

Undergraduate Social Work FIELD MANUAL

Field Education

Field Education is an integral component of social work education....It occurs in settings that reinforce students' identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession.

Adapted: Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards 2015
Council on
Social Work Education

2023-2024

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UNIVERSITY

the catholic franciscan learning place

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Glossary of Terms

Field Placement/Practicum/Internship: The terms field placement, practicum and internship are used interchangeably throughout this manual. These terms refer to the agency where students will do their internship.

CSWE: Counsel of Social Work Education. This is the accrediting body for all accredited Social Work programs. CSWE has specific standards that must be met in order to be accredited and stay accredited.

Director of Field Education: The Department of Social Work's Field Director coordinates all activities of the Field Education component of the Social Work program at Briar Cliff University. The Director will be the coordinator of field placements, field documents, orientation, trainings, and documentation, for both Field Supervisors, agencies, and *Field Education Seminar*.

Designated Field Liaison: The faculty liaison is the person who is appointed to serve as a liaison between the agency, student and School of Social Work.

Field Placement Agency: This is the agency or organization in which the student learns and practices Social Work skills. A field internship differs from paid employment in that the focus of the internship is on learning and applying classroom knowledge.

Field Instructor/Field Supervisor: The field instructor/ field supervisor is the agency-based supervisor/instructor who is responsible for orienting the student to the agency, assigning and teaching relevant and appropriate practice experiences, and evaluating student performance. If the field instructor holds a BSW or MSW they will also be responsible for providing social work supervision.

Social Work Supervision: This is the mandatory CSWE accreditation supervision meeting between the student and the Field Instructor (agency BSW or MSW) who signed the agreement. At the BSW level social work supervision allows the student an opportunity to explore situations at the agency from a social work perspective. Social Work supervision is provided by a field instructor with a BSW or MSW. The student and Field Instructor will go over the orientation, logs, policies, and procedures topics including clients and agency as well as Social Work interventions using the Generalist Practice based on a micro, mezzo and macro interpretation.

Task Supervisor: This is an on-site supervisor who is involved with the student's day-to-day tasks and provides supervision in addition to what is provided by the Field Instructor.

Generalist Internship Learning Experiences: Students participate in learning experiences with Individuals, Families, Groups, Communities, and Organizations.

Briar Cliff University

THE BEGINNING ...

In 1929, only briar patches covered a 175-foot hill located on the western outskirts of Sioux City, Iowa. But two people – Mother Mary Dominica Wieneke, Major Superior of the Sisters of Saint Francis, and the Most Reverend Edmond Heelan, Bishop of the Sioux City Diocese, had a dream. They saw that hill crowned with a Catholic college for women.

Mother Dominica and Bishop Heelan met on March 9, 1929 with members of the Sioux City community who committed themselves to raising \$25,000 to support the establishment of the college in Sioux City. After this showing of community support, significant events followed in rapid succession. On Sept. 18, 1930, the college, named Briar Cliff after the hill on which it is located, was dedicated. Four days later, 25 women started classes in Heelan Hall, the only building on campus.

A SHIFT IN FOCUS ...

In 1937, the University's two-year program was extended to four years. Fifty-five men were admitted to Briar Cliff in 1965 and co-education was formalized in 1966 with the admission of 100 full-time male students. The innovative Weekend College program started in the fall of 1979, which became the basis for the university's successful adult degree completion programs. The spring of 1980 saw the addition of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Master's programs were implemented in the summer of 2001. The college officially became a University on June 1, 2001. Online courses were first offered to students in 2006. The Center for Justice and the Center for Health Care Initiatives were established in 2012. The first doctoral degree, the Doctorate of Nurse Practitioner, was introduced in 2013. The Doctorate of Physical Therapy began in the summer of 2015. The Social Work Program has been accredited since 1974 and was innovative in beginning the online BSW degree completion program in the fall of 2015.

TRANSFORMING CAMPUS ...

Over the years, Briar Cliff adjusted to many student changes and needs by adding a fourth story to Heelan Hall in 1948 and the Bishop Mueller Library and the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace in 1959. The sixties brought even more change, especially in the residential living area, when Alverno, Toller and Noonan halls were added. A new gymnasium, the Newman Flanagan Center, was constructed in 1982. In 1988, the Baxter-DiGiovanni Living & Learning Center became the first apartment-style living quarters built on campus.

The 43,350-square-foot Stark Student Center opened in the fall of 2000. Facilities for student athletes were further enhanced with the construction of the McCoy Arnold Center, completed in 2004, and the acquisition of the Charger Dome in South Sioux City, NE in 2012. Renovation of the main academic building, Heelan Hall, was completed in 2013. It included the addition of an 8,340-foot atrium, state-of-the-art nursing, chemistry and biology laboratories and an integrated digital media lab.

While the mission of the University has not changed in over 80 years, Briar Cliff continues to grow and expand, always placing the needs of students first.

Briar Cliff University

Our Mission

Briar Cliff University is a community committed to higher education within a liberal arts and Catholic perspective. In the Franciscan tradition of service, caring and openness to all, Briar Cliff emphasizes quality education for its students, combining a broad intellectual background with career development. The University challenges its members to grow in self-awareness and in their relationships to others and to God.

Our Values

Our Catholic Franciscan identity

enhanced by the presence and sponsorship of the Dubuque Franciscan Sisters and the support of the Diocese of Sioux City

Our challenging academic environment

which includes a liberal arts education, career preparation, academic integrity and academic freedom

Our focus on the student

which promotes academic success and extra/co-curricular experiences

Our culture of service

to our constituents, to the Siouxland community and beyond

Our appreciation of diversity and

our respect for each person

Our commitment to shared governance

and collaborative decision making

Our innovative response to change

which envisions a promising and confident future

PREFACE

Social Work is an applied discipline and profession that requires a planned, supervised field practicum experience as an integral component of the educational process. Briar Cliff University undergraduate social work majors spend a significant amount of their school time in a field placement under the supervision of agency-based field supervisors. This learning process is often a critical determinant in the student's development as an effective generalist social worker. The courses in both the campus and online social work program options are structured and designed so that students are prepared for field. The campus and online courses have been co-developed by faculty so that students in both program options have similar learning activities and assessments. The social work field experience is the signature pedagogy of both program options and occurs in the student's final semester in both program options.

This field education manual is written for both the student intern and the agency-based field supervisor. It is designed to give an overview of the social work field practicum, i.e., its philosophy, its design, and its content.

The manual is divided into nine sections. The first section deals with the objectives and the specific details of how the program is to be carried out. The second section deals with the various intersecting responsibilities of the university, the agency, and the student. The third section describes the Field Education responsibilities of the Director of Field Education and Designated Field Liaison, Agency Field Instructor, and student. The fourth section describes Outcome/Core Competency Based Field Education Process. It includes the Council on Social Work Education Curriculum Policy Statement that is used as a basis for our curriculum. The fifth section provides an overview of the social work major at Briar Cliff University. The sixth section details additional administrative guidelines of the program. The seventh section includes a copy of the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics. The eighth section is part of the State of Iowa Code describing social work practice. The ninth and final section is a directory of field instruction agencies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Field Education Manual was originally written by Sister Shirley Fineran, OSF at Briar Cliff University. The field manual is updated yearly, incorporating changes in curriculum, the Council on Social Work Education Curriculum Policy Statements, State of Iowa code, or National Association Social Work Code of Ethics. The manual includes revisions and changes to agency listings, staff, and services.

Any questions concerning this manual should be directed to Melanie Berte-Hickey Director of Field Education, Department of Social Work, Briar Cliff University, 3303 Rebecca Street, Sioux City, Iowa 51104, 712-560-6334, Melanie.berte-hickey@briarcliff.edu

The **Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is a nonprofit national association representing more than 2,500 individual members, as well as graduate and undergraduate programs of professional social work education. Founded in 1952, this partnership of educational and professional institutions, social welfare agencies, and private citizens is recognized by the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in this country.*

****Check your state for a Code of Ethics for Social Work**

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Purpose of Social Work

“The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally” *Council on Social Work Education* “2022 Social Work Practice, and Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards” (EPAS)¹.

Briar Cliff University Social Work Program

Briar Cliff University is a community committed to higher education within a liberal arts and Catholic perspective. In the Franciscan tradition of service, caring and openness to all, Briar Cliff emphasizes quality education for its students, combining a broad intellectual background with career development. The Briar Cliff University Social Work Program is based in that Franciscan. It provides an “academically challenging curriculum that enables students to integrate and apply the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession in order to become competent baccalaureate generalist social workers who engage in ethical practice, with diverse client systems in a variety of settings and are committed to social and economic justice” (CSWE Accreditation Reaffirmation, 2015, p. 82).

The program at Briar Cliff University Social Work department’s goal in the curriculum design is to build the CSWE values, skills, and knowledge as students’ progress in the program. The social work program sequences the practice courses so that students are required to take Practice I (individuals) first, then Practice II (groups), and then finally, Practice III (communities and organizations). The purpose of this sequence is to prepare students for the signature pedagogy of field; thus, the graduates of Briar Cliff’s program have the knowledge, values, and skills which prepare them for entry level practice positions in social work and for graduate social work education.

Overview of Field Education

Field education connects theoretical and conceptual contributions of the classroom and field settings for the campus and online program options. The Briar Cliff Social Work program has designed the sequence of courses so that students in both program options have gained theoretical and conceptual knowledge in the classroom (or virtual classroom) in order to have the necessary generalist skills in field. The courses, for both campus and online, are scaffolded to ensure knowledge builds over a student’s education.

Social work field education at Briar Cliff is an educationally directed program supervised by the Director of Field Education, which offers students opportunities of self-exploration for growth, change, transformation, and empowerment. The field placement experience in both program options offers students opportunities to develop and apply skills in generalist social work practice.

¹ Retrieved from <http://www.cswe.org/2015>

The placement provides students opportunities to test their skills, foundation theories, and principles learned in the classroom. The program considers field as the signature pedagogy where the foundational knowledge, skills, and values and cognitive and affective processes of the social work profession come together in the final experience of field practicum.

The Department of Social Work at Briar Cliff University uses field experience as the education component to direct students in a practice learning environment. Under the supervision of a qualified field instructor, students in both the campus and online programs interact with clients in face to face settings. Student complete internships in a variety of social work settings and through these varied settings, students are provided the opportunity to practice generalist skills such as engaging with clients, completing assessments, working on reunification plans with families, attending policy meetings, co-facilitating groups, attend staff and board meetings and/or relevant community meetings where policies are being discussed.

It is expected that students in field in both program options have a variety of social work opportunities to work with a variety of clientele systems. Student interns, working with their field instructor, contract specific learning strategies for the nine CSWE competencies for the internship using the *Practice Behavior and Learning Objectives Plan*. (See Appendix 1, pgs. 60-64) It is expected that senior social work students will demonstrate a readiness to enter the professional field as a beginning generalist social work practitioner by the end of their practicum.

Goals/Objectives of Field Education

1. The student intern is expected to learn how social work services are provided through the agency to which he/she is assigned; and how this agency is related to other social work services in the community, both public and private.
2. The student is expected, through direct work with individual clients, groups and/or community systems to utilize social work foundation areas and practice skills in performing professional tasks. This involvement should provide the student with a knowledgeable understanding of the impact of social problems, personal and family dysfunction, the effect of social structures, and the generalist social work options for intervention.
3. The student is expected to become professionally reflective and self-evaluative by identifying, understanding, and accepting his/her attitudes, prejudices, feelings, and practice strengths and limitations, thereby enabling him/her to function in a professional manner.
4. The student is expected to understand the impact of one's own values and ethics and their influence on social work with people in respect to age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
5. The student is expected to develop the confidence and ability to function as an entry-level generalist social work practitioner.

Field Education Courses

SWRK 01 IS Introduction to Field Work

Introduction to Field Work is a required one-credit course taken either one or two semesters prior to field placement. Students in the campus program option will take Introduction to Field the semester before their field placement. Students in the online program option will take Introduction to Field either one or two semesters before their field placement. The timing will depend on the student's location and will be determined in consultation with the student's advisor.

Introduction to Field prepares senior social work majors for their senior internship by providing them with information about the Field Education Program, the agency, university and student responsibilities and expectations. It offers the students the opportunity to research, seek out, and visit community agencies that are potential field education settings. The course is an opportunity for students to discuss their observations of differences and similarities about the agencies that they have visited and are considering for their practicum. Students prepare their own résumés and review interview strategies in anticipation of their interviews with agency field education instructors.

Students are required to attain a grade of “B” or better in this course and have secured a placement to register for SWRK 455/Field Experience.

Practicum Placement Process

Finalizing the placement is completed during the Introduction to Field course. This is done collaboratively among the student, the Director of Field Education / Designated Field Liaison and the agency instructor. The Director of Field Education approves all field practicum agencies. The practicum placement process procedure is as follows:

1. The student will arrange for a **minimum of two** agency visits/interviews with selected agencies. The student is responsible for locating, contacting, and visiting the agencies.
 - a. The student must complete and submit an *Agency Visit Observation Reflection Form* following each agency visit/interview. The form is found in Brightspace
2. After completing the agency visits/interviews, the student will schedule a consultation meeting with the Director of Field Education. The student will be responsible for contacting the professor to request a meeting.
 - a. The aim of this meeting is to ensure the student's selection for their practicum placement is a proper fit for the student, will meet the social work learning needs of the student, and review the next steps in the placement process.
3. Prior to the consultation meeting the student **must** submit the *Student Selection for Practicum Placement Selection Form* to Brightspace.
4. Following the consultation meeting, the Director of Field Education will initiate the formal practicum placement process with the agency.
 - a. The Director of Field Education will contact your selected agency and forward the following documents:
 - i. Agency Affiliation Agreement: This is a document that is completed by the agency and Briar Cliff University

- ii. Supervisor Information Form: This form is completed by who will be providing supervision (serving as Filed Instructor) the student.

- 5. After the necessary documentation from the placement agency is completed and returned, a Placement Agreement Contract signing meeting will be scheduled between the Director of Field Education, student, and the student's Field Instructor from the agency.
 - **Students are not initiate direct contact with the agency until after the placement agreement contract meeting or if given permission from the Director of Field Education.** If you have questions or concerns about your pending placement, contact your Intro to Field faculty member first! This will avoid miscommunication between the Field Director, placement agency, and the student.

** If you are an online student, you may experience a variety of situations in your geographic community related to the selection and approval of a Briar Cliff University social work practicum experience. Potential practicum agencies in some states only accept social work practicum students from local colleges/universities where they have existing affiliation agreements. If a current affiliation agreement is not in place, agreements are easily completed when that is a request of particular agency.

There are national and international opportunities for practicum placement, if you are interested learning more about the variety of options contact Melanie Berte-Hickey, Director of Field Education.

Students will continue to develop their ePortfolio site during this field placement. The ePortfolio will be used for the practicum documentation and information to evaluate our signature pedagogy.

Criteria for Admission to Field Experience

Only students who have after successfully completing the following requirements will be eligible to enroll Field Experience in which they will complete their practicum:

- Successful completion of SWRK 011S Introduction to Field, including a passing grade of "B" or higher and having a signed placement agreement.
- Meeting all academic and professional requirements of the social work program as detailed in the Social Work Department Student Handbook.

Field Experience

During the last semester of the senior year, social work students who have successfully completed all of their academic requirements will be eligible to begin practicum. Field Experience is a twelve credit hour course. For both the campus and online program options, students are not allowed to enroll in the field education course until after the student has successfully completed all other required social work courses. (*See in the "Liberal Arts Requirements" in the Briar Cliff University Social Work Student Handbook*) In both program options, all social work courses is to be

completed prior to starting the student's internships, with no incompletes and no more than one "D" in required social work courses.

In *Field Experience* students will complete their practicum in a local agency and are required to **complete** a total of **400 agency-based hours** in order to meet Briar Cliff University's social work program requirements. There is **25 additional hours given for seminar**. This equals **425 hours total**. Field Work placements are face to face settings in which students practice and develop the nine CSWE core competencies. Students in Field Work receive supervision from a degreed social worker and their Field Work instructor. The course is supplemented by conferences, collateral readings, written evaluation, and participation in the *Field Education Seminar* component of the course.

The primary objective of the *Field Education Seminar* component is to reinforce integrated learning, which occurs in the agency. Seminar is the setting where social work foundation areas, a liberal arts perspective, values, and certain acquired skills or experience in the agency will be assessed and examined. This examination process will be made in the light of the values, concepts, theories, and principles learned through-out the social work curriculum. Students integrate their perspectives about the social work profession, its goals, operations, its ethics, the problems to which the profession addresses itself, a variety of problem-solving interventions, and the empowerment of people to live satisfying lives in dignity.

The learning experiences in both the practicum placement and seminar component are integrated through the use of an Outcome/Core Competency-Based model of field instruction that focuses the social work internship around nine specific beginning level, generalist social work skill competencies. It is hoped that by clearly articulating what comprises social work practice on the beginning BSW level that the student and field instructor will understand what CSWE competencies a social work major must attain before exiting the Department of Social Work of Briar Cliff University and entering generalist social work practice.

II. FIELD EDUCATION PROCESS

Briar Cliff University's field education program has specific policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field settings. In *Introduction to Field* students in both the campus and online program options will work to identify their placement for the *Field Experience* course. The following is Briar Cliff University Social Work Program's requirements for selecting practicum sites:

A. Criteria for selecting agencies.

1. The field experiences available in placement are compatible with the knowledge base taught in the classroom and support the learning objectives of the school.
2. The agency, or department of a large setting, has a commitment to social work education and have an understanding of the process of social work education.
3. There are individuals within the agency who will serve as field instructors and who have the minimum requirements for affiliation with the school. (Licensed field instructors with a CSWE-accredited BSW or MSW degree and a minimum of two-year practice post-degree are the standard.)
4. The agency is able to provide work space for the student intern.
5. The agency believes in employing BSW degree level graduates.
6. The agency releases the practicum student's designated Field Instructor to attend field placement related seminars and meetings.
 - Individuals supervising campus students there will be two that will take place on the BCU campus, one at the beginning of the practicum and one towards the end of the student's practicum.
 - Individuals supervising online students there will be a virtual orientation meeting.
 - For all placements there will be 2 evaluation meetings (mid-term & final) which will take place at the agency or via virtual meetings.
7. The agency demonstrates the acceptance and use of social work values, ethics, and principles with all client groups irrespective of gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation.
8. All field settings comply with all pertinent federal, state, and local laws and policies concerning nondiscrimination.

B. Criteria for selecting field instructors. (BCU Director of Field Education approves selections made by the agency.)

1. The field instructor is willing to provide instruction and supervise Bachelor level social work student internships.

2. The field instructor is willing to participate in appropriate training and orientation in the responsibilities of field instruction.
 - Individuals supervising campus students there will be two that will take place on the BCU campus, one at the beginning of the practicum and one towards the end of the student's practicum.
 - Individuals supervising online students there will be a virtual orientation meeting.
 - For all placements there will be 2 evaluation meetings (mid-term & final) which will take place at the agency or via virtual meetings.
3. The field instructor has positive feelings and uses strength based approaches toward students and toward the social work education process.
4. The field instructor is present on the job during the same hours that the student intern is in placement.
5. The field instructor is able to spend at least 30 minutes per week in formal in person supervision meetings with the student intern.
6. Field instructors are prepared to role model professional behavior to student interns and appropriately evaluate student interns accordingly and will communicate concerns with Director of Field / Designated Field Liaison at Briar Cliff University.
7. The field instructor participates within the Field Instruction concept of the Department of Social Work and Briar Cliff University.
8. The field instructor evaluates the student's progress in meeting the social work competencies at midterm and at the end of the field placement and give the evaluations to the Director of Field Education
9. Field instructors must hold a baccalaureate or master's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program and have 2 years post social work degree practice experience in social work.
10. For cases in which a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree or does not have the required experience, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective. In this instance, the field education program would assist the student in locating a field instructor with the required education and experience from outside the agency who can reinforce the social work perspective. The student would also maintain an agency based supervisor.

C. Procedures for faculty monitoring of students in practicum.

1. The Director of Field Education or the Designated Field Liaison, both faculty members, serve as a consultant, as necessary, to the field instructors during the student placement.
2. The Director of Field Education monitors the completion of the nine (9) Outcome/Competency Based Education Learning Strategies both at the beginning of the practicum and again at the halfway point of the semester of the placement between the student, supervisor, and the Director of Field Education.
3. The student and the field instructor evaluate the student's progress in meeting the social work competencies at midterm and at the end of the field placement and give the evaluations to the Director of Field Education. These ratings comprise part of the grade given for SWRK 443.
4. The Director of Field Education is involved with both the student and the agency supervisor should difficulties develop during the practicum.
5. During the final weeks of the semester the Director of Field Education has an exit interview with each student and field supervisor at the placement agency.

D. Mechanisms for obtaining field instructor's input into the program:

1. Each student placement is preceded by an interview between the Director of Field Education and the agency field instructor. This is an attempt to both orient the new field instructor and keep in touch with the university's experienced supervisors.
2. Field instructors review and submit a midterm and final narrative evaluation of the student's practicum experience. These are placed in the student's permanent file. The Director of Field Education will meet with the field instructor and student at midterm and final to discuss the evaluations and student progress.

E. Orientation sessions for field instructors and seminars on field instruction.

Each new field instructor individually receives an orientation to the Briar Cliff University approach to social work field practicum from the Director of Field Education prior to the practicum. The orientation will take place in person or virtually and includes an overview of the department's general educational goals and requirements and an introduction to the Competency Based Education model utilized by the department. New field instructors are provided with additional from the Field Director or Designated Field Liaison throughout the practicum placement.

F. Employment-based Placement Policy

A student's place of employment serving as a practicum agency site is not considered an optimal situation. Student learning can be restricted in an employment setting.

Employment supervisors, colleagues, students, and clients may experience role confusion in the educational supervision process, thus detracting from the student's overall learning experience during practicum.

Students who are already employed by a social service agency often inquire about using their employment as a field practicum site. There are guidelines that must be met to be placed at an existing employment site for practicum:

- The agency must be willing to provide the student with an educationally focused experience for the required number of practicum hours. Therefore, if a student seeks to use their current employment as a practicum placement, the student must be assigned completely different educationally focused duties, ideally in a different program/department than the one where they are employed that encompass broad and transferable skills/knowledge relevant to the learning contract and the core competencies.
- The Agency Field Instructor/Supervisor must be someone other than the student's employment supervisor
- Students requesting employment-based practicums must submit an Employment-Based Practicum Proposal Form complete with the required signatures to the Director of Field Education via Brightspace.
- Employment-based practicum placements must be approved by the Director of Field Education prior to the student being placed in the agency.

The approval and acceptance of employment-based practicums rest with the Director of Field Education. The Agency and the student must agree to comply with all practicum policies delineated in the Briar Cliff University Social Work Program field manual. If a student proposes to use the place of employment for field education, the Director of Field Education will:

- Assess the setting to determine its appropriateness as a field education.
- Ensure that student opportunities, assignments, and responsibilities differ from those of employment to maximize student learning.
- Ensure that the student has a different field instructor than that of employing supervisor and the experience is educationally focused.
- Ensure the agency will provide practice and learning opportunities that will facilitate the student's development as a professional social worker and allow the student to demonstrate attainment of required competencies.

Termination of Employment-Based Practicum

Students participating in an employment-based practicum must be aware that consequences could arise from a change in their employment status at the agency. If a

student's employment is terminated by the agency or the student, it could jeopardize the ability to complete field requirements.

In the case of termination, reassignment and continuation of field placement is not guaranteed. The Director of Field Education will investigate the reason for termination and consider the point in time of the semester when termination occurred before determining one of the following:

- The student is reassigned to a new field placement in the current semester
- The student will be required to secure and complete a new field placement in the following semester.

III. FIELD EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Director of Field Education Briar Cliff University - Department of Social Work

1. Manages and maintains an overview of the Field Education Program
2. Facilitate pre-field course and meetings which will prepare students for field placements.
3. In consultation with students, field instructors, and Designated Field Liaison approves field placements.
4. To provide a confidential *Field Education Seminar* setting where student interns may share field experiences as well as integrate classroom and theoretical knowledge.
5. Provide orientation to field instructors and be available for ongoing consultation throughout the placement and to visit the agency (in person or virtually) for evaluations and as necessary if issues arise during the field placement.
6. To provide grading and reporting mechanisms for field instructor, student, and faculty and make the final determination of the student's grade considering:
 - a. the field instructor's evaluation
 - b. evaluation of discussion pieces
 - c. documentation of completed practice behaviors of the CSWE Outcome Core Competencies
 - d. student's participation in *Field Education Seminar* and the ability to integrate knowledge and practice
7. Provide a certificate for three Continuing Education Units to field instructors upon completion of field placement.

Responsibilities of the Agency/Field instructor

Agency

1. Agencies are selected based upon their ability to provide social work field experience and learning that is nondiscriminatory in working with diverse populations.
2. Provides a Field Instructor/Field Supervisor (To provide a BSW or MSW field instructor to the extent possible)
3. Provide task supervisor with sufficient time to provide supervision of the student. A minimum of 30 minutes - one hour per week face to face formal meeting of supervision should be held with the student each week, with opportunity for questions at other times as needed is required.
4. Provides appropriate entry level generalist learning experiences for students.
 - a. Appropriate experiences that reflect agency policies, mission and students' learning plan.
 - b. This should include a series of contacts across all levels of agency-based entry level generalist practice
 - c. Focused on learning plan practice behaviors
 - d. Focused on goal directed service.
 - e. Provide opportunities to work with other social workers in the agency, observing their work, collaborating with them, and attending staff meetings, conferences, and task groups in the agency.
 - f. Provide opportunities to have contact with a variety of community groups in both observational and participatory roles.
 - g. Access to appropriate research-based practice materials.
 - h. Agency provides handbook/policies and procedures to the student.
 - i. Provide an opportunity for the student to observe client small groups; some students could also be responsible for a leadership role with this type of group.
 - j. Opportunities to attend staff training sessions and conferences when appropriate.
 - k. Opportunities for student to attend or be involved in community groups.
5. Enters into an affiliation agreement with the University, which will include supervision and experiences described above.
6. Provides the field supervisor with time to attend University sponsored field instructors' meetings and training.
 - Individuals supervising campus students there will be two that will take place on the BCU campus, one at the beginning of the practicum and one towards the end of the student's practicum.
 - Individuals supervising online students there will be a virtual orientation meeting.
 - For all placements there will be 2 evaluation meetings (mid-term & final) which will take place at the agency or via virtual meetings.
7. The internship agency reimburses student interns for mileage expense the student incurs while performing agency business.
8. The agency will provide an agency owned vehicle for intern use if transporting clients is a part of their field placement duties. **Students are NOT allowed to use personal vehicles for transporting clients.**

Agency Field Supervisors/Field Instructors

1. Collaborates in the decision for placement of the student at their agency.
2. Provides Briar Cliff University with required credentials needed to be recognized as a field instructor/supervisor. (Minimum of two years' experience in the agency interested in social work education and willing to participate in field instruction.)
3. Provides orientation of the agency, its services, and the community, who the agency serves, and other pertinent information to the student assigned.
4. Provides field instruction to student, which will enable him/her to carry out agency functions, understand agency operation and meet CSWE Core Competency expectations.
5. A 30 minute - one-hour face to face formal meeting of supervision should be held with the student each week.
6. Discusses the student's progress with University Director of Field Education or Designated Field Liaison during evaluation visits.
7. Notifies the University Director of Field Education or Designated Field Liaison immediately if any problems arise during the placement of a specific student.
8. Completes formal program evaluation for midterm and final of student assigned to their agency.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. In Introduction to Field, the student will interview for the placement, providing the agency with a résumé including education, previous employment, and experiences.
2. Once accepted by the agency, mutually discuss with the field instructor particular needs, abilities, and goals.
3. Be in attendance at the agency until the established completion date of the placement at days and times agreed upon by the student and agency supervisor.
4. To add all pertinent field learning to the ePortfolio, including documentation of the Core Competency Learning on the *Learning Plan Evaluation* document.
5. Collaborate with Field Instructor/Field Supervisor to create a *Learning Plan Evaluation* document which will evaluate your proficiency in demonstrating and practice core competencies.
6. To report directly and promptly to the field instructor/field supervisor if unable to report for field education.
 - a. Work with the field instructor any compensation for hours missed to fulfill the required hours of field education.
7. Carries out all assigned responsibilities in a professional manner. These responsibilities include the agency assignments and written and *Field Experience Seminar* assignments.
8. To actively participate in the *Field Education Seminar* component of Field Experience and maintain ongoing contact with Director of Field Education and/or Designated Field Liaison.
9. To continually review, internalize, and adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics.

10. To provide the field instructor/field supervisor with a midterm and final evaluation of the field experience and to provide a copy to the Director of Field Education at the last class session of the *Field Education Seminar*.

IV. ADDITIONAL FIELD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Exemptions from Field Education

There are no exemptions from the senior level field education practicum. The Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education which were revised in 2015, clearly state that “Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas.”

Accommodation for Students with a Disability

Briar Cliff University values diversity and inclusion. The University recognizes that disability is an aspect of diversity. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If a student believes that he/she will need accommodations to successfully complete their internship, please notify the Director of Field Education as soon as possible. Persons with disabilities who need accommodations should contact the TRIO-Student Support Services Office to discuss needs. Documentation of the disability is required. The Director of Field Education is happy to work with the student and the field instructor to discuss the internship requirements, anticipated needs, and explore potential accommodations. For more information on disability services at Briar Cliff University, please refer to their website:

Disabilities Resources at Briar Cliff University: <https://www.briarcliff.edu/academic-support/student-support/>

COVID-19 Social Work Field Placement Guidelines

Cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) are rapidly escalating worldwide. There have been confirmed cases across the United States, so in response to impacts COVID-19, Briar Cliff University’s Social Work Department will implement the following guidelines for all Field Education Placements. The public health guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was used to develop these guidelines.

Since information is constantly changing and evolving. We anticipate changes and recommend checking with these authorities and local public health guidance frequently for the most up to date guidance and recommendations.

The following guidelines apply to Briar Cliff University Social Work students in their practicums:

Prior to starting practicum hours:

- All students will complete the ePROTECT Respiratory Infections World Health Organization online training and submit certificate of completion (<https://openwho.org/courses/eprotect-acute-respiratory-infections>)
- All students will sign and submit an Acknowledgement of Risk form
- Field Placement Instructors will provide the Director of Field Education or Designated Field Liaison with a copy of the agency COVID-19 safety and response protocols.
- Obtain and submit placement agency COVID-19 policies and procedures.

Students should not:

- Attend practicum if they are feeling ill
- Attend practicum if they have been asked to self- quarantine by public health authorities or Briar Cliff University
- Participate in the care of known or suspected COVID-19 patients and are not using personal protective equipment.

Student practicum will be canceled:

- At any site that is treating a patient with COVID-19 where appropriate environmental controls cannot be implemented per [CDC guidelines](#)
 - At any site when crisis standards of care are used to care for COVID-19 patients
 - When sites are unable to provide students with appropriate personal protective equipment
 - In the event that a shelter in place order is issued in the community in which the student resides or the agency is placed
- Students will immediately communicate to their field instructor and the Briar Cliff University Director of Field Education with any safety concerns and stop participating in the experience until the issue is resolved.
 - Practicum sites and/or Briar Cliff University retain the right to cancel student participation at any time to protect the safety of students.

Academic Impacts

In the event a student is removed from their practicum placement, as much as possible, students will be accommodated with alternate remote options if necessary, so they can continue to meet requirements toward graduation and licensure. Briar Cliff University Social Work Department field education faculty will work to communicate any updates to students expediently.

We are committed to supporting our students, faculty, staff, and community members as we prepare for and respond to this constantly evolving situation.

Credit, Attendance, & Holidays

No Academic Credit for Life and/or Work Experience: Academic or Field Practicum credit is not granted for life experience or professional work experience.

Starting and Ending Placement: Placement starts the first week of the semester. Students are not allowed to start their practicum early due to liability insurance. In addition, students will not be allowed to start their practicum until the *Field Education Placement Agreement* has been signed by the student, Agency Field Instructor, and Director of Field Education. The only activity you can begin before the first week of semester is training/orientation. Students are not allowed to engage in work with clients or deliver services prior to the first day of the semester they registered to begin their practicum.

Within the first week of your placement, all students are required to submit a schedule plan that includes the days of the week and times you will be at your placement throughout the semester along with your anticipated start/end dates to the Director of Field Education or Designated Field Liaison.

Students cannot work extra hours each week in order to finish Field Practicum early; continuity over time is a desirable developmental factor in the field experience. Students must continue in their placement until the practicum end date stated on the *Field Education Placement Agreement*, which cannot be before the last week of the semester.

Attendance and Unexpected Absences: Students are expected to be at the agency on a consistent, regular basis throughout both semesters in order to complete total field hours required. If students are unable to be at their field agency as scheduled for any reason, it is essential that the student contact and discuss this with their Agency Field Instructor as soon as possible. If student is experiencing an illness or injury that lasts more than two days, the student is required to alert the Field Director or Designated Field Liaison. In the event of a student not showing up to their practicum as scheduled and has not contacted their Field Instructor, the Field instructor should inform the Director of Field Education or Designated Field Liaison.

After two incidents of a student failing to report to their practicum as scheduled and does not contact their Field Instructor/Supervisor, the placement will be halted and a meeting between the student, Field Instructor/Supervisor, and the Director of Field Education is held.

Hours missed must be made up to ensure students complete the total number of hours required.

Timekeeping: Students are expected to track all time spent at their agency. Students should utilize the electronic *Time Sheet* form available on Brightspace. Agency Field Instructors should verify student hours, a bi-weekly basis, by initialing each time entry on the *Time Sheet*. Timesheets **must** be uploaded into Brightspace on a bi-weekly basis. At the end of the practicum placement, the student, Agency Field Instructor, and the Director of Field Education or Faculty Field Liaison must sign the *Time Sheet* verifying that hours recorded are accurate and the document loaded into Brightspace.

Only hours for practicum activities approved by the student's Field Instructor/Supervisor may be reported. Falsification of hours on timesheets can result in immediate removal from the program and/or negatively impact the student's grade.

Holidays & School Breaks: As a general rule, students are not expected to do fieldwork during Briar Cliff University holiday breaks. We encourage students to take a break, reconnect with family and friends, and practice self-care during holiday breaks.

Students needing additional field hours may negotiate with the field supervisor to arrange mutually agreeable field hours during term breaks and holidays. Please notify the Director of Field Education of student intentions to do field education during holiday/break time.

Policy for International Social Work Field Placement

Students must be in good standing with the University in order to be approved for international internships and beyond that must be deemed by the social work program faculty to be a good ambassador on behalf of the program, the United States and the social work profession. International internships are a privilege not a right for students. The program retains the right at all stages of the placement process to deny a student access to an international placement.

Prerequisites

1. All coursework must be successfully completed by the beginning of practicum.
2. Positive recommendation from at least two social work faculty.

International placements must meet the same educational standards as all field placements and are vetted by BCU faculty based on the additional following criteria:

1. **Educational soundness**

The student is able to meet the objectives for his/her field class qualitatively and quantitatively.

2. **Benefit to the University and the Agency**

The student's placement provides a real benefit to the agency comparable in value to the student's educational gain. The placement aligns with research, field and/or other scholarly endeavors already engaged in or under development by the social work program, and the agency's relationship with the social work program and the student has the potential to be of lasting benefit to the clients and purpose of the agency. The most desired working relationships are those that can provide sustained mutual benefit and uniquely compelling learning opportunities not necessarily found in the U.S.

3. **Feasibility**

The student will be able to communicate at a proficient level with agency staff, clients and University faculty. This requires sufficient language skills for the population and reliable internet access for the student's long-distance learning courses. Feasibility includes responsible use of the University's fiscal resources, i.e., placing multiple students at one site or clustering locations/travel. It is each student's responsibility to ensure proper funding for flights, lodging, and any other unforeseen expenses throughout the entire international practicum placement.

- Language requirements of the population
- Reliable internet access
- Fiscal responsibility/resource allocation

4. Safety

Recognizing that 100% safety is never a guarantee, the social work program, Office of Academic Affairs, and Office of Student Development seeks to identify risks and ameliorating factors by assessing the site(s)/city/region/country's: security, crime, infrastructure, medical issues/resources and transportation issues.

BSW international placements require additional levels of infrastructure such as the benefit of an exchange program or matching agency with additional resources available in country. Students seeking to establish an international placement options should inform the Director of Field Education at least 6 months prior to field internship to learn more about those processes.

Changing Agency Placements

Students stay in the same placement for length of their practicum. However, unusual circumstances may necessitate a change in agency placements. This change may be initiated by the student, the field supervisor, or the Director of Field Education. All the parties must discuss this change. The Director of Field Education will then initiate the change of placement if necessary.

Termination of student in field

If a student during the course of field practicum is not meeting standards related to professional behavior, he/she will be terminated from the program. These professional standards are clearly outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics. The Code is not meant to be exhaustive, but exemplary and includes among others, conflict of interest, privacy and confidentiality, sexual relations, sexual harassment, and personal impairments when they interfere with professional performance. In addition, at the conclusion of field practicum, students must also have demonstrated academic competence in the ten program core competencies as outlined in the CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement (see Field Manual).

Expectations of field practicum also demand that students fulfill workplace responsibilities and interact with clients and staff to solve problems. Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior throughout their practicum placement. A student can be removed from a field placement for improper conduct.

If for any reason, the field site agency determines that a student's conduct is inappropriate, or if a student has violated the NASW Code of Ethics, the Field Instructor/Supervisor should notify both the student and the Director of Field Education immediately by telephone and in writing. At this time, the student will be asked to discontinue field placement until a full investigation of the incident can be completed. The outcome may vary based on evaluation of the results of the investigation.

If an incident is considered minor, consultation with the Director of Field Education should be made and a meeting should be held with the student and the Field Supervisor to discuss the incident and to remedy the situation.

If an incident is considered to be of serious nature, the Director of Field Education may immediately remove the student from the field placement site. A grade of “W”, “F”, or “I” will be assigned for the course for the semester. The Director of Field Education will notify the BSW Department Chair of the incident in writing. A meeting with the Director of Field Education, BSW Department Chair, and the student to discuss the student’s advancement in the program.

If the decision to terminate the student from field practicum is upheld, every effort will be made to assist the student in choosing an interdepartmental or a multidisciplinary major (**see University Catalog**) so that the student can graduate as expeditiously as possible.

Students who wish to appeal a decision made under this policy should follow the appeals procedure outlined in the Social Work Department Student Handbook.

Criminal Background

The Department of Social Work at Briar Cliff University does not perform background checks on students prior to their field work, however agencies may have their own requirements with which students are expected to comply. Agencies may review databases such as the child abuse registry and sex offender registry. Agencies may require students undergo immunizations, drug testing and Background Criminal Investigation (BCI) checks. Any costs associated with immunizations and background checks are the responsibility of the agency or the student.

Reporting Pending Criminal Charges

Students who have been convicted of or have pending misdemeanor or felony charges against them that occur during the time of their practicum placement, are required to report these to the Chair of the Social Work Department and the Director of Field Education within 72 hours of their occurrence. Failure to do so may result in termination of the student from the social work major.

Policy for Reporting Pending Criminal Charges

1. A social work student has a continual obligation to report any criminal charges, (misdemeanors or felonies) with the exception of minor traffic violations, pending against him/her, which occur after the student has begun their practicum placement.
2. A written explanation of the pending charges should be submitted to the Chair of the Social Work Program and the Director of Field Education within 72 hours.
3. A decision regarding the student's continued participation in SRWK 443/444 - Field Work and *Field Education Seminar*, will be made by the Chair of the Social Work Department and the Director of Field Education.

4. Continued enrollment in other social work courses may or may not be affected depending on the circumstances. If necessary, the Chair of the Department and Director of Field may call for a faculty review.
5. Failure to comply with any aspect of this policy may result in immediate referral for a faculty review which could conclude with dismissal from the Social Work Program.

Adjudication of student grievances

Students are encouraged to register complaints of unfairness, rights infringement, or lack of clarity or evenness in faulty expectations directly to the faculty involved. If this is not possible or unsatisfactory, the student then presents the matter to the Director of the Department of Social Work. The Director then meets with the faculty person in question and the student involved. If the matter is still unresolved, the student may bring the grievance to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs will:

Bring in the faculty and student and listen to both views. If the matter cannot be resolved.....

The student selects two students and two faculty members outside the department who has not, thus far, been involved in the case.

This mediation panel hears both sides of the case and makes recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs then makes the final decision.

If the disagreement involves the field instructor and the student during the student's field education, the student is also encouraged to first resolve the matter directly with the field instructor. If no resolution is possible, the Director of Field Education meets at the agency with the field instructor and the student. If matters are still unsatisfactory, the student would use the procedure outlined above to bring the matter to the attention of the Director of the program.

Student Use of Private Vehicle: Students are not allowed to transport clients in their own private vehicles for their own protection and for the protection of clients and agencies. If students are required to use their own vehicle to complete Field Practicum tasks and assignments (other than getting to/from work site), agencies must inform students about liability or vehicle coverage available (or not available) to them through the agency and must provide mileage reimbursement. If students use their own vehicle for field practicum tasks – they are encouraged to contact their vehicle insurance company to see if additional coverage is required to cover professional/work, use of their vehicle.

Student Professional Liability Insurance: All social work practicum students are covered by Briar Cliff University's General Liability insurance. The University's liability coverage shall cover the actions of students while acting in the course and scope of practicum. Coverage is effective upon enrollment in the practicum/internship. The insurance coverage is provided by the liability limits are \$1,000,000 each claim and \$3,000,000 aggregate coverage.

Safety Issues

Field agencies should be aware of safety issues related to the activities of the field student. Students should not be expected to engage in any activity when there are undue safety concerns. Students should be thoroughly oriented to the agency's policies and procedures to ensure their health and safety during their practicum. Students should be provided with instructions on how to contact their Field Instructor or another staff person should an emergency arise. Students will be provided basic field safety information during their *Introduction to Social Work* course.

Social Media Considerations for Social Work Students:

Social workers' professional behavior is guided by the *National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics*, *The NASW, ASWB, CSWE, and CSWA Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice*, and agency policy. Common issues that students need to understand and manage when utilizing social media include, but are not limited to, privacy and confidentiality (Section 1.07), conflicts of interest and dual relationships (Section 1.06), and informed consent (Section 1.03) in our relationships with clients, colleagues and in our practice settings. Utilizing social media communication tools as a social work professional requires ongoing attention to these ethical challenges. As closely as possible, students in Social Work are expected to model professional standards of behavior as they conduct themselves in any public forum, whether it be online or off. Students are also expected to abide by the *BSW Student Handbook*.

Social media includes many forms of communication and information sharing technologies such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs and more that offer tremendous potential for positive change. The use of technology in professional practice is growing with the use of technology in crisis prevention, natural disaster response, or the advent of telehealth. Technology has dramatically transformed the world. It is now widespread practice to share daily experiences with friends and family through social media or text messaging. However, as a professional-in-training, your online persona should be managed as carefully as you would mind your actions, speech, and dress in the workplace. Professional social workers must be mindful of social media use because information shared on social media platforms can be used by clients, other professionals, and the general public to shape opinions about you, other social workers, and the profession. Maintaining primary social work values like client privacy and confidentiality are of utmost importance, and upholding one's reputation is critical to competent, successful practice.

This is an opportunity for you to continue developing your professional persona as you move into professional spheres. Thinking critically about how you present yourself, the social work program, University, and profession via public platforms is part of that process. This includes considering privacy and confidentiality for yourself and those with whom you work – clients and colleagues. Given the frequency with which we now rely on technology to communicate, it is critical that our behavior aligns with our professional code of ethics and the *Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice*. Review the content of any communication prior to sending it and ensure it reflects these values and is the best representation of yourself.

We have distilled those standards down to a few key practices that should be kept in mind when using social media and digital technologies. The following guidelines can be used to

help protect yourself and the clients who seek your services, along with your reputation and future livelihood as a social worker:

- **Assume that anything said or done online is public.** Do not post any content that you would be uncomfortable sharing with the entire world. There have been instances where private user data has become unintentionally visible to all users during a service upgrade or change. Users have also reported the reappearance of deleted data on some sites.
- **Negative comments** about clients, your field placement, or work environment are inappropriate and disrespectful.
- **Discussions about clients are always off-limit**, even when speaking generally. Such discussions are a breach of confidentiality, a primary professional value of social workers. Additionally, your group of friends could easily include an acquaintance of your client, especially in our increasingly interconnected world.
- **Avoid taking and sharing photographs or content that could violate client confidentiality.** Observe all state and federal regulations such as HIPAA as well as agency, department, and university policies.
- **Avoid using social media during class or in field settings** unless part of the curriculum or the agency placement. In general, your time in the field and the resources provided to you in your field placement are to be used for field related matters. Before using social media communication tools on behalf of your agency, be sure to seek approval of any messages or posts. Be careful not to endorse or promote a product, cause or position without prior approval of the agency. If you have personal sites, it is best to maintain them on your own time using your own computer.

Privacy is also of utmost importance when using social media as a professional. It is highly recommended that when utilizing social media sites students take precautions to keep personal information private, out of a concern for both professionalism and personal safety. Precautions can include:

- **Manage social media account settings** by checking them often and ensuring they are up to date. Be cautious about what you share online and think about your digital professional identity.
- **Do not “friend” or adding a client to your personal social networks;** Allowing clients, former clients, or others in your professional circle to cross into your personal life may complicate and blur your professional boundaries. Consider how to manage friend requests from clients, your own level of self-disclosure whether online or off, and how you will manage interactions with others on your social media accounts. Remember that it is your responsibility as a professional social worker to abide by the Code of Ethics, including

virtual communications and using social work values and principles to guide your interactions.

- **Consider what you share online and avoid posting photographs or content** that imply unprofessional behavior, such as photographs that could suggest to the viewer binge drinking, gambling, sexual behavior, etc.
- **Refrain from listing or sharing personal information**, such as home address, cell phone number, or intimate details about your personal life online.
- **Turn off automatic location check in** on social media posts. Sharing the location of specific agencies or clients publicly could be a direct violation of confidentiality.
- **Consider Field Placement Policies and** ask if your field site has a policy on social media. If so, review this policy with your field instructor. If not, what expectation does the agency have regarding the use of social media?

Following these guidelines can help to avoid consequences ranging from negative impact on the reputation and career of individual students, to undermining the reputation of the social work program or public trust in the social work profession. Take some time to review these guidelines and seek to identify other ethical standards that are applicable in your practice setting. As a social work student, you are continually developing a professional identity and you must be cognizant that your private world has a greater likelihood of becoming public when using social media. Field instructors, colleagues, and even clients may have access to information via the Internet that you would otherwise limit to your friends and families so we encourage you to consider the personal versus professional role of social media in your life and your field setting.

Ref: School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison
(2013) <https://socwork.wisc.edu/using-social-media-social-work-stude>



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards²

Purpose: Social Work Practice, Education, and Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

Final 2015 Educational Policy (EP)

Developed by CSWE Commission on Educational Policy (COEP)

Approved by the CSWE Board of Directors

March 2015

Purpose: Social Work Practice, Education, and Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

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

Social work educators serve the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels shapes the profession's future through the education of competent professionals, the generation of knowledge, the promotion of evidence-informed practice through scientific inquiry, and the exercise of leadership within the professional community. Social work education is advanced by the scholarship of teaching and learning, and scientific inquiry into its multifaceted dimensions, processes, and outcomes.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master's level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models and methods of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparable outcomes across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate.

EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design: (1) program mission and goals, (2) explicit curriculum, (3) implicit curriculum, and (4) assessment. The educational policy and the accreditation standards are conceptually linked to each other. Educational Policy describes

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each curriculum feature. Accreditation standards (*in italics*) are derived from the Educational policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program at the baccalaureate (B) or master's (M) level.

Competency-Based Education

In 2008 CSWE adopted a competency-based education framework for its EPAS. As in related health and human service professions, the policy moved from a model of curriculum design focused on content (what students should be taught) and structure (the format and organization of educational components) to one focused on student learning outcomes. A competency-based approach refers to identifying and assessing what students demonstrate in practice. In social work this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy.

Competency-based education rests upon a shared view of the nature of competence in professional practice. Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being. EPAS recognizes a holistic view of competence; that is, the demonstration of competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker's critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment in regard to unique practice situations. Overall professional competence is multi-dimensional and composed of interrelated competencies. An individual social worker's competence is seen as developmental and dynamic, changing over time in relation to continuous learning.

Competency-based education is an outcomes-oriented approach to curriculum design. The goal of the outcomes approach is to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice. In EPAS, social work practice competence consists of nine interrelated competencies and component behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes.

Using a curriculum design that begins with the outcomes, expressed as the expected competencies, programs develop the substantive content, pedagogical approach, and educational activities that provide learning opportunities for students to demonstrate the competencies.

Assessment of student learning outcomes is an essential component of competency-based education. Assessment provides evidence that students have demonstrated the level of competence necessary to enter professional practice, which in turn shows programs are successful in achieving their goals. Assessment information is used to improve the educational program and the methods used to assess student learning outcomes.

Programs assess students' demonstration of competence. The assessment methods used by programs gather data that serve as evidence of student learning outcomes and the demonstration of competence. Understanding social work practice is complex and multi-dimensional, the assessment methods used by programs and the data collected may vary by context.

Social Work Competencies

The nine Social Work Competencies are listed below. Programs may add competencies that are consistent with their mission and goals and respond to their context. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, while the preceding statements represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

2015 Council on Social Work Education Core Competencies³

Competency 1–Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro 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 recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective.
- Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.
- Social workers:
 - a. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
 - b. use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
 - c. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
 - d. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
 - e. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

³ Format changed for Briar Cliff University Social Work Program.

Competency 2 –Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, physical and mental ability, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.
- Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.
- Social workers:
 - a. apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro and macro levels;
 - b. present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
 - c. apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3 –Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education.
- Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of 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 and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.
- Social workers:
 - a. apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
 - b. engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4 –Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

- Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work.
- Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

- Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.
- Social workers:
 - a. use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
 - b. engage in critical analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
 - c. use and translate research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5 –Engage in Policy Practice

- Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development.
- Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro and macro levels and how social workers may effect change within those settings.
- Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.
- Social workers:
 - a. assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
 - b. critically analyze and promote policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6 –Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Social workers value the importance of human relationships.
- Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and their utility 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:
 - a. apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment and practice context to engage with clients and constituencies; and

- b. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 7 –Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and the implications of those theories for 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.
- Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.
- Social workers:
 - a. collect, organize, and critically analyze and interpret information from clients and constituencies;
 - b. apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
 - c. develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
 - d. select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8 –Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers recognize that a beneficial practice outcome may require collaboration with professionals from other disciplines.
- Social workers:
 - a. implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;

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

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

- Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness.
- Social workers understand methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.
- Social workers:
 - a. select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
 - b. critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
 - c. apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro and macro levels.

CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (continued)

Program Mission and Goals

Educational Policy 1.0—Program Mission and Goals

The mission and goals of each social work program address the profession’s purpose, are grounded in core professional values, and are informed by program context.

Values

Service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry are among the core values of social work. These values underpin the explicit and implicit curriculum and frame the profession’s commitment to respect for all people and the quest for social and economic justice.

Program Context

Context encompasses the mission of the institution in which the program is located and the needs and opportunities associated with the setting and program options. Programs are further influenced by their practice communities, which are informed by their historical, political, economic, environmental, social, cultural, demographic, local, regional, and global contexts and by the ways they elect to engage these factors. Additional factors include new knowledge, technology, and ideas that may have a bearing on contemporary and future social work education, practice, and research.

Explicit Curriculum

The explicit curriculum constitutes the program's formal educational structure and includes the courses and field education used for each of its program options. Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts, which provide the intellectual basis for the professional curriculum and inform its design. Using a competency-based education framework, the explicit curriculum prepares students for professional practice at the baccalaureate and master's levels. Baccalaureate programs prepare students for generalist practice. Master's programs prepare students for generalist practice and specialized practice. The explicit curriculum, including field education, may include forms of technology as a component of the curriculum.

Educational Policy 2.0—Generalist Practice

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

The baccalaureate program in social work prepares students for generalist practice. The descriptions of the nine Social Work Competencies presented in the EPAS identify the knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors associated with competence at the generalist level of practice.

Educational Policy M2.1—Specialized Practice

Specialized practice builds on generalist practice as described in EP 2.0, adapting and extending the Social Work Competencies for practice with a specific population, problem area, method of intervention, perspective or approach to practice. Specialized practice augments and extends social work knowledge, values, and skills to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate within an area of specialization. Specialized practitioners advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies in their area of specialized practice. Specialized practitioners synthesize and employ a broad range of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge and skills based on scientific inquiry and best practices, and consistent with social work values. Specialized practitioners engage in and conduct research to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

The master's program in social work prepares students for specialized practice. Programs identify the specialized knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors that extend and enhance the nine Social Work Competencies and prepare students for practice in the area of specialization.

Educational Policy 2.2— Signature Pedagogy: Field Education

Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline -- to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum – classroom and field – are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed,

supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program.

Implicit Curriculum

The implicit curriculum refers to the learning environment in which the explicit curriculum is presented. It is composed of the following elements: the program's commitment to diversity; admissions policies and procedures; advisement, retention, and termination policies; student participation in governance; faculty; administrative structure; and resources. The implicit curriculum is manifested through policies that are fair and transparent in substance and implementation, the qualifications of the faculty, and the adequacy and fair distribution of resources. The culture of human interchange; the spirit of inquiry; the support for difference and diversity; and the values and priorities in the educational environment, including the field setting, inform the student's learning and development. The implicit curriculum is as important as the explicit curriculum in shaping the professional character and competence of the program's graduates. Heightened awareness of the importance of the implicit curriculum promotes an educational culture that is congruent with the values of the profession and the mission, goals, and context of the program.

Educational Policy 3.0—Diversity

The program's expectation for diversity is reflected in its learning environment, which provides the context through which students learn about differences, to value and respect diversity, and develop a commitment to cultural humility. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. The learning environment consists of the program's institutional setting; selection of field education settings and their clientele; composition of program advisory or field committees; educational and social resources; resource allocation; program leadership; speaker series, seminars, and special programs; support groups; research and other initiatives; and the demographic make-up of its faculty, staff, and student body.

Educational Policy 3.1—Student Development

Educational preparation and commitment to the profession are essential qualities in the admission and development of students for professional practice. Student participation in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs are important for students' professional development. To promote the social work education continuum, graduates of baccalaureate social work programs admitted to master's social work programs are presented with an articulated pathway toward specialized practice.

Educational Policy 3.2—Faculty

Faculty qualifications, including experience related to the Social Work Competencies, an appropriate student-faculty ratio, and sufficient faculty to carry out a program's mission and goals, are essential for developing an educational environment that promotes, emulates, and teaches students the knowledge, values, and skills expected of professional social workers. Through their teaching, research, scholarship, and service – as well as their interactions with one another, administration, students, and community – the program's faculty models the behavior and values expected of professional social workers. Programs demonstrate that faculty is qualified to teach the courses to which they are assigned.

Educational Policy 3.3—Administrative and Governance Structure

Social work faculty and administrators, based on their education, knowledge, and skills, are best suited to make decisions regarding the delivery of social work education. Faculty and administrators exercise autonomy in designing an administrative and leadership structure, developing curriculum, and formulating and implementing policies that support the education of competent social workers. The administrative structure is sufficient to carry out the program's mission and goals. In recognition of the importance of field education as the signature pedagogy, programs must provide an administrative structure and adequate resources for systematically designing, supervising, coordinating, and evaluating field education across all program options.

Educational Policy 3.4—Resources

Adequate resources are fundamental to creating, maintaining, and improving an educational environment that supports the development of competent social work practitioners. Social work programs have the necessary resources to carry out the program's mission and goals and to support learning and professionalization of students and program improvement.

Assessment

Educational Policy 4.0 – Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment is an integral component of competency-based education. Assessment involves the systematic gathering of data about student performance of Social Work Competencies at both the generalist and specialized levels of practice.

Competence is perceived as holistic, involving both performance *and* the knowledge, values, critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment that inform performance

Assessment therefore must be multi-dimensional and integrated to capture the demonstration of the competencies and the quality of internal processing informing the performance of the competencies. Assessment is best done while students are engaged in practice tasks or activities that approximate social work practice as closely as possible. Practice often requires the performance of multiple competencies simultaneously; therefore, assessment of those competencies may optimally be carried out at the same time.

Programs assess students' demonstration of the Social Work Competencies through the use of multi-dimensional assessment methods. Assessment methods are developed to gather data that serve as evidence of student learning outcomes and the demonstration of competence.

Understanding social work practice is complex and multi-dimensional, the assessment methods used and the data collected may vary by context.

Assessment information is used to guide student learning, assess student outcomes, assess and improve effectiveness of the curriculum, and strengthen the assessment methods used.

Assessment also involves gathering data regarding the implicit curriculum, which may include but is not limited to an assessment of diversity, student development, faculty, administrative and governance structure, and resources. Data from assessment continuously inform and promote change in the explicit curriculum and the implicit curriculum to enhance attainment of Social Work Competencies.

Code of Ethics
of the National Association of Social Workers
Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing 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 wellbeing in a social context and the wellbeing 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 NASW 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 *NASW 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 *NASW 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. NASW 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 NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW 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 *NASW 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 *NASW 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 *NASW Code of Ethics* is to be used by NASW 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 *NASW 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 wellbeing 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.

1. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the wellbeing 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

(d) 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.

(e) 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.

(f) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before audio taping or videotaping clients or permitting observation of services to clients by a third party.

1.04 Competence

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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

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

(b) 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.

(c) 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

(a) 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.

(b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

(c) 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.)

(d) 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

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

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

- (d) 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.
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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.
- (g) 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.
- (h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.
- (i) 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.
- (j) 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.
- (k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.
- (l) 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.
- (m) Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.
- (n) 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.
- (o) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.
- (p) 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.

(q) 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.

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

1.08 Access to Records

(a) 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.

(b) 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

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

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

(d) 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

- (d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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.

2. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES

2.01 Respect

- a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.
- (b) 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.
- (c) Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the wellbeing 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

- (a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the wellbeing 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.
- (b) 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 wellbeing.

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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

- (a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues

(a) 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.

(b) 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, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

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

(b) 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 NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.

- (c) 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.
- (d) 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 NASW committee on inquiry, or other professional ethics committees).
- (e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

3. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICE SETTINGS

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

- (a) 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.
- (b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) 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.
- (d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

3.02 Education and Training

- (a) 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.
- (b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.
- (c) 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.
- (d) 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

- (a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in records is accurate and reflects the services provided.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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.

(d) 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

(a) 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.

(b) 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

(a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.

(b) 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.

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

(d) 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 *NASW 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

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

(b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

(c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.

(d) 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 *NASW Code of Ethics*.

- (e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.
- (f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.
- (g) 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

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

4. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROFESSIONALS

4.01 Competence

- (a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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

- (a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.
- (b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.
- (c) 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

- (a) Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.
- (b) 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

- (a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.
- (b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

5. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

- (a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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.
- (d) 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.
- (e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

- (a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

- (b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.
- (c) 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.
- (d) 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.
- (e) 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' wellbeing, 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.
- (f) 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.
- (g) 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.
- (h) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.
- (i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.
- (j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.
- (k) 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.
- (l) 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.
- (m) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.
- (n) 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.
- (o) 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.
- (p) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

6. 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.

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

(c) 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.

(d) 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.

APPENDIX I

Competency Practice Behavior and Learning Plan

To be developed at the beginning of the practicum experience with student and field instructor. Develop at least one activity that details how you will learn and practice each Core Competency. Describe your method of documentation that the activity/learning objective was accomplished. Add to grid as needed.

Competency	Practice Behavior	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	a. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;	•	•
		•	•
		•	•
		•	•
	b. use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;	•	•
		•	•
	c. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;	•	•
		•	•
		•	•

	d. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;	•	•
	e. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.	•	•
		•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice	a. apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro and macro levels;	•	•
	b. apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro and macro levels;	•	•
		•	
		•	•
	c. Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences;	•	•
		•	•
		•	•
	d. apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.	•	•
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Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice	a. Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels;	•	•
		•	•
		•	•
	b. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.	•	•
		•	•
		•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice	a. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;	•	•
		•	•
	b. Engage in critical analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings;	•	•
		•	•
	c. Use and translate research finding to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery	•	•
		•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
5. Engage in Policy Practice	a. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services	•	•
		•	•
	b. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;	•	•
	c. Critically analyze and promote policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.	•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities	a. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment and practice context to engage with clients and constituencies, and	•	•
		•	•
	b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.	•	•
		•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities	a. Collect, organize, and critically analyze and interpret information from clients and constituencies;	•	•
		•	•
	b. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;	•	•
		•	•

	c. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies;	•	•
		•	•
	d. Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.	•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities	a. Implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;	•	•
		•	•
	b. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in environment and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;	•	•
		•	•
		•	•
	c. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;	•	•
	d. Negotiate, mediate and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies;	•	•
	e. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.	•	•

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Learning Strategies	Method of Documentation
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities	a. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;	•	•
	b. Critically analyze, monitor and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes;	•	•
		•	•
	c. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro and macro levels.	•	•
		•	•