>S.W.K. 775 Program Evaluation OR S.W.K. 776 Clinical Evaluation (can be taken either with S.W.K. 771 or S.W.K. 772)</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.W.K. 772 Field Instruction IV</td>
<td>S.W.K. 775 Program Evaluation or S.W.K. 776 Clinical Evaluation as outlined in the concentration program plan if not taken with S.W.K. 771.</td>
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Advanced Standing Program—36 Credit Hour

Field Instruction for Advanced Standing students is concurrent with specific coursework (see table below). Advanced standing students are required to complete one internship at the concentration level, either Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.) or Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.). This field placement is a minimum of 500 hours and typically occurs across two semesters in one academic year. Students are placed in social work settings for a minimum of sixteen hours a week, which meets the requirements for earning three credits per semester.

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Field Seminar

Attendance and participation in the field seminar components S.W.K. 671: Field Instruction I, S.W.K. 672: Field Instruction II and S.W.K. 771: Field Instruction III is required.

Purpose of Field Seminar

- Facilitate students' understanding of the learning experience through critical reflection on field and coursework.
- Students' engage in a structured environment in which to integrate theoretical material learned in the classroom with field experiences.
- The structure and assignments facilitate the synthesis of theory, research, policy, and practice and encourage exploration of the profession's ethics as they relate to beginning generalist practice.
- Through the completion of assignments, class discussion, and the field practicum, the student develops an understanding of the social work profession, including values, ethics, social work roles, key theoretical and practice concepts, the use of self, the integration of personal and professional values, and advocacy.

Foundation and Concentration Level Internships

Description of Foundation and Concentration Level Internships

Foundation Level

The foundation level internship emphasizes generalist social work practice at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. Students learn how to advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice, using a range of engagement, assessment, intervention and evaluation methods in their practice with individual, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students will develop their identity as a social work professional, while applying ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Students will also learn how to engage in policy and research informed practice, while developing an understanding of the importance and influence of diversity and difference in shaping a person’s life experiences.

Concentration Level

The concentration level internship, either advanced clinical practice (A.C.P.) or advanced integrated practice (A.I.P.), focuses on a deeper understanding of specific knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes consistent with each concentration area.

A.C.P. students learn to practice as clinical social workers. Students engage with individuals, families and/or groups to learn clinical assessment, diagnosis, research informed interventions and evaluation skills. Students will learn how to incorporate clinical practices compatible with a client’s culture and values, in addition to identifying barriers to treatment due to prejudice, oppression, privilege and power. Students also develop an understanding of mental health related issues and policies that affect and inform clinical practice settings.

A.I.P. students learn to effectively navigate multiple levels of social work practice by engaging in varied professional roles and/or functions. Students develop advanced skills in engagement, assessment, research-informed interventions and evaluation at the direct and/or indirect practice level, by working on with multi-disciplinary teams in community-based settings. Students learn to incorporate social work practices compatible with client, organizational and /or community cultures and values, as well as, developing advocacy strategies that address and alleviate causes of oppression. Students also learn how to modify existing policy or develop new policy at the agency, local, state, or federal levels, in order to positively affect social work practice and delivery systems.

Both concentrations ensure that graduates will have a curriculum that meets the New York State L.M.S.W. and L.C.S.W. course requirements.

Requirements for Entering Foundation and Concentration Level Field Instruction
Foundation Level

Students entering the full-time M.S.W. program are automatically eligible to begin field placement planning upon acceptance and matriculation into the M.S.W. program. Readiness for field placement will be assessed during the placement planning process.

Students entering the part-time M.S.W. program will be eligible for field placement after they complete the first year of classes (or a minimum of 12 credit hours). Readiness for field placement will be assessed during the placement planning process. Academic probation status will be taken into consideration during this assessment.

Concentration Level

Students entering concentration level field placement must have passed field instruction I & II and the co-requisites of S.W.K. 601 and S.W.K. 602. Readiness for concentration level field placement is also assessed at the time of concentration level placement planning.

Selection of Field Instruction Settings

The School of Social Work has long standing relationships with many excellent human service agencies which offer a broad array of practice modalities and serve a variety of populations. In addition, the O.F.I. is continuously recruiting new field instruction settings. Below are the policies, criteria and procedures for selecting field settings.

Policy:

Vetting of Field Instruction settings (also referred to as agencies) occurs at the Office of Field Instruction (O.F.I.) level while official University/Agency contracting occurs at the Falk College level. The O.F.I. is responsible for recruitment and assessment of new field settings, along with referral to Falk College for initiation of a contract. A field instruction site is not an approved setting until the Syracuse University Agency agreement has been fully executed. Students cannot enter the internship site until a fully executed agreement is on file.

Procedure:

The O.F.I. (one of the Field Office team) complete completes an assessment utilizing the below criteria to determine appropriateness of the setting for social work internships. The field team member will provide information about the field setting to the Director of Field Education to discuss and determine appropriateness. After appropriateness of setting has been determined, the O.F.I. is responsible for completed initiating paperwork that is submitted to the Falk College to begin the contracting process. The contracting process can take an average of 3 months and is managed by the Falk College administrative team.

Criteria:

Broadly speaking, the School looks for evidence of commitment to social work principles and values, this is done first by reviewing the mission, values and goals of the organization to ensure alignment with social work principles and values. The field office meets with the organizations leadership to discuss the obligations and requirements for the agency to become an internship partner agency. During this meeting, the field office assesses the agencies capacity to foster a climate conducive to student learning. In addition, new agencies complete the Internship Description form. This form provides information about the kinds of internship tasks the student can engage in at the setting, who the proposed field instructor(s) are, and other demographic information.

All agency partners must be able to meet the obligations outlined in the Syracuse University Falk College Agency Agreement. Following is a list of more specific criteria for agency selection. Many of these same criteria are outlined in the Syracuse University Falk College Agency Agreement.

- The agency must be able to provide learning experiences that allow the student to practice and integrate the nine social work competencies. In the foundation year, the agency must have the capacity to engage the student in generalist practice. In the concentration year the agency must be able to provide students with the specific learning opportunities associated with the students concentration;
- The agency must allow the students across all program options in its field education program demonstrate social work competencies through in-person contact with clients and constituencies;
- The agency has evidenced that they seek to develop staff and improve programs through training, supervision and connection to the work of experts in their relevant fields;
- The agency must have available qualified B.S.S.W. and/or M.S.W. Field Instructors and can provide them the support necessary to function as field instructors, plan the student’s program, prepare for and hold supervisory conferences, attend field instruction orientations and trainings, and generally supervise the student’s progress. The agency is given the list of Field Instructor Responsibilities.
- The agency acknowledges the student as a learner whose assignment must be geared to learning needs rather than the scheduling demands and workload of the agency. Student assignments must be flexible enough to maximize learning, providing opportunities for foundation and/or concentration learning experiences.
- The agency must allow the student access to case records and other appropriate material, and recognizes that the student may present de-identified client information for classroom discussions and assignments.
- The agency allows the student to take part in staff meetings, in-service staff training, interagency conferences and such other educational opportunities as might arise.
- The agency can provide adequate physical space for meeting with clients, report writing, as well as access to technology necessary for recordkeeping

Selection of Field Instructors

Policy:

The Field education program requires that the Field Instructor of a graduate intern:

- possess a Master’s in Social Work (M.S.W.) degree from an accredited school of social work;
- have two years post-M.S.W. experience in an agency/institutional setting;
- be supervised within the scope of practice as defined by the New York State licensure statute; and
• have an expressed interest in and willingness to accept the field instructor’s role and responsibilities within the Program’s field education framework. This includes a capacity to share professional knowledge and experience, and facilitate development of student competencies and practice behaviors.

Procedure:
Potential field instructor’s are often identified first by the field setting and referred to the O.F.I. for review and approval. The potential field instructor is sent an e-mail asking them to complete an on-line field instructor application and provide a resume. Attached to the e-mail are several items to inform the field instructor of the responsibilities of being a field instructor, includes the M.S.W. Field Manual, F.A.Q.’s for Field Instructors, and Placement Typology.

The field application asks the potential field instructor their practice educational background, professional background, their active professional licenses and/or certifications they hold, any past field instruction experience and the reason for wanting to become a field instructor. In addition, the O.F.I. asks about any past disciplinary actions. Lastly, the O.F.I. asks the field instructor to agree to:

• Value the educational process for social work students
• Ensure that the student is adequately oriented to the agency/program
• Document supervision sessions, including subject matter, feedback and remedial recommendations discussed
• Provide constructive and effective feedback on an ongoing basis
• Complete a Professional Development Plan in cooperation with the student
• Present to students to diversity and offer an array of opportunities to enhance the educational experience
• Assist students in developing practice skills that are grounded in a bio/psycho/social/spiritual/cultural/environmental context
• Differentiate with students between student learning and employee expectations
• Assist students in gaining a strengths-based perspective in practice
• Provide students with a minimum of one hour of supervision per week throughout the internship.
• Address performance issues with the student and field liaison if needed.
• Participate in the student/program evaluation process and complete a formal evaluation at the end of each semester.
• Attend Field Instructor Orientation, F.I. workshops, field visits and review information provided by the Field Office.
• Adhere to the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics and professional values

Upon receipt of the field instructor application and resume, the O.F.I. team reviews the applications and determines if the potential field instructor meets the requirements. The Office Coordinator verifies there license via New York State Office of Professions website.

Task Supervisors/ Non-M.S.W. Field Instructors
In select instances where valuable learning experiences exist in a setting where no on-site M.S.W. is available, a human service professional engaged in social work functions may serve as a task supervisor with approval of the Field Office. Selections are made on an individual basis dependent upon agency’s learning opportunities and the task supervisor’s ability to provide experiential learning. In instances where a task supervisor is designated to provide the primary day-to-day oversight, the agency should also designate someone to provide the required M.S.W. supervision, on a bi-weekly basis at a minimum. This may be provided in the form of consultation:

• with an M.S.W. who is connected to the agency, such as a board member;
• with an M.S.W. from an agency that shares programming with the field agency;
• with an M.S.W. from the community who is contracted by the agency.

M.S.W. Student as Task Supervisor
In some cases, an M.S.W. student who is also a staff person at an internship site may serve as a task supervisor to a Syracuse University B.S.S.W. social work intern. To ensure adequate supervision is provided to the intern, and to mitigate the potential for dual relationships or other risk issues, the procedure below is followed:

• Only M.S.W. students who are in the concentration portion of the program and are staff members at the field site may provide task supervision
• The designated concentration level M.S.W. student/staff member may provide task supervision to B.S.S.W. interns only.
• The Office of Field Instruction (O.F.I.) will be responsible for reviewing and approving any such requests prior to the start of the internship
• The O.F.I. will ensure that the B.S.S.W. intern is fully informed and will document the intern’s consent. The intern will agree to communicate timely with the assigned field liaison should any concerns or issues arise that could impact the intern’s learning.
• In such a case, the O.F.I. will inform the agency-based field instructor and a decision will be made to assign the student to a different task supervisor or to relocate the student to a new field placement agency.

Placement Planning
The School of Social Work uses a cooperative placement planning process to match a student with an appropriate field placement. A student is required to complete a field application, submit a current resume and participate in a field placement planning meeting with the assigned Internship Placement Coordinator to determine appropriate field placement choices. The placement planning protocol and procedure are outlined below.

Please Note: All correspondence from the field office will be via syr.edu e-mail, per University policy.

Placement Planning Protocol
• Students may not contact potential field placement agencies without the approval of their Internship Placement Coordinator.
• The Internship Placement Coordinator will make every effort to place a student in his/her population, setting and area of interest in Social Work.
• Field placement sites are sometimes available within a student’s home community. However, some students may need to commute in order to have access to specific types of experiences.
• Field placement sites offering night and weekend hours are extremely limited. Your Internship Placement Coordinator will make every effort to accommodate your scheduling needs, however the O.F.I. cannot guarantee specific placement hours or an internship that can accommodate your work or personal schedules.
• The field placement is not officially confirmed until formal notification has been sent from the field office to the student and agency.
Placement Planning Procedure

Newly Matriculated Full-Time, Part-Time Students Entering Field for the First Time, and Advanced Standing Students:

- Students will be contacted via e-mail by the Director of Field Instruction to begin the placement planning process
- Students are directed to return the completed field application and a recent resume to the Director of Field Instruction.
- If the student does not send the O.F.I. the field application and resume in a timely manner (2 weeks), the O.F.I. will send a reminder e-mail. If we still do not hear from the student after 2 weeks the O.F.I. will call the student. If we are unable to connect with the student after this, the O.F.I. will send an e-mail notifying the student that they will be taken off the list for placement planning and the O.F.I. will no longer attempt contact.
- The Director of Field Instruction will then assign the student a placement planner.
- The field application and resume will be put in the student’s electronic field instruction file for future reference.
- The assigned Internship Placement Coordinator will contact the student to schedule a placement planning meeting. If the student does not respond to our request for a placement planning meeting, the O.F.I. will send one reminder e-mail, if no response, then the placement planner will attempt contact via the phone. If the student does not respond to the placement planner within a month of being assigned, the student will be notified that they are being taken off the list for placement planning and will not be allowed to enter field in the fall.
- The Internship Placement Coordinator will meet with each student to review the field application and resume. A general orientation to field instruction and its role in the curriculum is provided as needed. During the placement planning meeting the Internship Placement Coordinator will:
  - Assess the student’s experiences and learning interests.
  - Provide feedback and corrections to the resume, if necessary.
  - Research possible placements within the student’s area of interest.
  - Provide interview tips and materials, and role play a “mock” interview when necessary.
  - At the completion of the placement planning meeting, two to three pre-approved settings are selected as potential locations for internships.
  - The Internship Placement Coordinator sends a letter of interest with the student’s name and resume, via email, to the pre-approved settings.
  - The student will likewise receive a letter indicating the agreed upon pre-approved settings and the address, phone number and email address of each agency field instructor or contact person.
  - It is the student’s responsibility to contact and interview at each potential location.
  - If the student has difficulty connecting with the potential setting to secure an interview after several good faith attempts, the student should notify the Internship Placement Coordinator immediately.

The final placement decision is made by the mutual agreement of the Field Instructor, student, and the Internship Placement Coordinator. Placements are not considered finalized until a formal letter of confirmation has been sent to the student and Field Instructor from the Internship Placement Coordinator.

As a professional courtesy, students are expected to send a letter of acceptance or e-mail to their chosen agency as well as letters declining to any field instructor with whom they have interviewed and not selected the site as their practicum. This can be done via email or formal letter with copies sent to the assigned Placement Coordinator.

Full-time and Part-Time Students Entering Concentration Level Placement:

- In most cases, the assigned Internship Placement Coordinator who is the student’s current field liaison will be the placement planner for the concentration level placement planning.
- Placement planning will be initiated through an e-mail to the student from the Office of Field Instruction.
- Prior to this placement planning meeting, the student must complete and submit via email a Concentration Level Field Placement Application and current resume to the assigned Internship Placement Coordinator.
- The Internship Placement Coordinator will meet with each student to review the field application and resume. A general orientation to Concentration Level field instruction and its role in the curriculum is provided as needed. During the placement planning meeting the Internship Placement Coordinator will:
  - Assess the student’s experiences and learning interests.
  - Provide feedback and corrections to the resume, if necessary.
  - Research possible placements within the student’s area of interest.
  - Provide interview tips and materials, and role-play a “mock” interview when necessary.

At the completion of the interview, two to three pre-approved settings are selected as potential locations for internships. Students will receive contact information for locations via e-mail. It is the student’s responsibility to contact and interview at each potential location.

The final placement decision is made by the mutual agreement of the Field Instructor, student, and the Internship Placement Coordinator. Placements are not considered finalized until a formal letter of confirmation has been sent to the student and Field Instructor from the Internship Placement Coordinator.

As a professional courtesy, students are expected to send a letter of acceptance to their chosen agency as well as letters declining to any field instructor with whom they have interviewed and not selected the site as their practicum. This can be done via email or formal letter with copies sent to the assigned Placement Coordinator.

Notification Regarding Felony Convictions and Unprofessional Conduct
Students admitted to the Master’s Program are hereby notified that having pending charges, felony conviction or sanctions for unprofessional conduct may impact potential for obtaining field placement (required for graduation), as well as obtaining social work licensure and future employment as a social worker.

Students who cannot secure a placement after three interviews due to their criminal background or sanctions for unprofessional conduct will be notified that the O.F.I. is unable to secure them a placement. Next steps will be discussed.

Students with questions or concerns regarding this can contact their Internship Placement Coordinator or the Field Director.

**Employment-Based Field Placement**

Students who are already employed by a human service agency often inquire about using their employer as a field practicum site. There are strict guidelines that must be met in order to be placed at an existing employment site for practicum. First and foremost, the agency must be willing to provide the student with an educationally-focused experience for the required number of internship hours. To ensure the role of student as learner, the student learning opportunities and assignments cannot be the same as those of the student’s employment duties. There is a formal application process and the Director of Field Instruction must approve the proposal. Please note that two-year M.S.W. students are required to complete two separate practicum placements over the course of the program. It is rare for a student to be placed with the same agency in both their first and second year of study. Occasionally this may be approved by the O.F.I. if the agency is able to provide two distinct experiences for students.

**Policy:**

If a student wishes to request an internship in an agency in which she/he will be simultaneously employed, the following minimal conditions must be met:

1. The agency employs full-time social work staff;
2. An individual with an M.S.W. and at least two years post-M.S.W. experience must be available as a field instructor, subject to the approval of the School. The field instructor may not have supervised the student in another capacity;
3. The proposed field instruction assignments must differ significantly from previous/current employment or other field instruction experience within the agency;
4. The proposed field instruction assignment must meet curriculum requirements, for example: generalist opportunities for foundation M.S.W. or B.S. S.W. students and;
5. In the 60 hour M.S.W. program, employment-based internships are for one academic year. Exceptions are made only when it can be demonstrated that the plan for the concentration year employment-based internship clearly meets the criteria presented in conditions 2, 3 and 4 above in which case an exception may be considered.

**Procedure:**

It is expected that the student will have discussed the option for Employment-based Placement with the employing agency administrator responsible for staffing decisions prior to the student’s placement planning meeting. It is understood that all formal negotiations related to the proposed assignment subsequent to receipt of the student’s completed application are conducted by the Field Office. Interested students should complete the “Application for Employment-based Placement” form after consultation with the field office. The form is located on the field webpage.

The Application for Employment-based Placement is:

- Initiated and signed by the student
- Authorized by the employing agency with signatures as indicated
- Submitted to the assigned Internship Placement Coordinator
- Reviewed and Approved by the Director of Field Education

Final approval of the Application for Employment-based Placement occurs when the student and agency receive a formal letter of confirmation finalizing the placement. Approval of employment based internship is determined by the Director of Field Instruction. An approved and signed copy of the Application for Employment-based Placement will be put in the student’s electronic field instruction file for future reference.

All inquiries regarding employment-based placement should be directed to the Office of Field Instruction.

**Student is Unsuccessful in Securing an Internship**

Students are given up to three opportunities to interview at potential field settings to secure an internship. The field office will not send students to an unlimited amount of interviews.

If the above process does not result in a confirmed placement, the Internship Placement Coordinator will meet with the student to discuss what transpired in the interviews and explore reasons why they have been unable to secure a placement. Feedback from the field instructors or interviewers will be used to explore and reassess a student’s readiness for field. Options for next steps will be explored in a meeting with the student and may include:

1. Engaging the student in a "mock" interview to assess for areas of improvement and/or readiness for field and then giving student a final opportunity to interview at a potential field setting.
2. In cases when the reason for not securing a placement is due to the students availability (whether due to working full or part time or personal reasons), the students schedule will be reviewed to determine if it is feasible to secure any internship with the student’s schedule. If the student cannot change their schedule to accommodate an internship then the student will need to take a leave of absence until the time when they can be available to complete an internship.
3. Asking the student to register as a part-time student to take coursework that gives the program an opportunity to assess the student’s readiness for practice prior to entering field.
4. Counseling the student to re-evaluate his/her choice of social work as a career.

In some instances, the O.F.I. may terminate the placement planning process and the student will not be permitted to re-enter field until certain conditions have been met. Such a decision is based upon the Internship Placement Coordinator’s assessment, findings and feedback from interviewers. The student
Internship Roles, Responsibilities and Policies

Field Instructor Role and Responsibilities

The field instructor must possess a Master’s in Social Work (M.S.W.) degree from an accredited school of social work and have at least two years post-M.S.W. experience in an agency/institutional setting. Field Instructors providing clinical supervision may have additional years of post-M.S.W. experience and an advanced credential to supervise students in some settings associated with the A.C.P. concentration.

The Field Instructor is expected to carry out the following responsibilities:

- Orient the student to the agency, staff and task supervisors or other social workers with whom the student will work.
- Orient the student to safety concerns as outlined in the safety checklist.
- Collaborate with the student to develop and implement a Professional Development Plan.
- Schedule and provide weekly face-to-face supervisory sessions with the student for a minimum of 1 hour.
- Provide administrative, educational and supportive social work supervision.
- Document supervisory sessions.
- Provide appropriate activities and opportunities for the student to develop social work competency consistent with the student level in the program.
- Regularly review student progress and provide regular positive and constructive feedback.
- Maintain an ongoing evaluation of the student’s progress and complete written evaluations of the student at the end of each semester.
- Support the student’s initiative in gaining access to other learning experiences and resources in the agency and professional community when needed.
- Confer with the field liaison for mutual planning, review, and evaluation of the field experience.
- Inform the field liaison promptly of any problems in the field placement and, when necessary, develop a plan of remedial action with the liaison and the student. (See Field Problem Resolution Procedures)
- Participate in orientation and training activities for field instructors.
- Provide information to the O.F.I. to assist in the future use of the agency as a placement site, including the field instructor’s interest in continuing service as a field instructor.
- If a task supervisor is used, the Field Instructor is required to regularly communicate with and oversee the task supervisor’s work with the student.

Task Supervisor Role and Responsibilities

A Task Supervisor may be designated by the Field Instructor to assume specific responsibilities for secondary instruction and supervision on a particular assigned task, project, or assignment. The Task Supervisor does not replace the Field Instructor; rather, they collaborate to ensure that the student learning goals are being met and regular feedback is provided. Field instruction gives more emphasis to using the field experiences as an extension of social work classes, to assure achievement of competency and socialization to the profession. Task supervisors must work in a related discipline and have an understanding of the social work perspective. The task supervisor typically has expertise in an area that expands a student’s learning opportunities.

The Task Supervisor is expected to carry out the following responsibilities:

- Provides secondary instruction/supervision to student on a specific task, project, or assignment as assigned by the Field Instructor.
- Responsible for the day-to-day, on-site guidance for specific work, research, and practice.
- Provides constructive feedback to student on specific tasks undertaken.
- Keeps a record of learning projects or tasks assigned.
- Keeps field instructor informed of student’s progress on projects undertaken with task supervisor.
- Participates in the field visit with the Field Liaison once per semester.
- Provides input to the final Performance Evaluation of the student.
- Attends Task Supervisor training sponsored by the O.F.I. as required.
- When feasible, participates in a portion of regular supervision with student and Field Instructor.

M.S.W. Student as Task Supervisor

In some cases, an M.S.W. student who is also a staff person at an internship site may serve as a task supervisor to a Syracuse University B.S.S.W. social work intern. To ensure adequate supervision is provided to the intern, and to mitigate the potential for dual relationships or other risk issues, the procedure below is followed:

- Only M.S.W. students who are in the concentration portion of the program and are staff members at the field site may provide task supervision.
- The designated concentration level M.S.W. student/staff member may provide task supervision to B.S.S.W. interns only.
- The Office of Field Instruction (O.F.I.) will be responsible for reviewing and approving any such requests prior to the start of the internship.
- The O.F.I. will ensure that the B.S.S.W. intern is fully informed and will document the intern’s consent. The intern will agree to communicate timely with the assigned field liaison should any concerns or issues arise that could impact the intern’s learning.
- In such a case, the O.F.I. will inform the agency-based field instructor and a decision will be made to assign the student to a different task supervisor or to relocate the student to a new field placement agency.

Field Liaison Role and Responsibilities

The Director of Field Instruction and the Internship Placement Coordinators serve as faculty field liaisons and carry the major responsibility for agency-school contacts regarding the design, implementation and evaluation of the field practicum. The role of the field liaison is to provide a link between the School of Social Work, the student and the internship agency. Field Liaisons meet jointly with the student and field instructor at least once per semester to discuss progress made with their Professional Development Plan. Field Liaisons are also available to the student and the agency for problem resolution.
The Professional Development Plan (P.D.P.) is a formal plan between the student and field instructor which identifies the learning opportunities/activities that facilitate the attainment of the program competencies. Once students engage in agency orientation activities, they will begin to develop their P.D.P.

Students should discuss with their Field Instructor how they learn best, their strengths, limitations and areas of interest as they pertain to the agency. The development of the P.D.P. is a cooperative process between the student and field instructor. The P.D.P. will support and inform how the field instructor facilitates the attainment of the program competencies. Once students engage in agency orientation activities, they will begin to develop their P.D.P.

The P.D.P. serves as a guide to develop the student's professional skills. It is seen as an organic document that is individualized for each student and is used for two semesters of field work. The P.D.P. is reviewed and updated at least once every field visit to ensure that it supports educationally sound experiences. The P.D.P. is seen as an organic document that is individualized for each student and develops over time, it will be used for two semesters of field.

Summary of the Components of the Professional Development Plan

**Student Role and Responsibilities**

The student, in the role of learner and beginning social work professional, with the support of the field liaison and the field instructor has major responsibilities for his/her own learning and is expected to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of the internship experience. Responsibilities center on professional social work behavior, the use of supervision, participation in the P.D.P. along with self-evaluation and the use of agency resources.

**Professional Social Work Behavior**

When students enter the field placement they are expected to accept and abide by the Social Work Code of Ethics as required by the profession, state law, and/or licensing regulations. Students assume responsibility for reading the Social Work Code of Ethics prior to entering field placement. Students assume the liability risks that are inherent in their role as a practicing social work student.

The student should not allow their personal issues such as psychosocial distress, substance abuse history, or mental difficulties to interfere with professional judgment or performance. The student is responsible for communicating with the O.F.I. if any personal issues are impacting their ability to practice as a student social worker. If personal issues are not remediated the student's placement can be terminated. The student should be aware that the student's placement can be terminated. The student should be aware that the student's placement can be terminated. The student should be aware that the student's placement can be terminated. The student should be aware that the student's placement can be terminated. The student should be aware that the student's placement can be terminated.

**Field Orientation and Other Required Training**

All first year/foundation students are expected to attend a Mandatory Field Orientation held by the O.F.I. prior to beginning their internship. Roles, responsibilities, and rules are reviewed. Safety in field and supervision requirements are discussed.

The process of becoming oriented to the agency placement, to the supervisory relationship, agency and field safety protocol and decision-making are provided by agency based field instructors and/or task supervisors.

All students are required to complete the New York State On-Line Mandated Reporter training within the first two weeks of the semester they enter field.

**The Professional Development Plan**

The Professional Development Plan (P.D.P.) is a formal plan between the student and field instructor which identifies the learning opportunities/activities that facilitate the attainment of the program competencies. Once students engage in agency orientation activities, they will begin to develop their P.D.P.

Students should discuss with their Field Instructor how they learn best, their strengths, limitations and areas of interest as they pertain to the agency. The development of the P.D.P. is a cooperative process between the student and field instructor. The P.D.P. will support and inform how the field instructor evaluates the student's ability to demonstrate related social work knowledge, values and skills. The seminar instructor and/or field liaison reviews the P.D.P. to ensure that it supports educationally sound experiences. The P.D.P. is seen as an organic document that is individualized for each student and develops over time; it will be used for two semesters of field.

The Field Instructor is expected to carry out the following responsibilities:

- Develop and maintain working relationships between specified agencies and the School of Social Work.
- Oversight of the student learning experience or Support student safety and competency development
  - Consultation in the development of the individual P.D.P.
  - Clarification of the expectations of the school and the curriculum
  - Consultation and support of the problem solving efforts of student and/or field instructor.
  - Making at least one field visit per semester. This typically occurs at the agency but in some cases, due to distance or other factors, the field visit may occur telephonically or via Skype.
- Instructor for Integrative Field Seminar
- Review of student field evaluation and awarding field instruction final grade for each semester.
- Ongoing assessment of the agency setting, field instructor and the potential for providing educationally sound instructional experiences.
- Participate in development and presentation of field instructor training program and related resource materials.
- Participation with the Director of Field Instruction in program evaluation activities.

The field liaison is available for the agency field instructor to consult with regarding any matters concerning students placed in an agency and can be contacted at any point during the internship for consultation. The School of Social Work highly encourages regular contact between the Field Liaison and Agency Field Instructor to ensure the field placement is a positive learning experience for the student and the agency.
The Professional Development Plan allows the field instructor and student to address the logistics and supervisory expectations of the field placement; the learning opportunities/activities the student will engage in, including how they relate to social work program competencies and the field instructor evaluation of the student at the end of the semester. The P.D.P. is submitted in three sections to the field liaison:

Section I:

Logistics and Supervisory Expectations. This section addresses the orientation plan for the student, the supervision plan, and the logistics of field placement hours and the individual tasks, assignments or learning goals of the student. It is electronically submitted to the field liaison on the date indicated on the syllabus. It is reviewed by the liaison and suggested additions, clarifications or changes will be made by the student, if indicated.

Section II:

Learning Opportunities /Tasks are developed by the student and field instructor. These opportunities/activities should provide the student with an opportunity to practice and demonstrate the practice behaviors related to the Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) program competencies. The educational experiences of field instruction are intended to prepare students with the necessary social work knowledge, values and skills for competent social work practice. Section II is electronically submitted to the field liaison on the date indicated on the syllabus. It is reviewed by the liaison and returned to the student. Suggested additions, clarifications or changes will be made by the student, if indicated.

Section III:

Section III is submitted shortly before the end of each semester. This section gives the student the opportunity to reflect on competency development, achievements, and areas for continued growth. The student’s reflections are shared with the field instructor and field liaison via email to inform the Performance Evaluation that is completed by the field instructor.

**Documentation of Internship Hours**

Students and field instructors are responsible for tracking and documenting internship hours.

**General Guidelines:**

The field instructor is responsible for ensuring that the student spends their internship time engaged in activities and learning opportunities that allow the student to develop social work competence as outlined in the nine (9) social work competencies and listed in the Performance Development Plan (PDP).

An essential part of the student learning experience is engaging with an organizational system and building awareness of the organization’s culture. The learning process given this, the expectation is that the student spends most of the time at the organization, and/or engaged in community or other agency-based meetings and home visits. See policy for guidelines and procedures related to counting internship hours for any other off-site practicum-related learning opportunities or tasks.

It is acceptable to count internship time for:

- Travel time to, from and during community or other agency-based meetings
- Travel time to, from and during home visits

It is unacceptable to count internship time for:

- Travel time to and from the agency to start and end your internship day;
- When agency is closed due to weather or holiday
- For time spent on social work course assignments, readings or homework either at the agency or elsewhere

**Procedure:**

The student, in partnership with their field instructor, is required to establish a plan for how time is documented. The student will outline the number of internship hours per week, internship schedule and the documentation plan in the Performance Development Plan, along with any specific information for school breaks or other planned time off for the academic year. The field instructor and the student should be prepared to show internship hours documentation, upon request, such as during a field visit. If the student must call in sick or miss regular internship time, the student and field instructor are responsible for developing a plan to make up any time missed.

Students must receive prior approval from field instructor to accrue internship hours when off site (see Policy on Accumulating Internship Hours When Off-Site and Unobserved). This approval should be documented in writing in the Professional Development Plan and comply with the appropriate policy below.

**Accumulating Internship Hours When Off-Site and Unobserved**

Students can accumulate internship hours when off-site and unobserved under the following guidelines.

**General Guidelines**

- The student must receive pre-approval from their field instructor to engage in learning opportunities when off-site and unobserved.
- The field instructor has discretion to approve off-site learning activities as they deem appropriate and can provide rationale to the field liaison. In addition to ensuring the student is engaged in learning opportunities as outlined in the PDP, field instructors should take into consideration the students:
  - Reliability
  - Initiative
  - Ability to work independently
• Use of professional judgement
• Ability to critically think and effectively problem solve
• Any internship hours accumulated when off site and unobserved, must be related to a specific learning outcome/competency and there must be concrete evidence of knowledge, values, skills and or cognitive/affective processing the student developed as a result of said learning opportunity /task.
• It is acceptable to count on-call internship time for:
  • direct client contact (via phone, online or in person)
  • indirect client contact such as field instructor or colleague consultation (via phone, online or in person)
  • related documentation
• Students who engage in on call for part of their internship experience take the risk of accruing an inconsistent amount of internship hours when on call.

Field Visits for Students and Field Instructor

The Council on Social Work Education and the School of Social Work require that school representatives have contact with field instructors and students during the internship experience to monitor student learning and assess field setting effectiveness. The School of Social Work utilizes field liaisons to achieve this requirement by facilitating a minimum of two (2) on-site field visits, once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester with the student, field instructor and task supervisor (when appropriate).

The field liaison is assessing the student’s ability to articulate their learning through:

• Summarization of internship context and experiences;
• Provision of example of integration of theory/social work concepts to practice;
• Discussion of specific cases, groups, projects and/or learning opportunities and in what ways these have advanced competency development; and
• Use of social work professional language, concepts and ethical guidelines.

The field liaison is assessing the field instructor’s ability to provide an effective learning environment through:

• Verification of regular and consistent teaching including weekly supervisory sessions to monitor, enhance, support and evaluate student learning;
• Discussion of how specific tasks, cases, groups and/or other learning opportunities are appropriate to the students educational level and the related social work competencies;
• Verbal articulation of how the field instructor influences the student’s development as a professional; and
• Discussion of the organizational culture in relationship to supporting student learning.

Scheduling the field visit day and time

• The fall semester field visit is typically scheduled between mid-October to the end of November.
• The spring semester field visit is typically scheduled between mid-March to the end of April.
• Field liaisons will attempt to schedule the field visit during the day and time of the regularly scheduled supervisory session.
• In some cases additional field visits may occur. Additional field visits may be utilized to problem solve around barriers or struggles with the students learning or within the learning environment.

Student Disability and Accommodation in Field

Students with disabilities are expected to meet the same educational standards and requirements for competent social work practice as required for all students. Syracuse University complies with federal and state laws which affect qualified persons with disabilities. It is the policy and practice of the School of Social Work to provide equitable educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities in all programs and activities, including internships or field placements. Students with disabilities who may need accommodation in the field placement are strongly encouraged to talk with a member of the Field Instruction staff. Efforts will be made to work with prospective agencies and field instructors to ensure that students will receive the supports they need to function well within the agency setting. Students are also encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services at Syracuse University. Reasonable accommodations that facilitate the performance of a student with a disability will be explored with the student and field instructor in the agency setting. Reasonable accommodations do not necessarily mean extraordinary accommodations.

Transportation

Students must provide their own transportation to and from their field placement. As part of their field placement duties students may be required to use their personal automobiles for home visits and agency visits. Students are responsible for providing adequate automobile insurance coverage to cover their use of their personal vehicle while performing field agency related duties and activities. Due to liability concerns (i.e., to be sure that s/he is covered to do so), any student who transports clients in her/his personal vehicle must, at the beginning of the placement, inform the provider of the automobile insurance that s/he is using the vehicle for internship.

Students who drive in a vehicle in performance of their field responsibilities – whether transporting clients or not – should be aware that they are not covered for this activity under the university’s insurance.

If permitted by the field agency, students may use agency vehicles to perform duties related to their field experience. Students must follow the agency policies and procedures when using agency vehicles. The students are responsible to ascertain and verify that the agency has appropriate insurance coverage of the student and the agency vehicles when the student uses an agency vehicle to perform agency duties or activities during their field experience hours.

Students are responsible for incurred costs related to parking and driving to and from the field placement agency, making home visits, and agency visits. Some agencies reimburse the costs; some do not. Students are responsible for ascertaining whether the agency will cover the driving costs and to follow the appropriate agency procedures for reimbursement. Agencies are expected to reimburse students for expenses incurred as part of any field assignment, if they reimburse staff for the same expense.

Student Safety
The O.F.I. recognizes that there are inherent risks for professional social workers and students engaged in the study of the profession. The social work program will provide students with information and skills to address potentially harmful situations. A student should not be required to engage or to remain in assignments or at placements in which s/he feels physically at risk. If a student’s concern about safety interferes with the learning process, the field instructor or student should contact the field liaison to facilitate exploration of the concerns and to seek a mutually satisfying resolution.

Office of Field Instruction Responsibilities:

- Provide all field students with general written information about safety in field placement;
- Provide basic safety information at the student field orientation and during their seminar class;
- Provide a safety checklist to the field instructor and student, that is required to be reviewed, signed and submitted to the O.F.I.;
- Provide support, consultation and coaching as needed;
- Responsive to students concerns about safety.

Agency Responsibilities:

- Orient student interns to the agency specific safety policies and procedures.
  Such orientation should include, but not be limited to, discussion of safety issues in the community, within the agency building(s), with particular clients prone to violent behavior, or regarding clients who may be sharing living quarters with persons prone to violent behavior, to the extent that such information is known. Security of personal belongings of the student intern while at the agency should be also covered and procedures for the student(s) to follow in the event of a safety or security problem;
- Provide accommodations to ensure students’ safety such as is provided for agency staff. In some situations the agency may need to make even greater accommodation for a student, such as partnering with another staff member for home visits;
- Review required safety checklist with the student;
- Contact the field liaison if an incident occurs in which a student is personally threatened or hurt.

Student Responsibilities:

- Report safety concerns with the agency based field instructor immediately;
- If personally threatened or hurt the student should contact their field liaison.

See Appendix IV for Safety Checklist Information

Social Media & Professional Communication

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the Syracuse University School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities. Students participating in field placement are expected to practice in an ethical manner, in accordance with the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics, the N.A.S.W./A.S.W.B. Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice, University policies and New York State laws while working with clients or programs within their placement.

Students need to be aware that public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos about the field placement or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students’ social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, and/or the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics. If a student is found sharing information about agencies on an internet social networking site, or violating field agency policies, action may be taken by the agency or the field office to dismiss the student either from the agency or from the field program.

In the event that a student’s social media profile or linkage is considered a poor professional practice or an ethical violation, the student will be subject to an academic hearing (see section on academic)

View suggestions regarding protecting yourself and your personal and professional reputation while on-line.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is the federal agency responsible for enforcing Title VII. The E.E.O.C. Guidelines, 29 C.F.R. Section 1604.11, provide the following definition of sexual harassment:

“Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.”

These guidelines only apply to employment. However, any possible sexual harassment is a comparable concern of the institution and the courts. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which is intended to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities, had been held to apply in such cases. If any student has a complaint, s/he is strongly encouraged to take the complaint to the field liaison, faculty advisor, the Director of Field Instruction or the Director of the School of Social Work. Students are encouraged to also review their internship sites sexual harassment policies.
What to Do if You Feel You Have Been Subjected to Sexual Harassment

1. Clearly and firmly demand that it cease immediately.
2. Tell the harasser, in writing if necessary, that you object to this behavior. Describe the specific things that offend you or upset you. Keep a copy of this letter.
3. Keep a diary or log with dates and times of occurrences for documentation.
4. As a student in Field, contact your Field Liaison or Director of Field Education immediately.
5. Contact the Syracuse University Counseling Center for confidential assistance and support at 315.443.4715
6. Contact Onondaga County Police Department Emergency Number (911) if you were assaulted or raped.
7. Contact Department of Public Safety at their non-emergency number (315) 443-2224 to provide or obtain information.

Job Action

The School of Social Work does not take sides in a strike conflict. In the event of a job action at a site for field instruction in which a student from Syracuse University School of Social Work is in placement, the following procedure will be followed:

It is the responsibility of the agency field instructor to inform the field liaison of a job action or impending action. It is then the responsibility of the field liaison to notify the Director of Field Instruction of the job action.

1. If the social work staff involved is involved in the work stoppage, the student should be removed from the agency at once based upon the following considerations:
   • Concern for the learning climate at the agency;
   • Concern for students' safety;
   • The student not be put in the position of being perceived as a strike breaker.

2. If the social work staff at the agency is not involved in the job action, the field instructor, student, field liaison, agency management and the Director of Field Instruction will meet to consider whether the student will remain at this site. Final decision regarding the student's remaining with or being removed from the agency is made jointly by representatives of the agency and the School of Social Work. Considerations to be taken into account will include:
   • concern for the student's safety;
   • concern that the student not be perceived as a strike breaker;
   • the learning climate of the situation;
   • projected duration of the job action and the impact on the agency;

3. In the event that the student is removed from his/her placement, it is the responsibility of the field liaison and the Director of Field Instruction to develop alternate learning experiences of the student.

4. Before students leave a placement, they should have (to the degree possible) all their records and recordings up to date and available to agency personnel so that they are fulfilling their professional responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the field liaison to insure that the student is appropriately evaluated on all field work completed.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Ongoing Assessment of Performance

Assessing student performance in field instruction is a continual process and is an integral part of the educational program. Agency based field instructors are responsible for assessing the student's knowledge, skills and professional values throughout the internship experience. They are responsible for giving regular and timely feedback to give the student an opportunity to adjust any performance concerns or issues. In instances when the student in unable to remediate performance concerns, the field liaison and field instructor will consult to determine status of student in field internship. In instances where the performance concern or issue is an egregious violation of the Code of Ethics, agency policies or University policies, the agency has a right to immediately terminate the student.

Formal Evaluation of Student Performance

There are several ways in which student's performance is formally evaluated. These include:

• Completion of a summative field evaluation at the end of each semester by the agency based field instructor. Students and Field Instructors are directed to review the evaluation instrument as part of the preparation for developing the learning agreement. Students and field instructors are required to include a description of mechanisms for competency evaluation in the learning agreement. Examples of evaluation activities are provided to field instructor to assist with the development of the evaluation plan. The field evaluation instrument is available on the field instruction webpage.
• Completion of a field visit conferences between the field liaison, the field instructor and the student. Field visit conferences most often occur face to face, but in some instances may occur via telephone or Skype.
• Completion of all required field seminar assignments (applicable to S.W.K. 671, 672 & 771)

Grading

Field Instruction is a course, and as in any course, there is a grade. Grades in Field are “Pass” or “Fail”. A student achieves a grade of “Pass” by meeting the required performance criteria outlined in this Manual and the related field instruction syllabus; by adhering to the National Association of Social Workers’ Code of Ethics; and by demonstrating the Essential Abilities and Attributes for Performance in the School of Social Work.

For S.W.K. 671 Field Instruction I and S.W.K. 672 Field Instruction II, and S.W.K. 771 Field Instruction III, the seminar instructor, in consultation with the field liaison, is responsible for assigning the student's grade for the field instruction course. For S.W.K. 772 Field Instruction IV the field liaison is responsible for assigning the student's grade. Grades for field instruction are based on:
• the summative evaluation form completed by the field instructor which reflects the student's demonstrated knowledge, skills and values in social work practice;
Performance in field instruction is a critical indicator of the student's readiness to assume professional responsibilities. In addition, successful completion of field instruction is a formal requirement of the M.S.W. program. Therefore, students must earn a Pass (P) grade for each semester in field instruction in order to continue to move forward in field. A failing grade will result in an academic hearing and potential dismissal from the M.S.W. program. Students should refer to the M.S.W. Student Handbook: Grievance and Appeal Procedures if they feel that a grievance or appeal is warranted.

Field Problem Resolution Procedures

Productively and effectively addressing concerns, challenges and or conflicts in the workplace is an essential skill for any professional. If problems arise in the practice setting, it is recommended that students and field instructors refer to the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics which provides guidance for ethical responsibilities to colleagues and in practice settings. In addition, the School of Social Work provides a problem solving flowchart (see Appendix III) which emphasizes communication of concerns, large or small, at the earliest possible opportunity.

Field Instructor or Field Liaison identifies a Performance Concern

Step One:

When the field instructor or field liaison identifies a problem or performance concern it is brought to the student's attention as soon as observed so that the student, the Field Instructor and/or Field Liaison have full opportunity to initiate timely corrective steps. Field instructors and students are required to keep documentation (ex: supervisory notes) of problems or performance concerns.

Step Two:

If after utilizing the problem solving steps above, a resolution cannot be facilitated, the following action may occur:

A professional improvement plan (P.I.P.) is initiated by the Field Instructor and Liaison, in discussion with the student regarding the student performance issues. The P.I.P. will identify the specific student-related problem areas, skills needing development, the plan for remediation, and time frame for assessing progress toward resolving the problem. The P.I.P. is reviewed with the student and then the student is asked to sign that the PIP was reviewed with them. The Field Instructor and Field Liaison also sign and a copy is sent to the Director of Field Instruction. The P.I.P. is viewed as a tool to provide support and to optimize student’s success.

If after utilizing the steps described above, and improvement is not seen in the allotted time frame, the following possible actions may occur:

1. The student is moved to a different field placement agency or a different field instructor with the same agency.
2. The placement is terminated and the student is not permitted to re-enter field until certain conditions have been met (see termination of field placements);
3. A grade of “F” is assigned (see Grading Section for details);
4. The student is counseled out of the program

In cases when the agency believes that the continued presence of the student is potentially harmful or disruptive, the student will be removed as soon as an appropriate termination plan can be implemented. Likewise, if the student feels unsafe or otherwise unable to continue, s/he can request a termination of internship. (See Termination of Field Placement section for details.)

Student Identifies a Problem or Concern

The process of problem solving on one’s own behalf is an important part of professional development. The first step in most cases involves the field instructor, field liaison and/or Director of Field Instruction coaching the student on possible strategies for resolving the problem him/herself. If this fails, the student, Field Instructor, Field Liaison and/or the Director of Field Instruction initiates a joint meeting to further assess and enact problem resolution strategies.

If after utilizing the problem solving steps, a resolution does not occur, the following possible actions may occur:

1. The student is moved to a different field placement agency or a different field instructor with the same agency.
2. The placement is terminated and the student is not permitted to re-enter field until certain conditions have been met.

Termination of Field Placements

Field placements are made after a thoughtful and structured pre-placement process that involves active student and agency participation. Once confirmed, a placement is not terminated without careful consideration of all contributing factors. The following outlines the possible ways in which termination can occur:

- initiated by the agency/field instructor;
- requested by the student and initiated by the Office of Field Instruction (O.F.I.);
- Initiated by the O.F.I. without request from student or agency.

Agency and/or Field Instructor Initiated Termination

Circumstances that warrant a termination from an agency, initiated by the field instructor, would be as follows:

1. Student’s poor performance and inability to remediate concerns.
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 practice.

Foundation:

Appendix I: Social Work Competencies

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Potential Actions: the student is not permitted to re-enter field until certain conditions have been met; the student receives a grade of fail (F); or, the Director of Field Instruction determines whether student shall be reassigned to a different field instructor within the agency or if the placement will be terminated and the student re-placed at a different agency. The M.S.W. Program Director is notified of the outcome.

2. Student’s egregious violations of Code of Ethics, agency policies or university policies.

Potential Actions: the student receives a grade of fail (F) and the M.S.W. Program Director is notified that the student’s enrollment in field instruction has been terminated.

3. Student’s personal circumstances interfere with their ability to meet field placement expectations

Potential Action: the student is counseled to request an Incomplete for field, adjust his/her program status to part time and/or take a Leave of Absence until such time as the interfering factors have been mitigated. Withdrawal from the field placement may require a simultaneous withdrawal from the concurrent practice course; this determination would be made by the practice course instructor.

4. Agency’s circumstances interfere with its ability to meet field instruction expectations.

Potential Action: The student will be re-placed at a different agency, subject to agency availability.*

Student Requested Termination

Any student who prematurely and independently terminates a placement without prior approval of the O.F.I., will receive a grade of Fail (F).

Circumstances that warrant a request for termination is as follows:

1. Student’s personal circumstances interfere with their ability to meet field placement expectations:
   - Student Action: meet with field liaison to determine if a request for an incomplete may be appropriate.

2. Irreconcilable differences between the agency and student.
   - Student Action: The request for termination is then taken to the O.F.I. for determination. The Director of Field Instruction, field liaison and agency representative will cooperatively decide if the student will be re-assigned to a different field instructor within the agency or if the placement will be terminated and the student re-placed at a different agency.

*If the determination of the O.F.I. is that the student be re-placed at a different agency, arrangements will be made to secure another placement. A revised field placement timeline will be developed to ensure that the minimum 500 hours are completed. Students may be required to complete more than the minimum of 500 hours. The O.F.I. will determine the number of hours to be completed and will inform student before re-placement.

Office of Field Instruction Initiated Termination

The O.F.I. reserves the right to terminate placements for any of the conditions above. The O.F.I. is responsible for ensuring an educationally sound experience and for the continual assessment of a student’s ability to ethically and competently practice as a student intern. Furthermore, the O.F.I. is bound by the Code of Ethics to ensure protection of clients from harm due to student action.

Closure/Endings Considerations

Regardless of the reasons for early termination, it is expected that the student with direction from the agency field instructor, will carry out adequate closure with clients, co-workers, and the agency. Any plans for closure should include: the exact date of termination, the timing and method used to terminate planned contact with individuals and/or groups; the way in which the student will fulfill other agency obligations (completion of summaries needed for case transfer or closing, for example); and completion of necessary separation procedures (sign forms, returning keys and/or I.D., etc.). It is expected that the closure process will be done in a way that continues to support the student’s learning and the best interests of the clients served.

Evaluation of Field Instruction Program

Student feedback regarding the field program is vital to the School. Students are provided with the opportunity to formally evaluate the field placement and supervisory relationship at the end of the academic year. In addition, students provide feedback regarding the Field Liaison role and the Field Seminar at the end of each placement. The end of the year evaluation forms provide an opportunity to reflect on the overall field experience in the agency setting. While it is recognized that the information is subjective, it provides an avenue for discussion of any issues that may warrant exploration or change for future student field placements.

All evaluations are submitted electronically through Syracuse University Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (O.I.R.A.). Students will be notified via email of due dates for all evaluations related to the O.F.I. All feedback is received by the Director of Field Education and constitutes the primary data used in subsequent planning and placement decisions.

In circumstances when there is a pattern of agency or field instructor concerns from students,

Appendix I: Social Work Competencies

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Foundation:
• Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the N.A.S.W. 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
• Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situation
• Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, & electronic communication
• Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
• Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration understand how the values and ethical standards of the profession guide critical thinking and decision making that impact practice at an advanced level. Using historical, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, Social Workers understand the intersectionality of beliefs amongst individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, and the professional role they play within that system. They recognize, engage and influence others in the importance of self-awareness, reflection and professional development to enhance practice outcomes.

• Uphold professional ethical standards within their specialized areas of practice
• Use purposeful reflection and insight to negotiate the direction of supervision.
• Effectively navigate multiple levels of social work practice by engaging in varied professional roles and/or functions.
• Demonstrate leadership in professional collaboration, service delivery team, task force or committee.

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Practitioners in clinical social work recognize the importance of the therapeutic relationship, the person-in-environment and the strengths perspective, the professional use of self with clients, and the adherence to ethical guidelines of professional behavior. Clinical social workers recognize their role on interprofessional teams and the ethical use of technology in their practice.

• Uphold professional standards within the scope of practice for clinical social workers
• Engage in clinical supervision/consultation
• Utilize ethical decision-making, ethical use of technology in clinical practice.
• Engage in self-reflection to identify value conflicts, strengths, and challenges/areas for growth

2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Foundation:

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 sovereignty. 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.

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

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration understand that diversity is complex and multifaceted, 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 sovereignty. A.I.P. requires understanding that people interact with larger institutions, such as communities, organizations, and political systems, which may both enable and constrain the expression of difference. Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration will be able to recognize the difference between strategies of empowerment and oppression, and promote empowerment in their work with clients and client systems. A.I.P. also requires thorough exploration of the strengths and resources associated with a person’s diversity characteristics, and those of the communities with which they identify, as assets in facilitating meaningful change.

• Engage in an ongoing self-assessment to mitigate the influence of personal and professional biases.
• Integrate diverse and culturally responsive perspectives to guide practice within the context of multi-level and multi-professional systems.
• Conceptualize and analyze how systemic oppression, discrimination, and marginalization impacts individuals and/or the communities with which they identify

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Practitioners in clinical social work engage in diversity and difference by being knowledgeable about effects of the various forms of isms and discrimination. Practitioners continue to develop awareness and specialized knowledge and understanding about history, traditions, values and systems as they relate to clinical practice. Dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors, critical to the formation of identity, and characterize and shape the human experience.

• Engage in an ongoing self-assessment to mitigate the influence of personal biases in the therapeutic relationship
• Articulate how wellness and illness are defined differently depending on clients’ culture and values
• Incorporate clinical practices that are compatible with client culture and values.

3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Foundation

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.

- Apply and demonstrate understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice
- Effectively advocate when issues of social, economic and environmental justice interfere with engagement, assessment, intervention, evaluation, access to and delivery of services

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration have an advanced understanding that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as self-determination, security, dignity, and access to the full benefits of society. They can apply their understanding of structural causes of oppression to critically examine how multiple oppressions intersect at the crossing points of people’s diverse identities, expressions, and abilities. Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration can use their knowledge of oppression to both develop and evaluate strategies that promote social and economic justice, and advance basic human rights.

- Develop advocacy strategies that alleviate causes of oppression
- Assume leadership through varied social work roles and functions that advance or protect civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Practitioners in clinical social work safeguard and enhance fundamental human rights, including freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, and access to health care and education. They strive to eliminate oppressive structural barriers. They are aware of both local and global aspects of human rights and social justice issues, and of the ways in which the impact of economic and sociopolitical inequality, racism, sexism, and other forms of inequity and oppression undermine the emotional, mental, and physical well-being of their clients. Practitioners in clinical social work are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice, and integrate strategies into their practice to promote social and economic justice for client systems and communities.

- Recognize the presence of social, economic, environmental and other forms of injustice within clinical practice.
- Identify barriers to treatment from prejudice, oppression, privilege and power
- Demonstrate the ability to provide leadership in advancing human rights and social, economic and environmental justice within a clinical context

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

Foundation

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

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

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration can access and apply quantitative and qualitative research methods in developing advanced practice approaches as well as in evaluating their practice. Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration have an enhanced understanding 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.

- Use the evidence-base of social work practice to guide intervention strategies with individuals and communities
- Will be able to use observations from their practice to identify questions for further study

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Practitioners in clinical social work understand the methodology and applicability of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in advancing the science of social work, in interpreting and applying research findings, and in evaluating their own practice. They are aware that principles of critical thinking, scientific inquiry, cultural competence, and social work ethics must be integrated into research design and the building of knowledge. They understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. The also understand the processes involved in translating research findings into effective practice.

- Apply practice-informed research and theory to guide and improve clinical practice
- Apply critical thinking skills in interpreting and applying theoretical concepts and research findings in clinical work with client systems

5. Engage in Policy Practice

Foundation

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 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.

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

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration have a strong understanding that rights and social justice, as well as social welfare services, are affected by policies and their implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. They are knowledgeable about current social policies and services, and the role of practice in policy development. They can articulate the complex interrelationships across policies for service delivery, and are able to play an active role the development and implementation of policy in micro, mezzo, and macro practice and settings. Social workers have an advanced understanding of how to engage in policy practice to effect change in the context of historical, social, cultural, economic, organization, environmental, and global factors. They know how to locate and interpret policy documents as part of policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation, and as part of active engagement in policy advocacy to advance human rights and social justice.

- Take into consideration a range of economic and social factors to analyze social and organizational policies, and demonstrate the ability to convey their insights for the purpose of improving and modifying these policies to better serve vulnerable individuals
- Participate in or lead policy assessment aimed at modifying existing policy or developing new policy at the agency, local, state, or federal level where there is impact on social work practice or delivery systems

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Practitioners in clinical social work engage in policy practice through their knowledge and understanding regarding the factors that influence the development of program services, policies on various system levels, and legislation. This working knowledge gives insight to how policy influences service delivery, funding, and organizational stability. Clinical social work practitioners understand the connection between clients, practice, program, and organizational, social and public policy.

- Articulate the processes through which relevant policy is influenced and developed.
- Articulate how specific policies effect and inform clinical practice settings.
- Apply knowledge and expertise from direct clinical practice to influence relevant policy change.
- Communicate to stakeholders the priority for policies that advance the socio-political and economic well-being of client systems

6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Foundation

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.

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

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration have an enhanced understanding that engagement with diverse people and communities is an ongoing component of social work practice. They are able to utilize the professional knowledge base of social work, critically evaluate this knowledge, and draw upon different engagement strategies that are sensitive to organizational context and cultural difference. They have a rich understanding of how their personal experiences may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse individuals and communities. In their choice of engagement strategies and in their work with other professionals, they build upon a core foundation of social work values, such as person-centered practice, self-determination, community empowerment, and cultural humility.

- Are able to identify and describe the conceptual basis of the engagement approach they use to work with diverse individuals and communities
- Effectively utilize engagement skills appropriate to diverse individuals, communities, and settings in order to foster cooperative relationships

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Clinical 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. Clinical social workers value the importance of human relationships and understand theories of human behavior in the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage all clients and constituencies. They critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- Utilize a bio-psycho-social-cultural-spiritual approach to engage clients in clinical practice
- Demonstrate effective strategies for initiating and developing a therapeutic relationship
Identify how personal experiences and affective reactions may influence the ability to effectively engage with diverse clients.

Engage community resources to enhance treatment outcomes.

7. Assess with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Foundation

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.

• 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 multi-disciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.
• Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths needs, and challenges of clients and constituencies.
• Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration understand that assessment is a key component of integrated social work practice. Social workers are able to integrate a range of tools and frameworks in conducting an assessment of individuals and communities, including the use of empowerment theory, strengths-based perspectives, D.S.M.-5, and trauma-informed care frameworks. Social workers understand persons and social contexts as interdependent, are able to incorporate macro context in their assessments of individuals and communities, and can utilize interdisciplinary collaboration in this process.

• Independently identify applicable assessment frameworks and tools to collect and organize data;
• Utilize an integrated approach to collect and organize information from varied sources to develop a comprehensive assessment

• Identify multidimensional intervention strategy based on thoroughly integrated assessment

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Clinical social workers understand that assessment is a dynamic and interactive process that must be ongoing to best serve diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Clinical social workers, with an understanding of theories of human behavior in the social environment, critically evaluate and apply this understanding in making assessments with diverse clients and constituencies. Clinical social workers are particularly aware of their own affective reactions and personal experiences and how these may impact their assessment and decision-making.

• Demonstrate knowledge of family systems, the D.S.M. and other relevant frameworks for clinical assessment
• Engage in critical thinking to interpret information from client systems
• Demonstrate awareness of personal and professional biases that may influence clinical assessment

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

Foundation

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 collaboration in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

• Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies
• Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate, to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
• Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
• Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration recognize that intervention is at the core of the profession. They understand that intervention is comprised of three essential components, empirically supported models of practice, organizational context, and the self-determined preferences and choices of individuals and communities. They appreciate that interventions are informed by professional expertise; whose development is ongoing and arises from social workers’ practice experiences. They understand and value intra- and inter-professional communication and organizational collaboration, and recognize these processes as essential for effective intervention.

• Identify an appropriate empirically supported intervention for a client or client system
• Articulate a sound rationale for the selection of interventions
• Independently plan and implement appropriate interventions with attention to: client values and desires, organizational capacities, practitioner expertise, and professional collaboration

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Practitioners in clinical social work carefully assess interventions for appropriateness for each client system. They recognize the fact that interventions need to be reassessed and may change over time. Through an understanding of human behavior in the social environment, issues of diversity, and multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks, they critically analyze evidence-informed interventions for each client system to select only those that are appropriate to that client system’s issues. They engage client systems in the decision-making process to ensure that interventions address mutually agreed-upon goals and obtain informed consent before proceeding.

• Provide interventions that are consistent with clinical scope of practice and service delivery objective.
• Present sound rationale for the use of treatment modalities and evidence-informed clinical intervention.
• Develop mutually determined clinical interventions and goals based on client values and priorities, clinical assessment, and research knowledge.

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

Foundation

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.

• Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.
• Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.
• 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.

Advanced Integrated Practice (A.I.P.)

Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration understand the integral role of evaluation in maintaining accountability, determining practice effectiveness, and supporting clients' rights. Integrated practice with individuals or communities is informed by systematic evaluation of consumer needs, service delivery processes, intended and unintended outcomes of intervention, and cost. Social workers completing the A.I.P. concentration understand that all evaluation is culturally embedded and that validity requires culturally responsive evaluation.

• Frame evaluations based upon program theory and multi-disciplinary theories of practice
• Select information sources and data collection strategies that are culturally appropriate and relevant to the evaluation question
• Can lead or participate in evaluation activities in multi-professional settings, which includes effectively communicating findings to multiple stakeholder audiences

Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.)

Clinical social workers utilize qualitative and quantitative information coupled with various theoretical foundations to evaluate and contextualize their own practice. Clinical social work practitioners critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate process and outcomes of interventions to enhance and improve best practice knowledge.

• Establish evaluative methods in clinical practice to determine intervention effectiveness
• Utilize supervision as a mechanism for clinical practice evaluation to inform best practice knowledge
• Evaluate clinical practice in an effort to strengthen knowledge, values, and skills
• Utilize empirical literature that critically evaluates practice effectiveness

Appendix II: Frequently Asked Questions for M.S.W. Students

Placement Planning

Q: How do I find a field placement?

A: The School of Social Work uses a cooperative placement planning process to match a student with an appropriate field placement. The process begins with the completion of the Field Placement Application and submission of a resume to the Field Office. Students are assigned to a field placement coordinator who works with them to determine appropriate field placement choices. Students may not contact potential field placement agencies without the approval of their Internship Placement Coordinator.

Q: I am already employed at a social work agency. Can I do my field placement there?

A: Students who are currently working or have a potential job opportunity within a human service agency may be able to negotiate an employed placement with their employer. The Employer-Based Placement Policy and the Employment-Based Placement Application is available on the School of Social Work Field Instruction webpage. It is the student’s responsibility to have a preliminary discussion with their employer to ascertain their willingness to work with the school and the student to create an employment based-placement opportunity before the student meets with their Internship Placement Coordinator. To be approved, an employment-based placement proposal must demonstrate that the student can take on tasks that differ from what their previous responsibilities in the agency have been as well as meet the requirements of the curriculum. In addition, the agency must provide a qualified field instructor who is not the student’s regular supervisor. Many students are able to successfully negotiate a field placement within their agency.
Completing the Placement

Q: What is the difference between a field liaison and a field instructor?
A: The field liaison is employed by the School of Social Work to be the contact person for students and field instructors during the internship period. The field instructor is employed by the agency and is the internship site supervisor for the student. Field liaisons in cooperation with field instructors are responsible for ensuring an educationally sound experience.

Q: What are the field liaison’s responsibilities?
A: The field liaison will:
- Meet with the student and field instructor (at the internship site) at least once a semester
- Review and maintain all required field instruction documentation
- Provide support, coaching, monitoring and consultation for both the student and the field instructor
- Ensure that all program requirements are met
- Assign the pass/fail grade earned for field

Q: What are the field instructor’s responsibilities?
A: The field instructor will:
- Ensure that the student is adequately oriented to the agency/program
- Provide at least an hour of formal supervision per week
- Provide a cohesive array of activities and opportunities to enhance the educational experience of the student
- Provide constructive and effective feedback on a regular basis
- In cooperation with the student, complete the Professional Development Plan (P.D.P.)
- Complete a formal evaluation of the student at the end of each semester

Q: What are the student’s responsibilities in the field placement?
A: Sites will vary in their expectations and responsibilities for students. The Office of Field Instruction expects students will:
- Develop a Professional Development Plan in cooperation with the field instructor
- Engage actively in the supervisory process
- Be open to constructive feedback
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Take personal responsibility for their growth and development as a professional social worker

Q: When does field instruction begin and end?
A: Generally, your internship begins the first week of classes and runs to the end of finals week.

Some school based settings do not have students start until the beginning of their school year.

Some settings have students come in early for orientation. It is the student’s responsibility to contact their field instructor to arrange a start date which cannot be any earlier than two weeks before the start of the fall semester.

Q: What happens during school breaks?
A: Students must negotiate with their field instructor what is expected of the student during school breaks. Depending on the type of internship, you may or may not be able to be away for an extended period of time. Program and client needs must be a priority during your internship.

Q: How many internship hours are required?
A: Students are generally required to complete 16-18 hours a week (250 per semester or 500 hours per academic year) preferably in a two day time frame. Some students do break up their hours over several days if this meets client and programmatic needs. Occasionally, part-time students may have an alternate schedule for an entire year. Speak with your placement planner about such arrangements for more detail.

Q: Can I bank my internship hours?
A: No. Students are required to be in their internship all semester. Students cannot complete their internship any earlier than semester finals week. If a student exceeds the minimum 250 hours per semester, the additional hours simply enhance the student’s experience.

Q: Vacation, sick and personal time?
A: You should treat your internship like a job. The student is responsible for making prior arrangements or calling in if they need to take time off from their internship. The students and field instructor are responsible for tracking internship hours and having a plan to make up any time missed due to vacation, sick or personal time.

Q: How do I record my internship hours?
A: B.S.S.W. (undergraduate) students will be given time logs during their seminar class that should be used to record their internship hours. M.S.W. (graduate) students need to establish with their field supervisor how their time will be documented. M.S.W. students will be required to provide a mid-semester status report to their field liaison.

Q: Where can I get information about the field office (including P.D.P. format)?
A: Your field liaison, the administrative assistant to the field office, or the webpage.
A: The Professional Development Plan is a formal document developed collaboratively by the student and field instructor to structure the goals and activities of the individual placement. The foundation and concentration Professional Development Plan guides field instructors and students to develop practice learning opportunities that specifically permit the student to gain competency in all of the practice behaviors which operationalize the competencies. The Professional Development Plan includes a mechanism for cross checking activities with competencies as an additional mechanism for ensuring that the necessary generalist or advanced practice opportunities are available to the student. Field instructors and students receive support in understanding the competencies and in developing the P.D.P. through large group instruction at orientations, field instruction seminars, individual consultation with the field liaison, and supporting materials available through the School website. Resources are available on the Field Office website to enhance the capacity of field instructors to design learning experiences that complement the classroom-based components of the curriculum.

Q: Do I have malpractice insurance?

A: Syracuse University provides malpractice insurance for all social work students in the field. The policy is a professional liability policy that covers the students while they are participating in an internship for covered claims arising from real or alleged negligence. The policy also provides coverage for legal fees and court costs. In addition, the policy provides for medical expenses incurred as a result of bodily injury to the Insured and/or property damage to personal property owned by the Insured caused by an assault or at the direction of another. Also, the policy provides reimbursement for medical related expenses that the Insured voluntarily pays or has incurred for rendering first aid to others as a result of any bodily injury covered by the policy. This is not coverage for the insured, but rather to third parties. You will be given a malpractice form to complete and sign during the field orientation. Questions about the policy should be directed to Office of Field Instruction (315) 443-5557

Q: What records should I retain?

A: You should keep copies of all documents you receive from the Office of Field Instruction. This includes but is not limited to your confirmation letter, P.D. P., field evaluation and administrative supervision notes. You may need to refer to these documents in the future or they may be required for licensing.

Q: When should I begin thinking about licensure?

A: Now! Social work is a highly regulated profession. You and your placement agency are expected to be in compliance with a broad array of statutory and funder policies. The New York State Education Department, Office of the Professions is the licensing regulating body in New York State. Their website is a good place to start learning about your obligations. http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw/. The Field Office provides information about licensure issues during the field instruction seminar.

Q: What should I know about the dress code?

A: Each internship site has different expectations around dress, personal jewelry, hairstyle and color. You should ask your field instructor what is and is not appropriate to wear. Regardless of a formal or informal dress code, students are always expected to present in a professional manner.

Q: How should I protect my personal information while I’m in my internship?

A: Remember never to give your phone number or address to clients or their family members and revise your privacy setting on any social media sites to ensure that personal information cannot be accessed without your knowledge and consent.

Q: Can I change my placement after I have already started?

A: The Office of Field Instruction rarely allows a student to change their field placement during the academic year. The Field Office understands the cycle of an internship, therefore a process has been established to address typical problems in field. Please refer to the problem solving flowchart on the Field Instruction Website; it is also posted on Blackboard for seminars. Any concerns about your ability to complete your placement should be brought to your field instructor and liaison immediately.

Q: Do I need to identify myself as a social work intern when working with clients?

A: Yes. National Association of Social Workers (N.A.S.W.) and the Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.), have very clear ethical standards governing students and their supervisors failing to identify a practitioner as a student. The N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics provides ethical standards and violations can be brought to the New York State Office of Professional Discipline. Also, social work programs and field placement agencies that do not ensure that students disclose their intern status are in violation of C.S.W.E. standards. Clients and other professionals have a right to know the qualification of their service provider. Clients have a right to decline services from an intern, however, this rarely occurs.

Q: What does the school mean by professional social work behavior?

A: The field placement is the arena where students are socialized to professional social work behavior. Professional social work behavior in the context of academic performance includes ethical behavior and psychological well-being sufficient to interact positively with clients. The N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics and the C.S.W.E. competencies and practice behaviors provide guidelines for practitioners. Developing professional social work behavior is an ongoing process which requires continuous reflection and self-awareness.

Q: What is the difference in expectations for B.S.S.W. and first year M.S.W. students?

A: There is no difference in expectations for B.S.S.W. and first year M.S.W. students. B.S.S.W. students are held to the same standards as first year M.S.W. students. B.S.S.W. students who successfully complete an undergraduate program in Social Work are awarded advanced standing status in a Master of Social Work program and enter directly into the concentration year of the curriculum.

Q: What is the difference in expectations between foundation and concentration level M.S.W. students?

A: M.S.W. students at the foundation level enter into a generalist or foundation level placement which is broad-based with regard to skill development and emphasizes micro, mezzo and macro level practice. For the 2015-2016 academic year, there are two concentrations in the M.S.W. program, Individuals, Families and Groups (I.F.&G.) and Community Organization, Policy, Planning and Administration (C.O.P.P.A.). Two new concentrations will be offered beginning in academic year 2016-17: Advanced Clinical Practice (A.C.P.) and Advanced Integrative Practice (A.I.P.).
A.C.P. is designed for students interested in becoming clinicians who are capable of providing in depth, relationally-focused, evidence-informed interventions to a wide range of populations. Graduates will be prepared for clinical practice in traditional behavioral and mental health settings and will be adept at clinical assessment, intervention and evaluation through diagnostic skills and the use of the D.S.M.-5.

A.I.P. has been developed for students interested in direct and indirect practice, working on multi-disciplinary teams and in community-based social work as direct practitioners, supervisors, program planners and managers. Graduates will be able to practice in multidisciplinary settings such as hospitals, schools, child welfare agencies, community centers, or agencies that support individuals in independent living. They will be adept at weaving micro, mezzo, or macro practice to assist individual clients, or community groupings within complex systems. Both concentrations ensure that graduates will have a curriculum that meets the New York State L.M.S.W. and L.C.S.W. course requirements.

Q: What is generalist practice?
A: Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person in environment construct. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a large range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with individual, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Generalist practitioners incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. Generalist social work practice encompasses a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills in understanding clients’ needs within the scope of the environment. Generalist social work involves addressing the relationship between individual and collective issues utilizing a systems approach to practice that respects cultural diversity. Generalist social workers provide comprehensive assessments of problems and evaluate multiple solutions in order to choose appropriate interventions to build upon the strengths of client systems.

Q: When do I declare my concentration and start planning next year’s placements?
A: Concentration declaration is made in the fall of the foundation year before spring registration takes place. The choice of concentration is one factor that determines what courses the student will take in the upcoming semester. Placement planning begins at the start of the spring semester.

Q: Can I remain in the same agency for two years?
A: Generally, no. Exposure to diverse practice settings is crucial to a student’s growth and development as a professional social worker. Exceptions are made only when it serves the best interest of the student.

Q: Can I complete a placement in a private practice?
A: No. The school has a policy against placing students in a private practice setting.

Appendix III: Problem Resolution Chart

1. Student identifies a problem or concern
2. Student and field instructor discuss issue
   a. Issue is resolved or a plan is made to address the problem
   b. Issue is not resolved and no plan to address problem
      i. Student consults with S.U. field liaison who provides coaching
      ii. Student and field instructor discuss issue again
         1. Issue is resolved or a plan is made to address the problem
         2. Issue is still not resolved and no plan to address problem
            a. Student notifies S.U. field liaison
            b. Liaison schedules & facilitates meeting with field instructor & student
            c. Field Liaison notifies Director of Field Instruction
               i. Issue is resolved or a plan is made to address the problem
               ii. Cannot facilitate a resolution
                  1. Liaison notifies Field Director and S.W.K. Program Chair who consult to develop a plan of action
                  2. Student is counseling out of the program
                  3. Student is moved to a different field instructor or agency
                  4. Student is removed and not permitted to re-enter field until certain conditions are met

Appendix IV: Social Worker Safety Tips

Work Arrival:

- Organize before leaving home
- Visually check parking lot when you arrive
  - Are suspicious vehicles or persons in the lot?
  - Obtain plate number if possible
- Vary your parking
- Do not park next to van or truck
- Do not accept unsolicited offers of assistance
- Do not unlock the door to admit stranger
- Sound your horn if menacing stranger remains around your vehicle
- Cellular phone – call 911 assistance
- Be alert and aware of surroundings
- Visually check building when arrive
- Have key or swipe card ready
- Do not converse with strangers
Plan For The Visit

- Notify office of destination with the name, address, phone number, time of visit, and reason for the visit
- Notify client you are coming and purpose of the visit / meeting
- Obtain specific directions
- Have a street guide / map in car
- Bring cellular phone if available
- Call office before entering home
- Establish office procedure if you do not call in
- Try to conduct home visit in pairs, if possible
- Wear clothes and shoes that provide freedom of movement

Traveling to the Site

- Do not keep things out in the open in a car
- Lock purse / valuables in car prior to leaving for visit
- Keep car in working order with at least ½ tank of gas
- Drive with doors locked
- Park in well-lit, visible area and lock the car doors (do not park in the driveway or directly in front of the house)
- Observe the premises for suspicious activity; listen for threatening sounds
- Listen to your body language, if you feel unsafe at any time, leave
- Do not slam car doors
- Do not walk on lawns
- Knock and use doorbell
- Give eyes a chance to adjust to light (before entering)
- Carry as little as possible into home
- Return to car with key ready, check front and back seat and floor before getting in
- If you are being followed, do not drive home; drive to nearest police or fire station and honk your horn or drive to open gas station or business where you can safely call the police
- Do not leave the car unless you can walk into the building safely
- If possible, have a cellular phone in your car for emergencies; it may save your life!
- Always carry small flashlight with you (in purse or car)

During the Visit

- Visually check others present during visit
- Assess person’s emotional state
- Avoid sitting in the kitchen (many possible weapons; boiling water, knives)
- Always wait to be invited to sit
- Sit in straight-backed chair (easier to rise from chair in a hurry)
- Be aware of all possible exits in the house
- If there are dogs in house, ask client to remove them due to your allergies
- Ask to turn the T.V. off, as “I” have trouble hearing
- Restate the goal of the visit
- Maintain a respectful and courteous attitude
- Respect the individual’s personal space (maintain an appropriate distance)
- Keep a clear path to the door
- Avoid positioning self so that you become trapped if needed to make quick exit
- If situation escalates, leave
- Avoid giving out personal information, such as address or phone number
- Visually check the surrounding area or parking area when leaving
- Always carry car keys in same place where they are readily accessible

Office Visits

- Plan an emergency escape route
- Beware of how to gain help and to call law enforcement
- Know if 911 can be called directly or if other numbers must be called first
- Arrange furniture in office to prevent entrapment (sit where you have quickest access to the doorway)
- Avoid working alone in office after regular working hours; notify someone you are working late and keep all exterior doors locked
- Avoid seeing clients alone after hours
- Have co-worker attend meeting when interviewing possibly threatening clients or if you feel your personal safety might be threatened
- Keep desk and office clear of objects that could be used as a weapon Avoid giving personal information during interview
- Keep your automobile locked at all times

Defusing Techniques

- Keep it from escalating; try to stay calm and listen attentively
- Avoid sudden movements
- Avoid confrontation
- Maintain eye contact and personal space
- Keep situation in your control
- Use calm tone when speaking
- Do not argue with person
- Signal a co-worker or supervisor that you need help (try not to let angry client see this, as it may escalate situation)
Appendix V: N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics

Approved by the 1996 N.A.S.W. Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 N.A.S.W. Delegate Assembly

Preamble

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

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

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

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

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

Purpose of the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics

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

The N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics serves six purposes:

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

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

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

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in social work where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this Code that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers’ decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

In addition to this Code, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients’ and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This may involve
consultation with an agency-based or social work organization’s ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel.

Instances may arise when social workers’ ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this Code. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

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

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

**Ethical Principles**

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

**Value:** Service

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers’ primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.

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

**Value:** Social Justice

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

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

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

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

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

**Value:** Importance of Human Relationships

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

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

**Value:** Integrity

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

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

**Value:** Competence

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

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

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

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

Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities To Clients

1.01 Commitment to Clients

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

1.02 Self-Determination

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

1.03 Informed Consent

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

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

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

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

Social workers who provide services via electronic media (such as computer, telephone, radio, and television) should inform recipients of the limitations and risks associated with such services.

Social workers should obtain clients’ informed consent before audiotaping or videotaping clients or permitting observation of services to clients by a third party.

1.04 Competence

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

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

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

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

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

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

Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients’ interests primary and protects clients’ interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients’ interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.
Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

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

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

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

Social workers should respect clients’ right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.

Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

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

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

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

When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual’s right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

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

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

Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

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

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

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

Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.

Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients’ records in a manner that protects clients’ confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes governing records and social work licensure.

Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker’s termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

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

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

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

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

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

1.09 Sexual Relationships

Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

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

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

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

1.10 Physical Contact

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

1.11 Sexual Harassment

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

1.12 Derogatory Language

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

1.13 Payment for Services

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

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

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

1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

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

1.15 Interruption of Services

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

1.16 Termination of Services

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

Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.
Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

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

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

Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities To Colleagues

2.01 Respect

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

Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues’ level of competence or to individuals’ attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

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

2.02 Confidentiality

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

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession.

Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

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

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

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

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

2.05 Consultation

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

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

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

2.06 Referral for Services

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

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

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

2.07 Sexual Relationships

Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.

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

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

2.09 Impairment of Colleagues

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

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

2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues

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

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

2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues.

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

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

When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, an N.A.S.W. committee on inquiry, or other professional ethics committees).

Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities In Practice Settings

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

Social workers who provide supervision or consultation should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.

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

Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee.

Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees’ performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

3.02 Education and Training

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

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

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

Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.03 Performance Evaluation

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

3.04 Client Records

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

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

Social workers’ documentation should protect clients’ privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.
Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

3.05 Billing

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

3.06 Client Transfer

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

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

3.07 Administration

Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients’ needs.

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

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

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

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

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

3.09 Commitments to Employers

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

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

Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers’ ethical obligations as set forth in the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.

Social workers should not allow an employing organization’s policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations’ practices are consistent with the N.A.S. W. Code of Ethics.

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

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

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

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes

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

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

Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities As Professionals

4.01 Competence

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

Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.
Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

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

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

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception
Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.08 Acknowledging Credit
Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

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

Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities To The Social Work Profession

5.01 Integrity of the Profession
Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

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

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

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

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

5.02 Evaluation and Research
Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

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

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

Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.
Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants’ well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

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

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

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

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

Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

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

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

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

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

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

Social Workers’ Ethical Responsibilities To The Broader Society

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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