Table of Contents

Portfolio Checklist for Advisors.................................................................2
This checklist is a guide with tips and a timeline to help advisors support students in the portfolio process. Students may also find this document helpful in portfolio planning.

Portfolio Competencies Checklist.............................................................3
This chart provides students a brief checklist to indicate where they are addressing specific competencies.

Integrated Portfolio Project Overview.........................................................4
This document is a comprehensive overview of the portfolio process and addresses the portfolio committee, presentation, contents, strategies for organizing and developing the portfolio, and examples of portfolio pieces.

Assessment of Competencies Addressed in the Portfolio.............................10
This assessment is the tool used by the portfolio committee to evaluate the portfolio.
Portfolio Checklist for Advisors

Please address the following areas with advisees to prepare them for their portfolio:

**Has your advisee:**

◊ Formed a portfolio committee?
◊ Set a date for the presentation?
◊ Reserved a room for the presentation?

**Have you discussed:**

◊ The timeline for submitting the portfolio draft for feedback? (see timeline below)
◊ What format you prefer the draft to be submitted for feedback (i.e. submit the draft via email; feedback will be delivered electronically via Track Changes)?

**Does your advisee’s portfolio:**

◊ Provide evidence of the student’s development as an integrated practitioner and his/her mastery of competencies?
◊ Does the narrative demonstrate how the works chosen in the appendix represent mastery of knowledge?
◊ Mastery of this knowledge includes, but is not limited to:
  ▪ Knowledge of key theories that guide one’s practice
  ▪ Examples of how a student has practiced skills and applied knowledge at their practicum
  ▪ Examples of how one has grappled with difficult ethical issues
  ▪ Example of how one uses critical self-reflection in practice and how one incorporates attention to differences, power, etc.

**PORTFOLIO TIMELINE**

- 4 weeks before presentation: Student submits portfolio draft to Chair
- 3 weeks before presentation: Chair provides feedback to student with suggestions for revision
- 2 weeks before presentation: Student submits revised portfolio to full committee
- 1 week before presentation: Chair and committee members provide feedback on revised portfolio and chair determines whether student goes ahead with the revised portfolio as is or makes further revisions prior to presentation.
- Presentation: Students receives feedback from committee, which includes expectations for any final portfolio revisions.
- Post-presentation: Chair and student set date for submission of final revised portfolio. The final revised portfolio must be on file in the School of Social Work by the last day of finals’ week in order for degree to be awarded through the Graduate School.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Appendices</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Respond to contexts that shape practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Apply knowledge and skills of integrated practice to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Apply forms of leadership to support collaborative, interdisciplinary relationships and active participation of community members in addressing needs and concerns of individuals, families, groups and communities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Demonstrate understanding of key social, political, and economic challenges facing communities of the Rocky Mountain West, intersection with global concerns, and implications for social work.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integrated Portfolio Project Overview

The social work portfolio integrates student’s coursework, practicum experience, and research knowledge with the goals, competencies, and practice behaviors of the MSW program. The portfolio constitutes a central component of the student’s Individual Learning Plan.

Demonstrating Elements of Advanced Integrated Practice and Addressing Competencies

The portfolio project is a means of evaluating a student’s development as an advanced integrated practitioner and his or her mastery of competencies.

The elements of advanced integrated practice and program competencies are as follows:

Graduates of the MSW program will:

- Engage in ongoing critical self-reflection and examination of the values and assumptions that shape social work theory, practices, policies and programs.

  Competencies:

  - Identify as a professional social worker and conduct him/herself accordingly.
  - Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
  - Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

- Bring historical, cultural, and political perspectives and a critical understanding of difference and oppression to bear in understanding the person-in-environment, social problems, interventions, and possibilities for social-justice-oriented action.

  Competencies:

  - Engage diversity and difference in practice.
  - Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
  - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

- Integrate the skills of direct practice and community work and creatively bridges multiple levels of intervention.

  Competencies:

  - Respond to contexts that shape practice.
  - Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
  - Apply knowledge and skills of integrated practice to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- Continually bring knowledge and skills of research, policy analysis, and advocacy to bear in practice, regardless of setting, problem area, or specific job description.
Competencies:

- Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
- Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
- Assume a leadership role in the profession and community to promote broad-based participation in efforts to empower individuals and groups, strengthen programs, and advocate policies and practice that promote social justice locally and globally.

Competencies:

- Apply forms of leadership to support collaborative, interdisciplinary relationships and active participation of community members in addressing needs and concerns of individuals, families, and groups and communities.
- Demonstrate understanding of key social, political, and economic challenges facing communities of the Rocky Mountain West, intersection with global concerns, and implications for social work.

Portfolio Committee

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor who will oversee the design and progress of the portfolio. The advisor’s primary function is to ensure that the portfolio is congruent with the goals and objectives of the MSW program, addresses core social work competencies, and fits with the career goals articulated by the student.

Students present the portfolio before a faculty committee during the second semester of the concentration year. Students arrange for two faculty members from the School of Social Work and one person from outside the School to serve on the portfolio committee. The student’s advisor serves as chair of the committee. Examples of the outside committee person include the student’s agency supervisor, MSW outside supervisor or a faculty member from another department at The University of Montana. Students are responsible for contacting potential committee members to request their participation. Students should have their portfolio committees formed by the end of fall semester of their concentration year.

The Portfolio Presentation

A two-hour block is scheduled for the portfolio presentation. The structure is generally as follows:

1. Brief welcome, introductions, and overview of the process by the Portfolio chair (5 minutes)
2. Student presentation (30-40 minutes)
3. Questions and discussion—includes questions from committee members and audience (+/- 30 minutes)
4. Committee evaluation—the student and audience leave the room while committee meets (15-20 minutes)
5. Feedback from the committee to the student (5-10 minutes)

In addition to the committee, the student may invite colleagues, friends, and family to attend the
portfolio presentation. Students can choose to make the presentation open to the public or open only to the student and committee.

**Portfolio Contents**

The portfolio must include materials that provide evidence of the student’s development as an advanced integrated practitioner and his or her mastery of professional social work competencies. An assignment/project from each of four (4) practice courses is designed for possible inclusion in the portfolio (Practice with Individuals and Families in a Community Context, SW 515; Practice with Groups and Communities, SW 525; Advanced Integrated Practice, SW 535; Practice of Organizational Leadership, SW 545). Students may also select products from other course work and the practicum experience.

Portfolios may include the following materials:

- Agency reports (i.e., strategic planning, program evaluation)
- Case studies
- Grant proposals
- Policy analyses
- Program development plans
- Published documents (i.e., journal, newsletter or newspaper articles)
- Professional papers
- Annotated bibliographies
- Research reports
- Community development projects
- Written legislative testimony
- Community organization meeting summaries
- Video/audio tapes, CD’s, or print copies of PowerPoint presentations.
- Reflection essays and course journal entries

NOTE: Portfolios are public documents in that they are on file in the School. Care should be taken to maintain anonymity and confidentiality in all documents.

**Process of Portfolio Development**

Students are introduced to the portfolio requirements, the process of portfolio development, and its grading during Orientation. Specific details regarding the portfolio will also be covered in practicum seminars and practice courses.

**Portfolio Assessment**

The student’s final portfolio assessment will be based on his/her ability to demonstrate development as an advanced integrated practitioner and mastery of competencies in the portfolio and presentation. The student’s final assessment on the portfolio will be a committee decision. The student will receive a final assessment of “pass,” “pass with revisions” or “not pass.”

Additionally, the student’s portfolio will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. Are the materials well-organized, clearly presented, and properly cited?

2. Do the contents speak to the program objectives?
3. Do the supporting documents illustrate development as an advanced integrated practitioner and mastery of professional social work competencies?

4. Does the student demonstrate professionalism and the ability to elaborate on specific points, such as the theories that inform practice?

5. Does the student show evidence of critical thought, analysis, and scholarship?

6. Does the portfolio reflect the student’s honesty and professional integrity?

**Compiling and Presenting the Portfolio**

The checklist below provides guidelines for deciding what materials to include in the portfolio and how to present the work. Overall, the portfolio documents one’s growth as a professional social worker.

- **Table of contents** - Include a concise table of contents for the entire portfolio.

- **Clearly present and organize the work** – The portfolio should be clearly organized. Divide the work into sections and use an introductory abstract to describe the contents.

- **Include appendices** – The appendices are the products (reports, projects, case studies, etc.) that students have produced over the course of their time in the program. An appendix ensures that important points made in the text of portfolio are not lost on your reader. For example, if the student refers to an exercise used with a community group, include the entire version in an appendix so the reader has a more thorough understanding of the work.

- **Be selective** – Big does not always mean best. Think carefully about what to include in the portfolio and select examples of work that best exemplify knowledge, skills, and values and how these connect with the goals and the objectives of the program.

- **Give specific examples of students’ work** – Students should reflect on the goals of the MSW program and choose samples of work that communicate the quality of practice and one’s ability to critically reflect on his/her own process as a social worker. *How, for example, does the students’ work demonstrate an understanding of the integrated practice model?* The portfolio can include snapshots of the students’ work at different times throughout the program to highlight progressions in thinking and practice.

- **Highlight contributions to collaborative work** – Integrated practice depends on partnerships and collaborative work with community members and organizations. Include a description of how these arrangements worked and as well as the specific contribution made by the student.

- **Respect confidentiality and anonymity** – The portfolio should respect confidentiality and anonymity in reference to clients, colleagues, or others. The student needs to make clear to the reader in the introduction of the narrative the precautions taken to respect confidentiality and anonymity.

- **Address power, difference, and oppression** – The portfolio should address an understanding of power, difference and oppression personally, and in the implementation of services and social and community change strategies. Students need to demonstrate the ability to reflect critically on their own practice and personal and professional development in
this area. The themes of power, difference, and oppression should be integrated throughout the portfolio. For example, the student can consider these themes in terms of his/her relationship with clients, organizations and the community.

- **Provide evidence of learning, including personal challenges** – The portfolio is more than an opportunity to demonstrate competence in practice. It is Examples include situations where things did not go well, the challenges faced, and how these challenges promoted personal and professional growth.

- **Demonstrate the integration of theory, practice, and research** – The portfolio should illustrate the student’s knowledge of relevant literature, how knowledge informs practice, and the linkages between theory and practice. It is important that students integrate the knowledge learned in the classroom and social work practice in the practicum placement.

- **Demonstrate ability in self-evaluation** – The portfolio provides an opportunity for critical self-appraisal. Students are not expected to become “perfect social workers” but rather individuals who cherish inquiry in its own right and understand the importance of self-critique and examination.

**Suggested Organization for the Portfolio**

- **Title Page**
  - You may title your portfolio if you wish or just refer to it as the “MSW Portfolio.”
  - Include your name, date of presentation and names of committee members on title page

- **Table of Contents**
  - List names and page numbers or Appendix numbers of the various sections of the portfolio

- **Narrative**
  - This is a 15-20-page overview of your professional development as an advanced integrated practitioner and your mastery of competencies. The narrative provides you the opportunity to speak to the ways in which the various portfolio pieces demonstrate your learning experiences, challenges, opportunities, personal and professional development, and your achievement of the program objectives.
  - The narrative needs to demonstrate how the works included in the appendices represent the student’s mastery of the knowledge, skills and values of advanced integrated practice. Mastery of these components include, but are not limited to, knowledge of key theories that guide one’s practice, examples of how a student has practiced skills and applied knowledge at their practicum, examples of how one has grappled with difficult ethical issues, example of how one uses critical self-reflection in practice, and how one incorporates attention to differences, power, etc.
  - Bibliography – Use APA style.

- **Appendices of Portfolio pieces**
Include a range of pieces that individually and collectively speak to your capacity for advanced integrated practice, your mastery of competencies, and your individual learning goals.

- Portfolio pieces should be revised in light of feedback received at the time the piece was originally developed and presented.
- All items included in the portfolio should be clean copies – without instructor comments on them.
- Use of tabs to separate portfolio pieces makes for a clean and user-friendly organization.
- Bibliographies and citations – Each individual portfolio piece should include citations and bibliography as appropriate.
- For PowerPoint presentations, student may include with hard copy pages of the presentation or a disk of the presentation.

**Final Portfolio Submission**
- Beginning in 2015, the final portfolio needs to be submitted electronically in either a pdf or gif format. Please email to Heidi.holzer@mso.umt.edu

**Examples of Items suitable for portfolio inclusion:**

Throughout the course of the MSW program students have completed a variety of projects that they may wish to include in the Portfolio. Examples from the foundation year include: final case study from SW 505; final historical research paper for SW 530; application of theories of human development in SW 511 or theories of practice in SW 505; annotated bibliographies; literature review and proposal for a therapeutic/support group or community action from SW 525; poistionality paper or teaching learning project from SW 511. Examples from the concentration year include: professional paper from SW 535; case study or teaching-learning demonstration outline and materials from SW 535; policy briefs or transcripts of testimony from SW 531; program evaluation or research designs from SW 521; grant proposals and leadership development materials from SW 545. In addition to these course-based examples, students may include products developed in the context of practice such as resource guides, action plans, outlines and supporting materials from presentations, In addition to these examples of formal “products” students may also include items such as reflection papers and journal entries that demonstrate the process of professional growth and development over time. Examples from practicum activities may also be included as appendix items or within the narrative itself to illustrate how the students is putting the knowledge, skills, and values of advanced integrated social work to practice.

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**Assessment of Competencies Addressed in Portfolio**

**Student:**
Evaluator:

Date:

1. **Identify as a Professional Social Worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:

2. **Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:

3. **Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:

4. **Engage diversity and difference in practice.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:

5. **Advance human rights and economic justice.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:

6. **Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:

7. **Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.**
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   - Comments:
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   Comments:

9. Respond to contexts that shape practice.
   - Written Narrative
   - Portfolio Documents
   - Oral Presentation
   Comments:

10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
    - Written Narrative
    - Portfolio Documents
    - Oral Presentation
    Comments:

11. Apply knowledge and skills of integrated practice to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
    - Written Narrative
    - Portfolio Documents
    - Oral Presentation
    Comments:

12. Apply forms of leadership to support collaborative, interdisciplinary relationships and active participation of community members in addressing needs and concerns of individuals, families, groups, and communities.
    - Written Narrative
    - Portfolio Documents
    - Oral Presentation
    Comments:

13. Demonstrate understanding of key social, political, and economic challenges facing communities of the Rocky Mountain West, intersection with global concerns, and implications for social work.
    - Written Narrative
    - Portfolio Documents
    - Oral Presentation
    Comments:

Additional comments:

updated 6/16