Main Hall, Mount Sentinel and the grizzly bear statue.
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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Revised June 2016
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Welcome MSW students,
On behalf of the University of Montana School of Social Work, we welcome you to practicum. The practicum is often referred to as the signature pedagogy of social work education. Your practicum will offer you the opportunity to:

- Integrate classroom experience with actual social work practice
- Develop core competencies, practice behaviors, and advanced practice behaviors in a field setting
- Develop professional self-awareness and accountability
- Practice social work skills and theories
- Exercise ethical decision making in the context of social work values and the code of ethics (http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp)

You will begin your practicum in the fall of your foundation year. Each semester, you will spend approximately fifteen hours a week in a practicum setting. The practicum will provide you with the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to the practice arena. There are many varied and diverse practicum settings. I will assist you in securing a practicum that fits your interests and learning needs.

Students complete 450 hours in the foundation year and 450 hours in the concentration year. At the beginning of your practicum, you will be assigned a Faculty Advisor, who will assist you with writing a learning agreement, and serve as a liaison between the agency and the School of Social Work.

This manual provides the information and forms you need in order to fully participate in the practicum experience. Please read the manual thoroughly. The Practicum Office is always open to provide additional assistance. I look forward to working with each of you.

Sincerely,

Kate Chapin, LCSW
Director of Field Education
School of Social Work Faculty and Staff

**Jim Caringi, Ph.D.**  
Chair

**Mary-Ann Bowman, Ph.D.**  
BSW Director

**Keith Anderson, Ph.D.**  
MSW Director

**Practicum**

**Kate Chapin, MSW, LCSW**  
Director of Field Education

**Ashley Trautman, MSW, JD**  
Assistant Practicum Director

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2016-2017 Academic Calendar

**Autumn Semester 2016**

August 25-26 (Thurs-Fri) .......................................................... New Student Orientation
August 29 (Mon) ................................................................. Autumn Semester Classes Begin
September 5 (Mon).......................................................... Labor Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
November 8 (Tues) .......................................................... Election Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
November 11 (Fri) .......................................................... Veterans Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
November 23 (Wed) .......................................................... Student Travel Day – No Classes
November 24-25 (Thurs-Fri) ........................................... Thanksgiving Break – No Classes, Offices Closed
December 12 (Mon) .......................................................... Last Day of Regular Classes
December 13 (Tues) .......................................................... Study/Reading Day
December 14-20 (Wed-Tues) ................................................. Final Exams

**Winter Session 2017**

January 3 (Tues) .......................................................... Winter Session Classes Begin
January 16 (Mon) .......................................................... Martin Luther King Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
January 20 (Fri) .......................................................... Last Day of Winter Session Classes and Final Exams

**Spring Semester 2017**

January 19-20 (Thurs-Fri) .......................................................... New Student Orientation
January 23 (Mon) .......................................................... Spring Semester Classes Begin
February 20 (Mon) .......................................................... Presidents’ Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
March 20-24 (Mon-Fri) .......................................................... Spring Break
May 5 (Fri) .......................................................... Last Day of Regular Classes
May 8-12 (Mon-Fri) .......................................................... Final Exams
May 13 (Sat) .......................................................... Commencement

**Summer Session 2017**

May 22 (Mon) .......................................................... Classes Begin
May 29 (Mon) .......................................................... Memorial Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
June 23 (Fri) .......................................................... Last Day of Classes for First Five-Week Summer Session and Final Exams
June 26 (Mon) .......................................................... Classes Begin for Second Five-Week Summer Session
July 4 (Mon) .......................................................... Independence Day – No Classes, Offices Closed
July 28 (Fri) .......................................................... Last Day of Classes
Mission, Goals and Competencies

The practicum or field education component is a core part of the MSW experience. The practicum provides students the opportunity to engage in supervised practice consistent with the mission, goals, competencies, and practice behaviors of the MSW Program. The practicum experience fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge, promotes development of professional competence, and provides opportunities for students to identify with the purpose, values, and ethics of the profession.

School of Social Work

School of Social Work Mission

The mission of the School of Social Work at the University of Montana is to effectively engage in activities integral to preparing skilled baccalaureate and master’s level social work practitioners, while promoting more just and humane social structures and outcomes within Montana, the United States, and internationally.

MSW Program

MSW Program Mission

The Master of Social Work program prepares social workers who, guided by a person-in-environment perspective, will promote and support the profession’s historic commitment to social and economic justice and equality through direct practice activities and community-based efforts reflecting the needs and dignity of all people. The program educates students to become competent, ethical, and collaborative practitioners, community leaders, and researchers who appreciate diversity, use critical thinking skills, and understand rural and global contexts. Graduates will embrace advances in knowledge and practice promoting the rights and well-being of people and creating a more humane society.

MSW Program Goals: The MSW Program prepares graduates to

1. Integrate direct-level practice with community and social change practice.

2. Utilize knowledge, skills, values, ethics, and critical thinking necessary for effective social work practice in dynamic rural and global contexts.

3. Address historical, political, cultural, and economic forces shaping diverse life experiences and contexts of practice.

4. Build relationships with service users, service providers, and other community stakeholders that reflect core social work values and foster empowering change.
5. Apply relevant theoretical frameworks and collaborative modes of practice to plan, implement, and evaluate processes of change at multiple levels.

6. Promote innovative practice that respects difference and responds to emergent social conditions and human needs and rights.

7. Assume leadership positions in the profession, public and non-governmental human service organizations, and community action and social policy-making arenas in the state of Montana and beyond.

8. Promote democratic participation, human rights and social and economic justice through collaboration with policy makers, service providers, community members and those affected by inequitable social conditions.

9. Promote scholarly inquiry, best practices, professional development, and lifelong learning to advance social work knowledge and practice.

Advanced Integrated Practice;

The UM MSW Program offers a concentration in advanced integrate practice. The MSW program was designed to respond to the complex social, political, cultural, and economic contexts of social work in a region that encompasses both rural communities and urban areas; struggles with a shifting economic and socio-political base; includes a racially and culturally diverse population (predominantly white with significant American Indian and growing Latino populations); experiences high rates of poverty, addiction, and suicide; and offers opportunities to create change at the interpersonal, community, and policy levels. The program’s strong generalist social work foundation, which is integrated within a social justice-oriented framework, sets the stage for developing the knowledge, skills, competencies, and practice behaviors required for advanced integrated practice in the concentration year. The advanced integrated practitioner:

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

- Brings 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.

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

- Brings knowledge and skills of research, policy analysis, and advocacy to bear in practice, regardless of setting, problem area, or specific job description.
• Assumes 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

Accreditation by Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

The University of Montana School of Social Work is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The school meets the following curriculum policy requirements as outlined by the Council on Social Work Education.

CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement Regarding Field Practicum

Field education is an integral component of social work education anchored in the mission, goals, and educational level of the program. It occurs in settings that reinforce students’ identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; and promotes the development of professional competence. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis of criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives (from CSWE Accreditation Standard 2.1 for Field Education, 2008, http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=13780, pp 9-10).

CSWE Field Practicum Standards

2.1.1 Connects the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practice setting, fostering the implementation of evidence-informed practice.

B2.1.2 Provides advanced opportunities for students to demonstrate the core competencies.

2.1.3 Provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and 900 hours for master’s programs.

2.1.4 Admits only those students who have met the program’s specified criteria for field education.

2.1.5 Specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field settings; placing and monitoring students; maintaining field liaison contacts with field education settings; and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness congruent with the program’s competencies.

2.1.6 Specifies the credentials and practice experience of its field instructors necessary to design field learning opportunities for students to demonstrate program competencies. Field instructors for baccalaureate students hold a baccalaureate or master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. Field instructors for master's students hold a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. For cases in which a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree, the program assumes
responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective and describes how this is accomplished.

2.1.7 Provides orientation, field instruction training, and continuing dialog with field education settings and field instructors.

2.1.8 Develops policies regarding field placements in an organization in which the student is also employed. To ensure the role of student as learner, student assignments and field education supervision are not the same as those of the student’s employment.

CSWE Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors
The UM School of Social Work has adopted the core competencies and corresponding practice behaviors outlined by CSWE to guide the Foundation Year curriculum and practicum experience. The School has developed 38 advanced practice behaviors that correspond to the core competencies and guide the Concentration Year curriculum and practice experience in preparing students for advanced integrated practice. The School has developed 3 additional competencies and 8 corresponding advanced practice behaviors that specifically address the knowledge, skills, and values required for advanced integrated practice in the complex and dynamic context of the Rocky Mountain West. The competencies, practice behaviors, and advanced practice behaviors are presented below.

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth.

Practice Behaviors: Social Workers
PB 1.1 Advocate for client access to the services of social work
PB 1.2. Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development
PB 1.3. Attend to professional roles and boundaries
PB 1.4. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
PB 1.5. Engage in career-long learning
PB 1.6. Use supervision and consultation

Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers
APB 1.1 Incorporate self-awareness and self-reflection to promote career-long professional development
APB 1.2. Actively seek and incorporate feedback and peer consultation to improve professional knowledge and skills
APB 1.3. Apply knowledge and skills of supervision and consultation in advanced integrated practice

2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law.

**Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**

PB 2.1. Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice
PB 2.3. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts
PB 2.4. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**

APB 2.1. Critically examine and address personal values as they affect advanced integrated practice
APB 2.2. Utilize peer consultation to address complex ethical decisions
APB 2.3. Critically examine values and assumptions that underlie organizational practices, policies, and programs
APB 2.4. Demonstrate advanced skills to resolve ethical conflicts consistent with social work core values

3. **Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**
Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information.

**Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**

PB 3.1. Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
PB 3.2. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and
PB 3.3. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**

APB 3.1. Appraise and incorporate evidence-based knowledge into advanced integrated practice.
APB 3.2. Communicate effectively with diverse professional and community audiences
APB 3.3. Apply critical thinking skills in inform advanced integrated practice.

4. **Engage diversity and difference in practice.**
Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate 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.

**Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- PB 4.1 Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power
- PB 4.2 Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups
- PB 4.3 Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
- PB 4.4 View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- APB 4.1 Utilize theories, models, and approaches to advanced integrated practice that promote empowerment and respect difference
- APB 4.2 Apply inclusive approaches to bring the experiences of those affected to bear in development and evaluation of practices, programs, or policies
- APB 4.3 Utilize culturally-informed modes of practice to enhance client or community well-being

**5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice.**
Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice.

**Practiced Behaviors: Social Workers**
- PB 5.1 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
- PB 5.2 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice
- PB 5.3 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- APB 5.1 Research, plan, and deliver demonstration of practice skills that supports social justice in context of advanced integrated practice
- APB 5.2 Develop advocacy strategies and employ advocacy techniques to advance social and economic justice
- APB 5.3 Collaborate with others to create service or program innovations that promote social and economic justice
- APB 5.4 Apply knowledge of effects of oppression, discrimination, or historical trauma on individuals and communities to inform advanced integrated practice

**6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**
Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice,
policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

**Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- PB 6.1 Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry
- PB 6.2 Use research evidence to inform practice

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- APB 6.1 Demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research that promotes evidence-based advanced integrated practice
- APB 6.2 Utilize program evaluation to promote organizational or community change
- APB 6.3 Demonstrate ability to use research to inform practice and practice to inform research.

7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development.

**Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- PB 7.1 Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation
- PB 7.2 Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- APB 7.3 Critically select and apply theories of human behavior and the social Environment to inform advanced integrated practice
- APB 7.4 Critically evaluate explanatory theories or conceptual frameworks that guide advanced integrated practice.

8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know 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.

**Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- PB 8.1 Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being
- PB 8.2 Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action

**Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers**
- APB 8.1 Engage in policy analysis and advocacy in partnership with marginalized or oppressed groups and allies to promote human rights and social and economic
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APB 8.2 Demonstrate effective collaboration and teamwork in effecting sustainable change
APB 8.3 Promote social justice through policy practice

9. Respond to contexts that shape practice.
Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively.

Practice Behaviors: Social Workers
PB 9.1 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services
PB 9.2 Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services

Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers
APB 9.1 Utilize the skills of program evaluation to assess how organizational or community systems have an impact on clients
APB 9.2 Propose innovative social services that incorporate current research and account for complex contexts
APB 9.3 Demonstrate understanding of ways in which global social, political, or economic forces may impact local issues and social work responses to those issues
APB 9.4 Demonstrate ability to analyze and respond to complex practice contexts

10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

10(a) Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Practice Behaviors: Social Workers
PB 10a.1 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
PB 10a.2 Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
PB 10a.3 Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes

Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers
APB 10a.1 Critically reflect on questions of privilege, power, and difference that may affect development of therapeutic or community relationships
APB 10a.2 Analyze contextual implications of engagement and respond accordingly

10(b) Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Practice Behaviors: Social Workers

PB 10b.1 Collect, organize, and interpret client data
PB 10b.2 Assess client strengths and limitations
PB 10b.3 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives
PB 10b.4 Select appropriate intervention strategies

Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers

APB 10b.1 Use multidimensional assessment approaches relevant to specific context of advanced integrated practice
APB 10b.2 Modify intervention strategies based on ongoing assessment

10(c) Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Practice Behaviors: Social Workers

PB 10c.1 Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
PB 10c.2 Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities
PB 10c.3 Help clients resolve problems
PB 10c.4 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients
PB 10c.5 Facilitate transitions and endings

Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers

APB 10c.1 Utilize empowerment and strengths-based processes that engage clients as full participants in change process
APB 10c.2 Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including clients, community members, and other professionals to develop and implement action plans
APB 10c.3 Demonstrate ability to bridge skills of direct practice and community building in advanced integrated practice

10(d) Evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Practice Behaviors: Social Workers

PB 10d.1. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Advanced Practice Behaviors: Social Workers

APB 10d.1 Utilize a range of methods, such as participatory approaches, to assess effectiveness of advanced integrated practice interventions:
APB 10d.2 Communicate knowledge of best practices and effectiveness of interventions to diverse audiences
The UM MSW Program has also adopted 3 additional competencies and corresponding advanced practice behaviors that reflect our unique context, expectations of advanced integrated practitioners, and social justice focus.

**UM Competency 1. Apply knowledge and skills of integrated practice to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.**

- UM APB 1.1 Demonstrate ability to integrate direct practice and community building skills in assessment and intervention
- UM APB 1.2 Demonstrate ability to utilize a range of evaluation approaches to capture multiple dimensions of the intervention process and outcome

**UM Competency 2. Apply various forms of leadership to support collaborative, interdisciplinary relationships and active participation of community members in addressing needs of and opportunities for individuals, families, groups, and communities.**

- UM APB 2.1 Demonstrate knowledge and skills of leadership in engaging in organization, community, or policy change process
- UM APB 2.2 Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services

**UM Competency 3: 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.**

- UM APB 3.1 Identify specific issues and challenges related to your arena of social work practice in a rural context
- UM APB 3.2 Demonstrate ability to link specific local issues to global trends and forces that may affect context of practice
- UM APB 3.3 Demonstrate knowledge of advocacy and activism at the local, regional, and global levels relevant to your arena of practice
- UM APB 3.4 Demonstrate an awareness of how injustices in Indian Country manifest themselves in social service systems and how such injustices may be redressed
The Foundation Practicum

The foundation practicum (450 hours concurrent with classroom courses) provides students with opportunities for developing self-awareness and applying generalist social work knowledge, values, ethics, and practice skills. The practicum also provides a setting where students can enhance their oral and written professional communication and receive educational supervision from an Agency Field Instructor. A student in the foundation practicum will learn to critically assess, implement and evaluate agency policies to enhance the social condition of the agency clientele.

Foundation practicum placements are integrated and generalist in nature and may be done at a wide range of agencies. Students are offered an opportunity to experience a wide range of social work roles and functions, as well as the opportunity to work with many at-risk populations.

The Concentration Practicum

The concentration year practicum (450 hours minimum to 500 hours maximum, concurrent with classroom courses) is designed to give students concrete learning opportunities to develop and demonstrate their competence in the advanced practice behaviors that define the concentration year and to help the student gain advanced knowledge and skills related to advanced integrated practice.

Practicum Policies and Procedures

Application and Admission

Before entering the foundation practicum, students must submit an MSW Practicum Application to the Director of Field Education. The application is sent to students upon acceptance into the MSW program. The completed application provides information about students’ backgrounds and areas of interest, along with an assessment of their social work knowledge and skills.

After submitting the application, students should make an appointment to interview with the Director of Field Education, who will meet with students to discuss available practicum agencies and opportunities. The student will then arrange interviews with agencies and, after securing a site, complete the required paperwork. The 10 Steps to Securing a Practicum checklist serves as a guide for both practicum arrangement and required forms. Once a practicum site is selected and approved, students must complete and submit both the Practicum Plan and the Memorandum of Responsibilities prior to beginning practicum. Students cannot accumulate practicum hours until the above forms are submitted to the practicum office.

Foundation Year

Students admitted to field practicum must meet the following criteria:

- Acceptance to the University of Montana Graduate School.
- Acceptance to the University of Montana MSW program.
• Enrollment in Foundation Integrative Seminar I (SW 576).
• Submission of completed application for practicum placement to Director of Field Education.
• Submission of interests and abilities assessment to Director of Field Education.
• Interview with Director of Field Education.
• Submission of resume and interviews with prospective agencies.
• Acceptance by agency, completion of paperwork, and approval by Director of Field Education to begin practicum.

Concentration Year

Students admitted to the concentration practicum must meet the following criteria:
• Successful completion of the foundation practicum.
• Be in good academic standing, with a minimum GPA of 3.0.
• Successful completion of foundation courses and foundation integrative seminars.
• Students with any incomplete grades must have a plan in place, approved by their faculty advisor, for completion of the work.

Students develop a plan with the Director of Field Education indicating their choice of concentration practicum site and the advanced practice learning opportunities. Students moving to a new site for their concentration year interview with prospective agencies. Students who plan to continue in their current practicum site should work in consultation with their faculty advisor and Agency Field Instructor to ensure the concentration year provides new learning opportunities in line with concentration year competencies and advanced practice behaviors. The Director of Field Education must approve new concentration practicum placements.

Practicum Selection and Placement

Interview and Selection of a Practicum Site

• Prior to scheduling an interview with the Director of Field Education, students should familiarize themselves with the Practicum Agency Guide. This can be found online at: http://socialwork.health.umt.edu/content/msw-practicum.
• Students are required to make an appointment with Kate Chapin, Director of Field Education for an interview and discussion of available practicum sites. Together, the student and the Director of Field Education will select potential settings that best meet student needs, abilities, and interests.
• The Director of Field Education is available to advise students on matters relating to agency interviews and the preparation of resumes. Students are responsible for scheduling interviews with the agencies. Once a practicum site is selected and approved, students must complete and submit both the Practicum Plan and the Memorandum of Responsibilities prior to counting any practicum hours.
Practicum / Career Fair

It is strongly recommended that MSW students attend the on-campus Practicum and Career Fair in February. Qualified agencies are invited to attend and provide information to students about learning and career opportunities in their agencies. Students will have the opportunity to talk with agency representatives and agency field instructors at this time.

Practicum Position at Place of Employment

Under certain circumstances, a student may complete a practicum at a place of employment. Students must submit an application for employment-based practicums.

To help ensure a clear separation of practicum tasks and employment tasks, placements must meet the following criteria:

- Practicum experiences must be educationally focused and meet all the requirements of the social work program as indicated in the learning agreement.
- Practicum tasks and assignments must be separated from the normal employment tasks and assignments, thus providing the student with a distinct and different set of learning opportunities and experiences.
- Students must submit a description of current employment responsibilities, a description of distinct practicum responsibilities, and a weekly schedule for completing tasks (see below).
- Students must submit a letter from their employer supporting the employment-based practicum and identifying the structures in place to separate job tasks from practicum tasks.
- The supervision of practicum tasks must be separate from employment tasks. Students and agencies can choose from the following options to ensure separate practicum supervision:
  i. The agency can assign a separate supervisor with a BSW (for BSW students) or MSW (for BSW/MSW students).
  ii. The School of Social Work can provide an outside supervisor in situations where there is not an additional BSW/MSW at the agency to supervise practicum tasks.
  iii. The student and work supervisor may submit a supervision plan indicating how practicum supervision will be separate from employment supervision.

A placement at the agency where the student is employed must be arranged and approved by the Practicum Director. Applications are due at least one month prior to the start of practicum.
Practicum Requirements and Policies

Practicum Hours
MSW students must complete a minimum of 900 hours of practicum. Full-time students begin practicum during the first semester of study and must complete a total of 900 hours over a two-year period. Students must complete a minimum of 400 hours, with a maximum of 450 hours, during their foundation year. Students complete the remaining hours (minimum of 450 hours to maximum of 500 hours) during the concentration year, for a total of 900 hours. The practicum is to be completed concurrent with classes. Students must continue in their practicums throughout the entire fall and spring semesters, and, as a result, students need to plan their hours accordingly. Part-time students begin practicum in the first semester of their second year.

Students are responsible for tracking practicum hours. The total hours accrued for the semester will be recorded on the end-of-semester evaluation and must be approved by the Agency Field Instructor.

Scheduling, Vacations, School Breaks, and Absences
Students arrange their practicum schedules with agency field instructors. Students are required to maintain a significant presence in the practicum placement throughout the semester and complete the total number of required hours for the semester.

Practicum agencies are not required to work around the university’s academic calendar. Students should consider agency and client needs when scheduling school breaks, vacations, and absences. It is important to set a schedule that meets student and agency needs at the beginning of the semester to avoid conflicts and possible misunderstandings. Students are also responsible for arranging practicum schedules to accommodate required university classes and final exams.

It may be necessary to work evening or weekend hours to maximize the learning opportunities or to meet the needs of the practicum agency. Occasionally hours may also extend beyond the required weekly hours in order to take advantage of learning opportunities.

If a student is ill or needs to be absent from the agency during scheduled practicum hours, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the Agency Field Instructor to assure that agency staffing needs are met. If the absence lasts for more than two days, the student should also notify the Faculty Advisor and/or the Director of Field Education. During the practicum, students are responsible for informing the Agency Field Instructor, Faculty Advisor, and the practicum office with up-to-date contact information.

Winter Session
Students are not obligated to continue their practicum hours during the winter session break, but they may do so if it fits their schedule, their learning objectives, and the needs of the practicum agency.
Summer Hours
Students are expected to complete their first year practicum hours by end of spring semester. Under unusual circumstances a student may petition for approval to complete a portion of their hours during summer session. There is a 50-hour maximum for summer session. If approval is granted for summer practicum a student must remain within the 450 hour maximum for the foundation year.

Practicum Forms
Students are responsible for submitting the following documents to the practicum office before beginning to count practicum hours:

- Practicum Application
- Practicum Plan
- Memorandum of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities
- Application for Practicum Position at Place of Employment (if needed)

Deadlines for securing a practicum and submitting paperwork
Students must secure a practicum by the end of week three of the semester (week two for summer session). Paperwork, including the Practicum plan and the Memorandum of Responsibilities, must be turned in by the end of week four. Students must withdraw from practicum and seminar if they have not secured a practicum by the end of week 3 and submitted paperwork by week 4.

The student’s learning agreement must be completed and on file by the end of week four.

No grade will be given for practicum without completed paperwork, including:

- End-of-Semester Evaluation
- Student Evaluation of Practicum

During the practicum, students can use the monthly timesheets to keep track of their practicum hours.

No grade will be given for practicum without completed paperwork, including:

- Learning Agreement
- End-of-Semester Evaluation
During the practicum, students can use the monthly timesheets to keep track of their practicum hours.


**Learning Agreement**: The Learning Agreement is developed in collaboration with the student, Agency Field Instructor and Faculty Advisor if needed. The Foundation Learning Agreement addresses generalist practice from an integrated framework. The Concentration Learning Agreement addresses advanced integrated practice. Students identify learning activities that will enable them to develop and demonstrate competence in the practice behaviors or advanced practice behaviors (presented on p. XX). Students are also asked to identify the specific monitoring and evaluation criteria that determine whether the competencies have been met. For suggested learning activities/tasks and ways of monitoring see the MSW Foundation year learning agreement example and the MSW Concentration year learning agreement example.

**Changing Practicum Placements**

The foundation practicum and concentration practicum occur over two academic years. Students may remain in the same practicum site for the concentration year and take on new responsibilities and learning activities. Alternatively, students may change practicum sites in the concentration year to increase the breadth of the learning experience. The learning activities must meet the requirements of the concentration year learning agreement.

Occasionally, a practicum placement does not meet the expectations of the student, placement site, or the School of Social Work. A student may decide to change practicum settings mid-year for any of the following reasons:

- Administrative changes within the agency, which negatively impact the learning experience.
- Lack of fit between student and Agency Field Instructor.
- Failure of the agency to meet the expected standards for ethical professional practice.
- Failure of the agency to provide BSW or MSW-level learning experiences.

In these situations, students are encouraged to work to resolve the problems directly with the Agency Field Instructor and, if necessary, with the Assistant Director or Director of Field Education. It is often possible to resolve problems or issues, especially if attending to them in a timely manner. **Students experiencing problems at their practicum site are encouraged to speak to the Assistant Director or Director of Field Education early.**
If, after working with the Agency Field Supervisor and Director of Field Education, it is determined that the practicum site does not offer a high-quality experience or the student fails to meet the Agency’s expectations, the Director of Field Education will decide if an alternative practicum site is warranted.

The Director of Field Education must approve any practicum site change. If a change is made in the practicum setting to better accommodate the student’s learning, it may result in an extension of the number of weeks or hours of the practicum experience in order to insure a meaningful placement.

**Student Termination from Practicum**

An agency may terminate a student from practicum for any of the following reasons:

- Student’s inability to follow work-related policies (i.e. timeliness, dress code, professional conduct).
- Legal or ethical concerns or violations.
- Student’s inability to demonstrate knowledge and skills required by the practicum.
- Lack of fit between student and Agency Field Instructor.
- Poor academic performance of practicum student.
- Lack of professional readiness.

**Academic Review and Special Advising Process**

An academic review process will be held when a student is terminated from practicum due to academic status or misconduct. The Department Chair of the School of Social Work, the BSW or MSW Program Director, or Director of Field Education may request an academic review.

- A request may be made to the Department Chair in verbal or written form.
- The Department Chair will set a time for the review and determine who should be present.
- The student’s faculty advisor is invited to attend the meeting as a support-person
- All participants are notified.
- A meeting is held during which all participants present their views.
- A final decision will be made by the Department Chair based on the feedback and recommendations of the participants.

The academic review process is guided by the BSW/MSW Student Handbook policies and University of Montana academic misconduct policies found in the Student Conduct Code: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php.

Seminar
Students complete two semesters in a foundation practicum and two semesters in a concentration practicum. Seminars are held every semester and run concurrently with the practicum.

The foundation practicum seminar provides an introduction to the profession of social work and explores the practicum experience. Students receive guidance and feedback while integrating classroom material with the practicum. Students develop generalist social work skills and a foundation for social work values and ethics. Students receive assistance in writing the Learning Agreement.

The concentration practicum seminar prepares students to engage in practicum learning experiences as an advanced integrated practitioner. Students will write their Learning Agreement with the integrated practice model as a focus. Students also develop an Individualized Learning Plan, which include practicum activities that will fulfill concentration year advanced practice behaviors and competencies. In addition, students utilize the seminar for peer consultation on their portfolio development.

Practicum Supervision
Students receive ongoing supervision and support in the practicum through:

- regular supervision by the Agency Field Instructor;
- bi-weekly meetings with outside MSW supervisor, if there is not an MSW available in the agency to provide supervision;
- weekly integrative seminars facilitated by a faculty member;
- end-of-semester evaluations of practicum performance; and
- on-going contact with faculty advisor, who also serves as Faculty Advisor for the practicum.
Supervision is provided in four ways:

1. **The Faculty Advisor** is assigned to the student to provide support and assistance with the learning agreement. The student’s Faculty Advisor will meet with the Agency Field Instructor and the student at the beginning of the first semester to review the student’s learning agreement. The Faculty Advisor will meet at the end of the semester with the student and the Agency Field Instructor for the student evaluation. The Faculty Advisor will also serve as a liaison between the agency and The University of Montana.

2. **The Agency Field Instructor** provides the student with supervision and also writes the student’s end of semester evaluation. The Agency Field Instructor must have an MSW degree (for MSW students) from an accredited school of social work. If the agency does not have an MSW-level staff member to provide supervision, the school will assign an outside MSW supervisor to provide bi-weekly supervision. This will supplement the supervision provided by the agency and ensure that the student receives a social work perspective.

3. **The Practicum Seminar Instructor** assists the student with the writing of the Learning Agreement, the integration of theory and practice, the application of social work values and ethics in practices, and the development of the portfolio.

4. **The Director of Field Education** oversees the practicum process, interviews and places students, assigns Faculty Advisors, works with agency field instructors, and helps manage problems that arise during practicum.

School of Social Work and University Policies

**Communication**

**Social Work Website**

The School of Social Work website has important information that students need for practicum, including faculty contact information, faculty areas of expertise, practicum manual, applications, forms, and resources. The website can be found at http://health.umt.edu/socialwork/

**University E-Mail**

All electronic communication between students and the School of Social Work will be through the university e-mail. All students registered at the University of Montana have an e-mail address. Students are responsible for checking mail at this address several times a week. The email addresses of students, faculty, and staff are in the following format: firstname.lastname@umontana.edu.
Faculty Mailboxes

Faculty mailboxes are located in the School of Social Work office (Room 004) in Rankin Hall. Students may leave materials for faculty in faculty boxes.

Code of Ethics

Students are required to act in accordance with the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics found online at http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp.

A student’s failure to adhere to the expected standards of professional and ethical conduct may be considered grounds for termination of the practicum, a failing grade in the practicum, and dismissal from the MSW program. Practicum agencies are also expected to act in accordance with the Code of Ethics.

Policy Conflicts Between the Agency and the School

If there is a conflict of policy between the practicum agency and the School of Social Work, the student and/or Agency Field Instructor should notify the Director of Field Education. If the issue cannot be resolved, the Faculty Advisor will report the conflict to the Practicum Coordinator. All parties will convene to determine the suitability of the placement site.

Disability Accommodation

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic or practicum performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406-243-2243. The Director of Field Education will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Health Insurance

The University of Montana student fees provide for student health care at Curry Health Center on campus. Students who are in practicum are advised to be sure their health coverage will provide for any illness, injuries, or accidents that may occur in the practicum setting. Neither the University of Montana nor the School of Social Work provides health insurance coverage other than that described above. Responsibility for insurance rests with the student, not with the agency. Students should be aware that some practicum sites require additional health screening (i.e. Tuberculosis tests, drug tests). See details about the Student Insurance Program at http://www.umt.edu/curry-health-center/insurance/.

Liability and Malpractice Insurance

The University of Montana provides liability and malpractice insurance for students in practicum. This insurance is intended to cover costs associated with allegations of malpractice, but will not cover students who have been negligent in their practicum.
Personal Safety

In every agency there is the possibility of personal risk to practicum students. It is advised that students determine the safety policies and procedures utilized by their practicum agencies, become familiar with policies, especially in situations of risk or potential danger. Students are advised to take advantage of any training in personal safety offered by the practicum agency.

Sexual Harassment and Dual Relationships

University Policy, Information and Resources

UM Policy


The University of Montana does not tolerate sexual harassment of students, employees, or guests of the University and responds to every complaint, providing proper remediation when harassment is determined. This policy serves to support the University’s commitments to the principles of equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons and a positive action toward the elimination of discrimination in all aspects of university life.

UM Information and Resources

In 2012, the University launched PETSA (Personal Empowerment Through Self Awareness), a required online training to create awareness and help prevent sexual violence. For details, see http://www.umt.edu/petsa/.

Additionally, the University developed Sexual Misconduct Resources (http://www.umt.edu/sexualmisconduct/), which provides links to various resources as well as reporting contacts and information.

Practicum Program Policy on Dual Relationships

Students and agency field instructors are to maintain professional working relationships, as are students and agency clients. Dual relationships are discouraged and may violate the NASW Code of Ethics (http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp) because of the inherent power differences between individuals. Students are to maintain professional helping relationships with their clients, which excludes sexual relationships, dual relationships, lending to or borrowing from clients, and other non-professional relationships.
Student Complaint Procedures

If a student has a complaint or grievance related to practicum, and if the issues cannot be resolved through discussion between the parties involved, the student is encouraged to consult with the Director of Field Education. If the problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the student may choose to follow the official student complaint procedure, which is included in the University of Montana Student Conduct Code and can be found online at http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/default.php.
Dear Agency Field Instructors,

The University of Montana School of Social Work deeply appreciates the dedication and experience of the agency field instructors in preparing our students to become competent social workers. Thank you for your willingness to supervise, teach, and mentor a practicum student in your agency.

The Faculty Advisor, the Director of Field Education, and the Program Administrative Assistant are available to answer your questions and assist with student and agency issues. The Program Administrative Assistant will update and inform agency field instructors about educational opportunities and other pertinent information relating to field training.

The School of Social Work provides an annual field training in the fall. This training session provides information about the program’s mission and goals, the core competencies and corresponding practice behaviors and advanced practice behaviors, the Learning Agreement, and standards for evaluating a student’s performance. Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) are available. We will notify you as to the date and time of the training session.

The MSW Practicum Manual includes policies and information about the field practicum. There is a special section for agency field instructors, which includes helpful information about supervision, student responsibilities, and the evaluation process. There is also an excellent description of the integrated practice model.

We value your commitment to our program, and we thank you for your time and expertise in training our students to be professional social workers. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Kate Chapin MSW, LCSW
Director of Field Education
Agency Information

Program Background

The MSW Program is designed to meet accreditation requirements and contribute to the making of a new kind of practitioner – one well prepared to face the social welfare challenges in the Rocky Mountain West and the intersection of local and global issues therein. The MSW program prepares professionals and promotes a mode of social work practice that meet the challenges facing poor, marginalized groups and an overburdened state social service delivery system. Thus, the MSW program is committed to producing advanced-level professional social workers committed to integrated practice. The integrated practice model is best suited for advancing the goals and promoting the values of the profession, meeting 21st century challenges to the profession, and addressing the complex social welfare concerns of residents of Montana and the Rocky Mountain West.

The Social Worker Commited To Integrated Practice:

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

- Brings 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.

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

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

- Assumes 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.
Program Overview

The University of Montana offers a two-year, 60-credit program of graduate study leading to a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. The program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The curriculum is designed to meet CSWE’s accreditation standards and the profession’s core competencies.

Foundation Year

Accredited graduate social work programs provide a first-year curriculum that is grounded in the liberal arts and a generalist social work perspective. The foundation year courses in human behavior and the social environment, policy, practice, and research introduce students to the profession’s value base, relevant theories, practice context, and requisite skills for professional practice. Students take three practice courses in the foundation year: SW 505 Foundations of Social Work Theory and Practice; SW 515 Practice with Individuals and Families in a Community Context; and SW 525 Practice with Groups and Communities. The foundation year also includes content and learning experiences related to social work history and professional identity, values and ethics, difference and diversity, contexts of practice, human rights, and social and economic justice. Students will complete approximately 450 hours of field education or practicum experience over the course of the foundation year and participate in a weekly integrative seminar.

Concentration Year

The University of Montana MSW program offers a concentration year curriculum in advanced integrated practice. The concentration year develops a more in-depth focus on integrated practice, expands breadth through required courses in the areas of research, policy, practice, and elective courses, and increases depth of theoretical knowledge and skills in core social work content areas. Students develop and demonstrate their knowledge and skills of advanced integrated practice through completion of learning activities that correspond to the advanced practice behaviors that structure the concentration-year practicum learning agreement and evaluation. In the concentration year students tailor their professional education through completion of individualized learning plans (ILP) developed in consultation with their advisors. The ILP addresses required and elective courses, selection of practicum site and activities, and a portfolio plan.

The concentration year also provides opportunities to develop and apply skills of leadership, collaboration, policy analysis, advocacy, and program evaluation and to further examine the implications of practice in Montana’s rural communities and the surrounding region. In sum, the concentration year is a process for becoming an advanced level social work professional committed to integrated practice.

Part-Time Option

A part-time option has been developed to meet the needs of those students who are unable to attend full-time. Part-time students who remain in good academic standing are encouraged to complete the program in three years and are required to complete it within four calendar years.
Memorandum of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities

The Memorandum of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities clearly differentiates the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Field Education, the Faculty Advisor, the Agency Field Instructor, the student, and the outside MSW field instructor.

Qualifications and Expectations of Agencies and Field Instructors

FIELD SUPERVISION

◊ For BSW students, agency field instructors (supervisors) hold a BSW or MSW from a CSWE-accredited program and have 2 years post-social work degree practice experience in social work.
  o Field instructor is not a BSW or MSW; outside supervision is needed
◊ For MSW students, field instructors hold a MSW from a CSWE-accredited program and have 2 years post-social work degree practice experience in social work.
  o Field instructor is not a MSW; outside supervision is needed
◊ Sufficient term of employment at the agency to ensure familiarity with agency policies and procedures and availability to meet student’s needs.
◊ Provide a minimum of one hour of supervision/week.
  o The specific day and time of weekly supervision is outlined in student’s learning agreement.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

◊ Provide adequate workspace and access to telephone, computers, agency email, databases, records, etc. to fulfill the requirements of the agency and the school.
◊ Inform the student of agency Human Resources requirements, such as documentation of immunizations, background checks, etc.
◊ Provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and all accommodations must be agreed upon by UM Disability Services and the Practicum Coordinator.
◊ Reimburse students for out of pocket expenses incurred in the same manner as for agency employees.

ON-SITE TRAINING

◊ Orient new students to agency structure and function, student responsibilities, policies and procedures, and to commonly used community resources.
◊ Provide ongoing training, shadowing and direct observation of student’s performance.
PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

◦ Provide opportunities to participate in staff and committee meetings when appropriate.
◦ Utilize the student as a learner who will work directly with clients in ways that the agency.
◦ The agency is able to provide social work practice experience including:
  o Development as a professional social worker
  o Ethical decision making
  o Critical thinking skills
  o Engage in diversity and difference in practice
  o Advance human rights and social and economic justice
  o Research–informed practice and practice-informed research.
  o Knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
  o Policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
  o Respond to contexts that shape practice
  o Practice experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities, with specific opportunities for:
    ▪ Engagement
    ▪ Assessment
    ▪ Intervention
    ▪ Evaluation

**If direct experience in the above areas is not available, students and Agency Field Instructor must devise a plan to meet the above learning expectations.**

School of Social Work Requirements/Paperwork

◦ Follow policies and procedures outlined in the BSW or MSW practicum manual.
◦ Review and sign the Memorandum of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities
◦ Provide guidance to student in developing a Learning Agreement to structure the practicum experience.
◦ Complete the online evaluation of the student at the end of each semester.
◦ Complete agency evaluation of practicum experience at the end of the second semester.
◦ Participate in at least three site visits with the students and School of Social Work faculty.
◦ Attend Field Instructor training.

Expectations of Practicum Students

Practicum students will be expected to:

• Read and understand the practicum manual.
• Read and complete all paperwork required for the practicum. The Practicum Plan and Memorandum must be competed and submitted to the practicum office before the student may count practicum hours.

• Complete a Learning Agreement with the Agency Field Instructor.

• Contact Faculty Advisor at the beginning of the first semester to set up a meeting with both the Agency Field Instructor and the student to review the Learning Agreement.

• Behave in a professional manner, taking responsibility as an adult learner to understand duties and carry out assignments and adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics (http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

• Be in attendance at the agency on days and times agreed upon by the student and the Agency Field Instructor, and, if unable to attend practicum, notify Agency Field Instructor as soon as possible.

• Work the required hours for completion of a practicum and submit monthly timesheets to practicum office after securing Agency Field Instructor’s signature.

• Abide by agency policies and procedures, including confidentiality.

• Prepare for supervisory meetings by adhering to deadlines, completing work, formulating questions about assignments, and reviewing the Learning Agreement.

• Seek weekly supervision from Agency Field Instructor. The Agenda for Weekly Supervision may be a helpful tool.

• Discuss with Agency Field Instructor or Faculty Advisor any areas of disagreement, dissatisfaction, or confusion in respect to any part of the practicum experience.

• Contact Faculty Advisor and Director of Field Education regarding any concerns about the practicum placement.

• Near semester end, contact Faculty Advisor to set up a meeting with both the Agency Field Instructor and the student to complete the student’s End-of-Semester Evaluations (link sent via email).

• Complete the student evaluation of the practicum experience at the end of the second semester (link sent via email).
Expectations of Director of Field Education

- Oversees the entire practicum process.
- Interviews students and makes practicum placements.
- Works with and helps train the Agency Field Instructor.
- Helps manage any problems that arise during practicum.
- Assigns practicum grades.
- Plans and organizes Agency Field Training, Practicum Fair, and SW 360 practicum presentation.
- Participates in site visits.

Learning Agreement

**Suggested Learning Activities / Tasks**

In developing a Learning Agreement, students and agency field instructors may want to consider some of suggested learning activities/tasks for each of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy 2.1--Core Competencies listed below.

**Foundation Level Practicum Student**

See Appendix H for Suggested Learning Activities and Examples of Ways to Monitor/Evaluate (for the MSW Foundation Learning Agreement).

**Concentration Level Practicum Student**

See Appendix J for Suggested Learning Activities and Examples of Ways to Monitor/Evaluate (for the MSW Concentration Learning Agreement).

**Practicum Evaluation**

The practicum program has in place three separate evaluation tools for: (1) assessing student performance in the field; (2) gathering agency feedback about the practicum process; and (3) collecting student feedback about the practicum experience.

**Student Performance Evaluation**

Evaluation of student performance in the practicum is completed at the end of each semester via an online, submittable form. Links to the evaluation will be sent to students and agency field instructors at the end of each semester. Agency field instructors evaluate student performance based on the Learning Agreement with student progress measured against the accomplishment of each of the practice behaviors. It is anticipated that by the completion of the practicum,
students will have been exposed to all of the core competencies and practice behaviors. A grade for practicum is issued at the end of the second practicum semester based on the score received in the second evaluation.

**Unsatisfactory Practicum Performance**

If the student’s practicum performance is unsatisfactory, the student or the Agency Field Instructor should immediately notify the Faculty Advisor, who will arrange a meeting with the Agency Field Instructor and the student. The purpose of the meeting is to provide the student pertinent feedback and criteria for improvement. Should the student's practicum performance remain unsatisfactory, the Faculty Advisor will contact the Director of Field Education to engage in further problem solving.

**End-of-Semester Evaluations**

**First End-of-Semester Student Performance Evaluation**

The student, near the end of the semester, will arrange for and attend the End-of-Semester Evaluation meeting with the Agency Field Instructor and the Faculty Advisor.

The Agency Field Instructor will complete the first End-of-Semester Evaluation prior to the scheduled meeting with the student and Faculty Advisor. On the evaluation, a rating of satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or no basis to judge will be recorded for each of the practice behaviors along with any comments and the student’s total number of completed practicum hours.

**Second End-of-Semester Student Performance Evaluation**

The student, before finals week, will arrange for and attend the End-of-Semester Evaluation meeting with the Agency Field Instructor and the Faculty Advisor.

The Agency Field Instructor will complete the second semester, End-of-Semester Evaluation prior to the scheduled meeting with the student and Faculty Advisor. The Agency Field Instructor will provide a numerical rating for each of the practice behaviors, any comments, and the student’s total number of completed practicum hours. The evaluation tool will compute the mean score (the practicum grade).
The Agency Field Instructor evaluation comments and score will be reviewed with progress and recommendations noted, with the Faculty Advisor, are responsible for recommending the final evaluation grade.

**Directions for completing the online, submittable evaluation**

Agency field instructors will need to meet with their student prior to completing the online evaluation. Since the evaluation mimics the student’s learning agreement, it is important that the student and Agency Field Instructor consult on the student’s progress in each of the practice behaviors. Also during the meeting, identify the number of practicum hours completed by the student to date. The Agency Field Instructor will enter the total number of hours for each semester towards the end of the evaluation.

**Information to note regarding the online evaluation:**

- The evaluation saves automatically. To finish an incomplete evaluation, use the same browser and computer and follow the same link.
- A progress bar at the bottom of the evaluation will identify the percentage of the evaluation completed.
- Once submitted, you will immediately receive a report of your responses.

**Agency Evaluation of Practicum Process**

The Agency Field Instructor is strongly encouraged to complete the Agency Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum at the end of the practicum placement. A link to the online, submittable evaluation will be emailed to agency field instructors at the end of the second semester.

**Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience**

The student is strongly encouraged to complete the Student Evaluation of Practicum form at the end of the practicum placement. A link to the online, submittable evaluation will be emailed to students at the end of the second semester.
APPENDIX: Practicum Forms and Documents

APPENDIX A.................................................................10 Steps to Securing a Practicum
APPENDIX B..................................................MSW Practicum Application
APPENDIX C.................................................................Practicum Plan
APPENDIX D...Memorandum of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities
APPENDIX E.................................................................Monthly timesheet
APPENDIX F..........................................................Application for Employment-based Practicums
APPENDIX G..................................................Foundation year Learning Agreement
APPENDIX H..................................................Foundation year Learning Agreement Example
APPENDIX I.................................................................Concentration year Learning Agreement
APPENDIX J..................................................Concentration year Learning Agreement Example
APPENDIX K.................................................................Agenda for weekly supervision