



**Tulane
University**

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**TSSW
Student Handbook**

**Practicum Education
Appendix**

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TSSW'S Integrated Clinical in Community Practice

Integrated Clinical in Community Practice is an interactive process that highlights the dual context of understanding and working with people and groups within their communities. It recognizes the interrelatedness, strengths, and needs of the individual, family, organization, and community as the focus of growth and change. Areas that give meaning to people and which are of primary importance for social work include the physical and psychological dimensions, as well as environmental forces such as social and economic justice.

The clinical in community model of the curriculum utilizes theories and interventions that address the conditions of individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and governments to effect changes on multiple levels based on a person-in-environment perspective.

TSSW's Shift from "Field" to "Practicum" as the Signature Pedagogy Title

The TSSW is dedicated to continuous growth with evolving professional standards. In keeping with the current industry movement, TSSW's use of the word "Field" will gradually be transitioned to the use of the word "Practicum." During this transition, both terms may be used throughout the TSSW Student Handbook and the Field Education Appendix.

I. Overview of the Practicum Education Program

The purpose of the Practicum Education is to provide an educationally directed practice experience for the Master of Social Work (MSW) student. Historically, the partnership between social service Practicum sites and social work education has been an essential one. The supervised practice experience provided by social service Practicum sites for the education of social work may also be known as, “Field Placement,” “Field Instruction,” “Practicum” or “Internship.”

Signature Pedagogy of Social Work Education

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which accredits baccalaureate and Master of Social Work programs, has identified Practicum Education as the signature pedagogy of social work education:

Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline: to think, to perform, and to act intentionally, ethically, and with integrity.

The Practicum setting is where students apply human rights principles from global and national social work ethical codes to advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. It fosters a learning environment where anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion are valued.

(Council on Social Work Education. (2022). Educational policy and accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master’s social work programs.

<https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/94471c42-13b8-493b-9041-b30f48533d64/2022-EPAS.pdf>).

At Tulane University School of Social Work (TSSW), one (1) sequential three (3)-semester Practicum placement is provided through the Practicum site/TSSW partnership for full-time students and one (1) sequential six (6)-semester Practicum placement is provided for part-time students. Full-time students complete a minimum of 300 hours of Practicum per semester (an average of 24 hours per week), while part-time students complete a minimum of 150 hours per semester (an average of 12 hours per week). The professional social workers in Practicum sites who provide the educational supervision to students are referred to as “Field Instructors.” Concurrent with each semester of Practicum, students must also attend the associated Field Practicum & Seminar course, which is taught by the “Faculty Field Liaison.” The Faculty Field Liaison monitors and evaluates student progress in meeting the CSWE social work competencies and serves as the main point of contact for our Practicum site partners and Field Instructors. The TSSW’s educational objectives are specified in the individual course syllabi.

For the Practicum placement, students are placed in a variety of settings in social work practice. Practicum placements are geared toward student interests and educational feasibility. The expectation is that, regardless of the type of Practicum placement, students will receive the skills necessary to enter the social work profession at the master’s level upon graduation.

All Practicum sites, and Field Instructors are selected by The TSSW through a prescribed process overseen by the Practicum Education Team. Prior to the beginning of a student placement, each Practicum site completes the TSSW “Field Placement Agreement” that sets out the roles and responsibilities of the parties. This Agreement must be completed and signed prior to the beginning of a student placement.

Competency-Based Education

The MSW Degree program is currently following the 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). CSWE has identified nine (9) core social work competencies with accompanying practice behaviors that students must master in order to graduate. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. The goal of the outcome approach is to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. These competencies are measured in the Practicum and in the classroom-based curriculum. The nine (9) core competencies are available in full in the appendices and include a description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and the resulting practice behaviors that may be used to operationalize the curriculum and assessment methods. The competencies are defined in detail in the appendix.

A list of the 2022 competencies is provided in the **CSWE Competencies Table below:**

CSWE Competencies Table:

	2022
Competency 1	Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Competency 2	Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Competency 3	Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
Competency 4	Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
Competency 5	Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6	Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
Competency 7	Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
Competency 8	Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
Competency 9	Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

Practicum Placement Timeline

The Practicum placement experience is divided into the Generalist practice practicum and the specialized practice practicum, both of which occur at the same Practicum site. This sequence is presented in the **Practicum Placement Timeline Table** below:

Practicum Placement Timeline Table:

	Full-Time Students	Advanced Standing Full-Time	Part-time Students	Advanced Standing Part-Time
No Practicum	Semester 1	N/A	Semesters 1 & 2	N/A
Generalist	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semesters 3 & 4	Semesters 1 & 2

Specialized	Semester 3	Semester 2	Semesters 5 & 6	Semesters 3 & 4
Specialized	Semester 4	Semester 3	Semesters 7 & 8	Semesters 5 & 6

The search for a Practicum placement site generally begins during the student's Generalist semester, which precedes the first semester they are expected to start Practicum at their Practicum site. For example, a student interviewing in the fall semester will be starting the Practicum in the spring semester. Because The TSSW has rolling admissions with its online MSW program, different cohorts of students are seeking Practicum placements every semester.

Generalist Practice

The purpose of the Generalist Practice curriculum is to provide students with experience and instruction in foundation social work practice. It offers students an opportunity to learn a wide range of social work roles and functions (advocate, broker, resource developer, teacher, and counselor) and to become more aware of the needs of vulnerable populations. The Generalist practice course, Field Practicum & Seminar I (SOWK 7520), is completed in one (1) semester (during the full-time student's second semester in the MSW program). Part-time students complete the Generalist practice Field Practicum & Seminar courses PT1 and PT2 (SOWK 7910 & 7920) in two (2) semesters (during the part-time student's third and fourth semesters in the MSW program).

Specialized Practice

The second segment of the Practicum instruction sequence is the Specialized Practice Field Practicum. Its purpose is to promote and focus on the integration of theory and practice skills in advanced clinical in community social work practice. The Specialized Practice curriculum builds upon the Generalist Practice curriculum. Full-time students take Field Practicum & Seminar II and III (SOWK 7530 and SOWK 7540) during their third and fourth semesters in the MSW program. Part-time students take the Specialized Practicums PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6 (SOWK 7930, 7940, 7950, 7960) during the student's fifth through eighth semesters in the MSW program.

Relationship to MSW Curriculum

The Practicum is the link between the experiential aspect of learning and the overall curriculum. Each mode of learning, class and Practicum, reinforces and enhances the other. Some content may receive greater emphasis in the Practicum site or in the classroom, or content may emerge in one and be reinforced in the other. It is in the class/ Practicum partnership that integration of theory and practice occurs. The interdependence and complementary nature of the two (2) modes of learning are enhanced through mutual understanding by faculty and Field Instructors of the theories, content, learning experiences, and assignments offered to students in both environments.

This goal of integration is accomplished in part through the Field Practicum & Seminar course, which provides students the opportunity to discuss, process, and integrate their Practicum site-based placement experience with classroom learning. Teaching methods and learning activities for the Field Practicum & Seminar may include readings, skill building exercises, didactic presentations, case presentations, and role play exercises. Faculty Field Liaisons and Field Instructors communicate regularly to ensure students' educational goals are being met. Field Instructors are encouraged to review syllabi, bibliographies, and assignments.

Practicum Experience for Dual-Degree Students

The Field Education Team is responsible for making all Practicum assignments and makes every effort to provide a Practicum placement that meets the student's interests and specific needs.

- MSW/MPH: Students concurrently pursuing a Master of Public Health (MPH) at The Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine are required to consult with their MPH Program separately to ensure the identified Practicum site meets the MPH degree requirements.
- MSW/JD: Students concurrently pursuing a JD (Juris Doctor) at The Tulane University Law School may take one (1) of two (2) paths. They can either begin with coursework in The Tulane School of Law or with The TSSW. Both paths take a total of eleven (11) semesters. Please contact your Academic Advisor for additional information regarding the curriculum paths for this dual degree program. Students in the MSW/JD program have a prescribed course sequence that incorporates semesters in both the JD Program and MSW Program. MSW/JD students must consult with both The Tulane School of Law and The TSSW throughout their time at Tulane University.
- MSW/MS-DRL: A Practicum is not required of the Master of Science in Disaster Resiliency Leadership (MS-DRL) program

II. Roles & Responsibilities

Practicum Education Team

The Practicum Education experience at The TSSW is enhanced by the collaborative efforts between the MSW Program's Practicum Education Team and the In-Placement Practicum Education professionals, who provide students with support, educational supervision, and classroom instruction.

The Practicum Education Team consists of:

1. Director of Field Education
2. Program Managers & Senior Field Education Coordinators
3. Field Education Program Coordinator
4. Placement Advisors

Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education works collaboratively with various TSSW offices and staff to manage all aspects of Practicum Education and ensure compliance with CSWE accreditation standards.

Program Managers/Senior Field Education Coordinators

Senior field education coordinators manage Practicum education programs. This includes assigning students to Practicum sites and vetting and approving Practicum supervisors. They also provide administrative support, troubleshoot issues, and educate students, Practicum sites, and Field Instructors on Practicum processes and policies.

MSW Field Education Program Coordinator

The MSW Field Education Program Coordinator provides administrative support that is critical to the day-to-day functioning of the MSW Program. This includes aiding students with Field Practicum & Seminar course scheduling and providing registration instructions and guidance. The Program Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the necessary processes and procedures for student documentation, such as background checks, attestations, and letters of verification are completed.

Placement Advisors

Placement Advisers work directly with students to secure their placement site. Field Placement Advisors are one (1) of the first (1st) (but not only) points of contact for students during the placement process. They provide guidance regarding the entire placement process, starting with the initial application to the day they begin at their Practicum placement site.

Practicum Education In-Placement Roles

The Practicum Education In-Placement team consists of:

1. Field Instructor
2. External Field Instructor
3. Task Supervisor
4. Faculty Field Liaison

Role of the Field Instructor

Field Instructors (FI) work directly with students at the Practicum site to support them in developing their CSWE competency-based learning objectives. Field Instructors provide the scaffolding between classroom assignments and learning experiences, ensuring students have enough opportunities at their site to complete a minimum of CSWE-prescribed 900 hours of Practicum (generally, 24 hours per week for full-time students and 12 hours per week for part time students). They are required to engage in at least one (1) hour of weekly supervision and complete evaluations of the student's performance with ongoing feedback, identifying student progress (or difficulty) in the learning process. Field Instructors contact the Field Liaison with any concerns regarding the student's ability to successfully engage in/or achieve competency in each of the CSWE Competencies.

The minimum criteria for consideration as a Field Instructor are:

- A MSW from a CSWE-accredited program (Canadian Association for Social Work [CASW]-accredited program from Canadian social work accreditor, recognized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CSWE and Canadian Association for Social Work Education [CASWE], or an internationally earned ISWDRES-evaluated degree; *and*
- Two (2)-years post-MSW degree practice experience in social work.
- Two (2) to five (5) years' work experience as a social work practitioner, licensure by the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners (LABSWE) (for those students located in Louisiana) or licensure in the state where the services are being provided (where the student and Practicum site reside). Note that the Field Education Department is aware that there are certain states where initial licensure (the Licensed Master of Social Work [LMSW]) is not required to practice, such as California.
- A full clinical license (Licensed Clinical Social Worker [LCSW], Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker [LICSW], etc.) is preferred by The TSSW.
- A commitment to participating in the education of students.
- Submission of a current curriculum vitae.
- Agreement and commitment to participate in a training program at least annually to enable the staff member to make the transition from the role of practitioner to that of educator, if the prospective appointee is new to field instruction. *A Field Orientation is offered in person for Field Instructors in the New Orleans area and online for those outside the New Orleans geographic area.
- Agreement to participate in meetings, institutes, and workshops essential to the ongoing operation of field instruction and the continuing development of the Field Instructor.
- If the Practicum site is unable to provide an on-site Field Instructor with the required credentials, The TSSW will work with the site to provide an off-site licensed social work supervisor - an External Field Instructor (EFI) - to provide weekly supervision and collaborate with an approved Task Supervisor to coordinate the field placement.

Task Supervisor

A Task Supervisor (TS) may be utilized to reinforce the social work perspective and ensure adequate supervision in conjunction with the Field Instructor/External Field Instructor. Task Supervisors are responsible for training students, which includes assigning tasks and responsibilities that are in line with the CSWE learning goals. Task Supervisors meet weekly with students for at least one (1) hour of supervision, and complete evaluations of student's progress every semester. Task Supervisors maintain regular communication with the Field Instructor/External Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison to ensure student learning goals are being met, and to address any questions or concerns.

External Field Instructor

When a Practicum site does not have a qualified Field Instructor, as defined by CSWE and TSSW policies, an external supervisor will be brought onto the student team to provide the CSWE-prescribed weekly supervision. The External Field Instructor (EFI) works closely with the Task Supervisor and the Field Liaison to ensure the student's Practicum reflects CSWE competencies and social work values.

They work collaboratively with the student, Field Liaison, and Task Supervisor to develop the student's learning goals. External Field Instructors meet weekly with students for at least one (1) hour of supervision and complete evaluations of student progress every semester. External Field Instructors communicate regularly with the student's Task Supervisor and Field Liaison to ensure the student's learning needs are being met and to address any concerns regarding the student's progress.

Faculty Field Liaison

The Faculty Field Liaison (FL) is a professor or adjunct instructor at Tulane University who teaches a Field Practicum & Seminar course. Faculty Field Liaisons are the first point of contact for the Field Instructor, External Field Instructor, Task Supervisor, and student once the Practicum has begun. They assume responsibility for Practicum advisement of small groups of students, meeting regularly with them in Field Seminar and conducting Practicum site visits at least once per semester. Site visits should include the student, the Field Instructor, and, if applicable, the Task Supervisor and External Field Instructor. Faculty Field Liaisons meet with students individually as needed, assessing and intervening in concerns with the student's Practicum experience. The Faculty Field Liaison monitors student progress, which includes grading student assignments such as Learning Goals, Field Performance Evaluations, and Timesheets. Faculty Field Liaisons enter grades for their students each semester in accordance with the deadline provided by The TSSW.

III. Placement Process

Placement Process

The Practicum is the signature pedagogy of social work and the most important learning experience for students. As students engage in the delivery of social work services, classroom content takes on a professional reality. Much care, thought, and attention is focused on the assignment of students to Practicum placements.

The placement of students in Practicum sites where social work practice occurs carries with it a serious professional gate-keeping responsibility. Accordingly, students must be in good academic standing and demonstrate professional behavior for admission to Practicum. This standard is articulated in The TSSW Code of Student Ethics that each student reads, discusses, and agrees to in the first semester, prior to placement. Additionally, students are expected to have read and internalized the NASW Code of Ethics that guides social work professional practice. The TSSW reserves the right to deny or delay a student's Practicum placement if these academic or professional standards are not met.

The Practicum Education Team assigns students to Practicum placements following a substantial amount of preliminary work, outlined in the "Practicum Site Vetting Process" section of this document. This includes assessing how many interns a Practicum site can support, and whether the site will be able to support students' individualized learning goals and desired Practicum experiences.

A final practicum assignment is made only after a student has interviewed with an assigned Practicum placement, and there is mutual agreement that the assignment will be productive. The Practicum Education Team must provide the final approval for an internship to start.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO CONTACT PROSPECTIVE PRACTICUM PLACEMENT SITES UNTIL A TENTATIVE ASSIGNMENT HAS BEEN MADE OR THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD TO DO SO BY THE PRACTICUM EDUCATION TEAM.

Prerequisites

With the exception of those admitted as Advanced Standing, students must successfully complete one (1) full-time or two (2) part-time semesters prior to starting their Practicum placement. The Practicum experience is in addition to students' non- Practicum courses, allowing for both theoretical and practical learning.

In addition, any student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 must undergo a Student Accountability and Standards Review (SASR) to determine whether or not they will be allowed to enter or continue in Practicum.

Advanced Standing students begin the program after the first (1st) full-time or second (2nd) part-time semester and enter Practicum placement when they begin their MSW studies.

Securing a Practicum placement involves a structured, multi-step process. While the exact order can vary, the following outlines the typical progression:

1. New Student Orientation
2. Practicum Placement Application
3. Practicum Consultation
4. Interview Assignments
5. Interviewing
6. Feedback
7. Placement Confirmation
8. Placement Onboarding
9. Practicum Orientation
10. First Day of Practicum

New Student Orientation

Students must attend a New Student Orientation before starting the MSW program.

This session will cover important TSSW policies and provide a general overview of the Practicum placement process, including important policies and procedures.

Practicum Placement Application

All students must complete a Practicum Placement Application to move forward in the Practicum placement process. The Practicum Placement Application is an opportunity for students to share with the Practicum Education Team the skills they hope to gain, and the populations and settings they hope to work with.

Practicum Consultation

Students meet with a member of the Practicum Education Team for individual consultation to discuss interests, barriers, and educational goals.

Interviews

In order to ensure timely placement and hour accrual, each student is guaranteed one (1) interview. If the Practicum site extends an offer and the student agrees that the Practicum site aligns with their educational and professional goals as identified in their Practicum Placement Application, The TSSW considers this a successful match for a Practicum placement. In the event that the offer is withdrawn due to unforeseen circumstances, the interview process will be reinitiated. It is the responsibility of the student to reach out to the Practicum site and set up an interview only after receiving written approval to do so by the Practicum Education Team.

Students are asked to refrain from contacting potential placement sites prior to interviews.

Please note, there are a variety of factors considered when deciding Practicum placements, such as the Practicum site's capacity to host a TSSW student and its alignment with student learning goals.

*For important information about the interview, please refer to the Practicum Addendum 2 of the Field Education Appendix.

Feedback and Confirmation

After completion of the interview, the Practicum Education Team encourages the student to share feedback about the interview experience. Simultaneously, the Practicum Education Team will contact the Practicum site to gather their feedback and confirm whether the Practicum site would like to make an offer to the student. If both the student and Practicum site are in agreement, confirmation of placement will be sent to both parties in writing.

The student will have 14 calendar days to accept their placement offer.

Once confirmed for placement, the student is expected to fulfill the requirements of the Practicum.

Students may NOT accept any offers of placement until they receive written approval to do so by the Practicum Education Team.

Onboarding

Each Practicum site typically has their own distinct onboarding process. As part of the Practicum, students will complete all Practicum site required pre-placement onboarding activities, such as training, background checks, drug screens, and paperwork. Students may not be permitted to begin their Practicum if these requirements have not been met.

***Please note that some Practicum sites have more stringent policies than that of Tulane, such as vaccine requirements, which are generally not negotiable.**

All students must submit proof of individual student professional liability insurance to The TSSW Practicum Placement Platform before entrance into Practicum. They must also submit proof of current and valid liability insurance upon request by The TSSW officials or Field Instructors.

Practicum Orientation

Students will complete a live orientation with the Practicum Education Team and will receive a comprehensive overview of Practicum Education. During the orientation, the Team will cover key roles and responsibilities, essential policies, and details about the Field Practicum & Seminar course.

First Day of Practicum

We can't wait to see you #DoWorkThatMatters!

IV. Practicum Site Vetting Process

Practicum Site Requirements

There is an interrelationship between schools of social work and the Practicum sites that provide Practicum instruction. They have a mutual commitment to the advancement of the social work profession through the education of professional social workers. Practicum sites are dependent on schools for the production of new professional practitioners, and schools must have resources within the community where students can develop competencies in social work practice. The TSSW seeks to promote and develop mutually beneficial and satisfying relationships with Practicum sites that provide social services and social work-related services and are willing to provide Practicum instruction for MSW students that supports mastering generalist practice behaviors and the Specialized Practice Clinical in Community concentration.

Practicum site receptivity and commitment to graduate social work education that supports the Generalist Practice, and the Specialized Practice of Integrated Clinical in Community Practice is required.

Prospective Practicum sites are identified using reputable databases of social service agencies (public and private) that serve relevant populations as well as community resources in the student's community. In addition, students may suggest Practicum sites in their communities.

Prospective Practicum sites are contacted by personnel in the Practicum Education Team regarding TSSW specific policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting Practicum settings. All Practicum sites are required to submit a TSSW Practicum Site Application which includes identifying the potential Field Instructor. Potential Field Instructors are interviewed by the Practicum Education Team and must be approved. All Practicum sites must meet the same criteria and adhere to the same policies.

The Practicum site must provide social work services and functions which meet the educational needs and professional goals of students, including but not limited to:

- New and expanding social services delivery systems, and systems with an adequate array of social work activities appropriate for student involvement at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice.

- Providing a qualified Field Instructor (or Task Supervisor and External Field Instructor), as defined in this handbook, who is capable of meeting the needs of students and the requirements of The TSSW in relation to the placement curriculum, subject to approval by The TSSW.
- Practicum site must have a licensed social worker (LMSW with 2+ years of experience or LCSW) who agrees to regularly observe and supervise the student and provide a minimum of one (1) hour per week of in person supervision. A full clinical license (Licensed Clinical Social Worker [LCSW], Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker [LICSW], etc.) is preferred by The TSSW for students in a clinical setting (most non-macro placements).
- Space and physical infrastructure provide for student presence three (3) days weekly on a 12-month basis for full-time students and one to two (1-2) days a week for 24 months for part-time students.
- Compliance with equal opportunity/affirmative action provisions as prescribed by federal guidelines.
- To exhibit ethical behavior as outlined in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics in conduct, teaching, and practice with clients, peers, and students.

School-Placement Agreement

Prior to placing students in a Practicum, an agreement must be signed by an authorized placement Practicum site representative and the Dean of The TSSW. The agreement outlines expectations and obligations of The TSSW, the Practicum site, and the student. Agreements are reviewed regularly prior to expiration to monitor currency and applicability.

NOTE: There were various exceptions made due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as permitted by CSWE. However, CSWE has returned to pre-pandemic standards, as has The TSSW. Should that situation change again, the Practicum Education Team will communicate with students, Field Instructors, Field Liaisons, and partner Practicum sites directly.

Employment-Based Placement Criteria

Practicum placements may be arranged at the work site where the student is engaged as an employee. The CSWE recognizes and permits the use of such Practicum placements so long as the educational integrity of the Practicum is preserved. According to the curriculum policy statement on graduate social work education, the Practicum is an integral part of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised direct service activities, providing practical experience in the application of the theory and skills acquired in all the generalist areas. The objective of the practicum is to produce a professionally reflective, self-evaluating, knowledgeable, and developing social worker.

In setting up a Practicum placement in the work site, the responsibilities and commitments of both The TSSW and the Practicum site will be clearly defined, have executive approval of the Practicum Education Team and authorized Practicum site leadership, and be formalized in writing prior to the initiation of the Practicum placement. The plan will be evaluated periodically by a Field Liaison and Practicum site personnel. The educational objectives of the student are to be safeguarded by the Practicum site. The final decision for approval of an employment-based placement is made by

the Practicum Education Administrators. Credit may not be given for previous work experience, and the same standards for Field Instructors also apply to employment-based placements.

According to the CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.7:

- "...student assignments and employee tasks may qualify as field hours when directly linked to the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) and level of practice (generalist or specialized);

Students must be evaluated by the Practicum Education Team for approval of an employment-based placement. Additionally,

- Students must be employed by their workplace for six (6) months in order to be considered for the employment-based placement.
- Students must submit an additional application and supplemental information.

(Council on Social Work Education. (2022). Educational policy and accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's social work programs. [https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-Educational-Policy-and-Accreditation-Standards-\(EPAS\).pdf](https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-Educational-Policy-and-Accreditation-Standards-(EPAS).pdf))

V. Practicum Policies

Safety

Social work practice activities sometimes occur in places that may not be safe or may not be perceived as safe by the student. Whether it is a perceived threat by a particular client or group and/or the physical or interpersonal environment of the situation, students are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding personal safety issues with their Field Instructor. If, after gathering enough information to realistically assess the situation and learn how to provide appropriate protection, the student does not feel sufficiently safe to carry out assignments, they are encouraged to renegotiate those assignments with the help of the Field Instructor. Any safety concerns should also be brought to the attention of the Faculty Field Liaison as soon as possible.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Federal law provides that it shall be unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer, because of the gender of any person, to discharge without cause, to refuse to hire, or otherwise discriminate against any person with respect to any matter directly or indirectly related to employment or academic standing. Harassment of an employee or student on the basis of gender violates federal law. In order to set a general standard for judging complaints of sexual harassment without infringing upon the freedom of speech if imposing individual standards of propriety upon the community, the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students believes that it is necessary to approach the problem in terms of circumstances and consequences rather than a definition per se. Verbal or physical behavior constitutes sexual harassment under the terms of these complaint procedures only if it:

- Would be regarded by most Tulane faculty members and students as grossly objectionable;

- Is not stopped by what the student considers, and what, under the circumstances, are normal protests;
- Occurs in a relationship in which the person is in a position to influence the student's academic career objectives through grades, recommendations, or job referrals;
- Creates an offensive or intimidating academic environment.

In the absence of any one (1) of these four (4) elements, the behavior would not constitute sexual harassment. Please see the most current Tulane University sexual harassment policy on the University's website at www.tulane.edu.

Use of Personal Vehicles

Social work practice often requires travel to facilities outside the location of the Practicum site. Some Practicum sites provide reimbursement for student use of their own vehicles and insurance coverage for carrying out Practicum-related activities. Other Practicum sites do not have these resources available. Issues related to the use of personal vehicles need to be clarified prior to placement.

*Please note: The TSSW does not reimburse students for gas mileage.

University Holidays

All students are entitled to official University holidays and to vacation periods scheduled between semesters. At the beginning of placement, students should provide their Field Instructors with a TSSW University calendar that outlines official holidays. If the Practicum site has particular holidays (religious, public holidays, etc.) beyond the prescribed University schedule, students will be expected to make up this time. Students are expected to anticipate planned holidays and to make plans for coverage of their practicum related tasks with the Field Instructor. If a student would like to continue practicum placement activities during a TSSW holiday period, approval must be sought and approved from the Faculty Field Liaison and the Practicum Education Team. Students cannot be COMPELLED by the site to participate in Practicum placement during university holidays. Students must be aware that their student professional liability insurance may not provide coverage during holidays or university breaks.

Sick Leave, Personal Emergencies, and Absences

CSWE Accreditation Standards mandate a minimum number of hours for completion of the MSW practicum. Most states require an MSW from a CSWE-accredited school in order to be licensed to engage in social work; therefore, students must complete a minimum of 900 hours of practicum in order to work as a social worker in most states. To assure students meet these requirements, sick leave or requested time off for personal emergencies must be made up during the semester in which the absences occurred. Rollover hours from previous semesters will not be accepted. Students who miss Practicum for several days should develop a plan to make up the hours with their Field Instructor and Field Liaison. Communication is crucial if/when any days must be missed.

It is important that every effort be made to treat all students equitably in regard to particular requests for an alteration in Practicum time.

Field Instructors are requested not to make unilateral decisions about unusual requests for time off in Practicum even though it is understood that the student will have to make it up later. The Field Instructor should discuss such a request with the Faculty Field Liaison who has a better overview of the total student group. In addition, any longer absence anticipated due to medical issues must be discussed with the Faculty Field Liaison, Field Instructor, and Practicum Education Team.

Dual Relationships

The Field Instructor and student are expected to develop and maintain a friendly but professional relationship. Field Instructors are prohibited from becoming romantically or sexually involved with Practicum students.

NASW Code of Ethics Standard 2.06 states:

“(a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact (including verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact) with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority” (National Association of Social Workers, 2021).

To avoid a conflict of interest, Field Instructors should not enter into dual-role relationships with Practicum students that are likely to detract from student development or lead to actual or perceived favoritism. Although there are pedagogical benefits to establishing good rapport with students and interacting with students both inside and outside the Practicum site, there are also serious risks of exploitation, compromise of academic standards, and harm to student development.

NASW Code of Ethics Standard 3.01(c) states:

“Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media” (National Association of Social Workers, 2021).

It is the responsibility of the Field Instructor to prevent these risks from materializing into real or perceived conflicts of interest. The Faculty Field Liaisons are available to consult with Field Instructors to help keep relationships focused on Practicum education goals and requirements.

Related to these issues of dual relationships, The TSSW will not assign students to placements involving:

- Supervision by a family member or friend, whether primary Field Instructor, secondary Field Instructor, Task Supervisor, consultant, or practice consultant;
- Supervision by another student in the MSW program, including task supervision;
- Supervision by current supervisor at place of employment;
- Placement in a Practicum site where the student or a family member is an active or recent client; or
- Other placements where existing relationships may impair meeting educational goals.

If a student has an existing relationship with a proposed Field Instructor or Practicum site, the student and Field Instructor have the responsibility to disclose this when the placement is proposed. The Director of Practicum Education will assess the nature of the relationship for its potential impact on Practicum education. (Adapted from College of St. Catherine School of Social Work Policy on Dual Relationships in Field and LSU School of Social Work)

Home Visits

Home visits may be a part of your Practicum placement. Practicum sites will be expected to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students. Students are not permitted to make home visits by themselves during their first (1st) semester (full-time) and first (1st) two (2) semesters (part-time). Dyads or pairs represent best practice and optimize safety for the student. The same safeguards provided to staff must be provided to students. However, in some cases students may need additional support and security provisions. The Field Liaison and Practicum Education Team should be consulted immediately if safety is a concern.

Transporting Clients

Students are NEVER permitted to transport clients under any circumstances, whether in their personal vehicles or a Practicum site vehicle, even if accompanied by a Practicum site employee. This is a liability issue for all parties involved. As it is not covered by car insurance or the students' liability insurance plans, this could leave a student with a large and unforeseen financial burden, and anything could happen during the transport. **DO NOT TRANSPORT CLIENTS.**

Information Sharing

As with all social work courses, the faculty of The TSSW has a responsibility to monitor the student's performance and progress in the program. To this end, faculty share information amongst themselves with respect to the student's status in the program.

Field Instructors are co-educators in the Field Practicum & Seminar courses whose input is essential to the information sharing process. Access to information is restricted to the students for whom the Field Instructor is or will be responsible. This information may include, but is not restricted to the following:

- Strengths, knowledge and skills;
- Suitability and readiness for Practicum work;
- Grades;
- Attendance and/or participation in other social work courses;
- Identified learning needs and/or areas requiring particular attention during Practicum education courses;
- Verification of required background and medical clearances required for internship.

Students are notified that information may be shared with Field Instructors and Practicum sites as part of the Practicum education process and are required to sign a Student Release of Information Form prior to beginning academic courses.

Professional Ethics

It is understood that students will adhere to the expected standards for professional and ethical conduct in addition to the policies and procedures of the Practicum site as long as those policies and/or procedures are not in conflict with the NASW Code of Ethics. An especially salient issue for students during the Practicum is that of confidentiality of case records, process recordings, and other related materials. As an important component of supervision with their Field Instructors, students are expected to review their work (audio/video tapes, written materials etc.) and Practicum site records pertinent to their duties. Additionally, students may be asked to share their work with their Field Liaison. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to remove documentation related to clients from the Practicum site.

A student's failure to adhere to the expected standards for professional and ethical conduct will be considered grounds for termination of the practicum, a failing grade of Unsatisfactory "U" in the placement, and immediate cause for a Student Accountability and Standards Review to determine the student's continuation in the MSW program.

Open Identification of Student Status

Students must identify themselves as students or interns in their work with clients and other Practicum site representatives. It is unethical for students to misrepresent themselves as employees of the Practicum site.

Personal Conduct

Social workers and social work interns serve the most vulnerable populations and are often looked to as role models by the community. Personal conduct can impact how a student is perceived by clients, referral sources, and colleagues, and may interfere with their ability to do their work. Students are expected to use the following standards from the NASW Code of Ethics as a guide when making decisions about personal conduct.

Respect

NASW Code of Ethics Standard 2.01 states:

"Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability" (National Association of Social Workers, 2021).

Professional Liability and Health Insurance

All students are required to submit proof of their own professional liability insurance prior to entering Practicum placement. **Students cannot be in Practicum placement if proof of liability insurance is not on file in the Practicum Placement Platform.** Students may be responsible for the provision of their own health insurance. Students who are in Practicum placements are advised to be certain their health coverage will provide for any injuries, accidents, or illnesses that may be incurred at the placement site.

Private Conduct and Social Media Guidelines

As social workers, we must be aware that our private world has a greater likelihood of becoming public when using social media. Field instructors, colleagues, and even clients may have access to information via the Internet that students would otherwise limit to friends and families.

NASW Code of Ethics Standard 4.03 states:

“Social workers should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities” (National Association of Social Workers, 2021).

It is inappropriate for students to refer to any Practicum site, client, or client situation, etc. on their personal social media pages (including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, X, blog posts, etc.) no matter how many security settings have been used.

Students should be clear when sharing personal views and should engage in a clear decision-making process before sharing views related to sensitive issues. Students should verify information before posting it, correct mistakes in a timely manner, and be aware of legal liability issues such as copyright infringement, defamation, and posting proprietary information.

NASW Code of Ethics Standard 4.06(a) states:

“Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker’s employing agency” (National Association of Social Workers, 2021).

Social media channels provide an excellent means to build community; however, as students utilize these tools, they should take care to do no harm to themselves, their Practicum sites, their clients, The TSSW, their classmates, or to the social work profession in the process.

Dress Guidelines

Students must follow the dress code that is required of Practicum site staff. Practicum site policies including, but not limited to dress, tattoos, and/or piercings must be adhered to by students. This is another factor to consider when choosing placements. Observe how people in the Practicum site are dressed during your interview and ask questions about the site's expectations on dress and presentation.

Harassment

The Institutional Equity Team at Tulane University is dedicated to ensuring that the Tulane community is discrimination, harassment, and retaliation free. Discrimination or harassment on the basis of any protected status or classification, by anyone affiliated with Tulane, whether verbal, physical, written, or visual, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Tulane University complies with applicable federal and state laws addressing discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation.

Should a student experience harassment during Practicum, The Practicum Education Team will connect the student with needed support. For more information regarding Tulane's Office of Institutional Equity, please contact (504) 862-8083.

Students with Disabilities:

It is the policy and practice of Tulane University to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (Pub. L. No. 101-336), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. No. 93-112, § 504, as amended), and state and local requirements regarding individuals with disabilities. Under these laws, no qualified individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities of Tulane University. For more information: <https://www.ada.gov/>

Goldman Center for Accessibility

Students with a disability which impacts the ability to perform tasks related to the Practicum, must request accommodations through the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility prior to the placement interview process. **Per Goldman policies, no accommodations will be considered without official documentation.** To ensure that documentation is received before the placement process, students are encouraged to contact the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility one semester prior to the Practicum placement process.

Goldman Center for Student Accessibility
Howard Tilton Memorial Library (Bldg. #60), Suite B25
7001 Freret Street
New Orleans, LA 70118
goldman@tulane.edu

VI. Field Practicum & Seminar

Generalist Practice Courses:

SOWK 7520 - Field Practicum & Seminar I (full-time)

SOWK 7910 – Field Practicum & Seminar 1 (part-time)

SOWK 7920 – Field Practicum & Seminar 2 (part-time)

Full-time students take Field Practicum & Seminar I during their second (2nd) semester in the MSW program, and part-time students take Field Practicum & Seminar 1 & 2 during their third (3rd) and fourth (4th) semesters in the MSW program as part of the Generalist Practice Instruction. Generalist Practice Instruction closely integrates with the Generalist Practice Practicum. Per the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2022), "Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework" (p.20). The 2022 CSWE EPAS states that "The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro mezzo, and mezzo levels" (p. 20).

Specialized Practice Courses:**SOWK 7530 - Field Practicum & Seminar II (full-time)****SOWK 7540 - Field Practicum & Seminar III (full-time)****SOWK 7930 – Field Practicum & Seminar III (part-time)****SOWK 7940 – Field Practicum & Seminar 4 (part-time)****SOWK 7950 – Field Practicum & Seminar 5 (part-time)****SOWK 7960 – Field Practicum & Seminar 6 (part-time)**

Full-time and part-time students in the MSW program complete the Specialized Practice Field Practicum & Seminar Courses during their third (3rd) and fourth (4th) semesters and fifth through eighth (5th-8th) semesters, respectively. These courses are closely linked to the Specialized Practice Practicum. According to the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2022), the Specialized Practice Instruction builds on the Generalist Practice Instruction by integrating the nine (9) social work competencies to “extend and enhance social work knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes, and demonstrate an ability to engage assess, intervene, and evaluate across client populations, problem areas, and methods of intervention” (p. 20).

(Council on Social Work Education. (2022). Educational policy and accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master’s social work programs. [https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-Educational-Policy-and-Accreditation-Standards-\(EPAS\).pdf](https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-Educational-Policy-and-Accreditation-Standards-(EPAS).pdf))

Evaluation and Grading

All Practicum grades are based on a Pass/Fail system. Possible grades for the Field Practicum & Seminar Course are Satisfactory “S” (PASS), Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL), or Incomplete “I”. The student must earn a Satisfactory “S” (PASS) grade each semester to meet the requirements for graduation. Please see the course specific syllabi for additional details

The requirements to achieve a Satisfactory “S” (PASS) grade each semester are outlined in the **Criteria for Receiving a Final Semester Grade of Satisfactory “S” (PASS) Table below:**

Criteria for Receiving a Final Semester Grade of Satisfactory “S” (PASS) Table

Criteria for Receiving a Final Semester Grade of Satisfactory "S" (PASS)	
Minimum Hours	Complete the minimum number of prescribed hours of Practicum concurrently with the associated Field Practicum & Seminar course(s). (Full-time students are required to complete a minimum of 300 hours per semester and part-time students are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours per semester).

Coursework	For courses graded on a Satisfactory “S” (PASS) /Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) scale, students must receive an 80% or higher to pass the class. Anything below 80% is considered Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL). Please note, 80% applies to coursework and not to Practicum Education hours. Practicum Education hours require 100% completion.
Assignments	Earn a minimum of 80% on all assignments listed within Canvas.
Field Performance Evaluations	To remain in good standing, students MUST have 80% of their ratings at 2 or above on the 3-point scale. (Please refer to scale on p. 27)

Students who do not successfully meet the requirements in the chart above may receive a final grade of Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL). A final grade of Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) for the semester presumes that there has been substantial discussion between the Field Instructor and the Practicum Education Team regarding the student’s overall performance in Practicum Education.

A grade of Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) will initiate a Student Accountability and Standards Review (SASR), and the student will have to repeat the course for which the Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) was earned.

The grade of Incomplete “I” is used in cases of illness or extraordinary circumstances, causing the student to lack the required time expected for completion of the Practicum. Students who receive a grade of Incomplete “I” will accrue Practicum hours that will roll over to the following semester. Students are required to fulfill the accrued hours along with the required number of hours in their current semester. Any missed coursework must be made up.

Incomplete “I” grades are not guaranteed, and they must be approved by the Faculty Liaison and the Practicum Education Team PRIOR to the end of the semester. An “Incomplete Grade Contract” is due PRIOR to the end of the semester for review.

Incomplete Coursework

A temporary grade of Incomplete “I” will only be granted in extenuating circumstances and must be submitted to the MSW Program Manager and approved by the Director of Practicum Education at least three (3) weeks prior to the last day of class and Practicum Education, per The TSSW academic calendar. Moreover, an Incomplete “I” may only be requested within the last four (4) weeks of the semester. All grades of “I” related to Field Practicum & Seminar will be handled by the Practicum Education Team and should be presented to the Program Manager(s) for approval from the Director of Field Education. Approval for an Incomplete “I” is determined based on:

- The student's grade at the time of the request is a grade of "B" or above in the course.
- Students requesting an Incomplete "I" must work with their instructor to identify missing assignments and create a plan to complete and submit all outstanding coursework.
- All coursework must be completed and submitted no later than five (5) weeks from the last day of class. If the grade is not submitted within five (5) weeks, the Incomplete "I" will turn to a grade of Unsatisfactory "U" (FAIL) and remain on the transcript as such.

Reasons a request for an Incomplete "I" grade can be denied:

- If the request is submitted to the MSW Program Manager less than three (3) weeks before final grades are due, as listed on The TSSW academic calendar;
- If at the time of the request the student's overall grade is not a grade of "B" or above;
- If there are more than two (2) requests for Incompletes "I" across the student's tenure at The TSSW, or there are any outstanding/unresolved Incompletes "I";
- If the student is in their last semester of courses. Incompletes "I" **cannot** be granted in the student's final term of the degree curriculum.

The student and instructor must complete and sign an "Incomplete Grade Contract ([Incomplete Grade Contract](#))" and submit the document to the MSW Program Manager who will obtain approval from the Director of MSW Programs. The Director of MSW Programs can request amendments to the plan or deny the request. Please keep in mind the following:

- Students will not be allowed to start Field Practicum & Seminar if they have unresolved or outstanding Incompletes "I".
- An Incomplete "I" in any semester could extend the student's graduation date and may affect student loan eligibility.
- Students will only be granted two (2) grades of Incomplete "I" during their tenure with The TSSW.

If and after all course requirements have been resolved within the five (5) week deadline, the instructor must submit a "Grade Change Request" according to The TSSW's established Grade Change Protocol, currently via Gibson, which will automatically be sent to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (Dean of The TSSW in lieu of) for approval. If the Director of MSW Programs does not have an approved "Grade Change Request", the grade change will not be processed.

If all requirements are not met, documentation is not submitted and completed by the deadline outlined on the agreement, the grade will automatically revert to a grade of Unsatisfactory "U" (FAIL). Any grade of "F" or "U" will be permanent and will not be changed.

Required Hours of Practicum

Per CSWE standards, **a student cannot earn an MSW without completing 900-hours of Practicum**. According to most State licensing requirements, students cannot work without an MSW from a CSWE-accredited program.

Practicum hours earned which exceed the required minimum per semester do not roll over to the next semester. Students will still need to complete the hour requirements for their Field Practicum courses each semester, 300 hours for full-time and 150 hours for part-time students.

Students are expected to remain in their Practicum for the duration of the semester. Accumulating additional hours early, in order to complete the internship sooner, is not permissible. For example, a full-time student who completes 350 hours of Practicum in one (1) semester will still be required to complete 300 hours of Practicum the following semester, even if it is their final semester.

Things to consider:

1. Commute time to and from your placement site does not count toward Practicum hours. However, if travel is a required part of your Practicum duties (e.g., home visits, off-site meetings), that time may be counted toward your total Practicum hours.
2. Students may count Field Practicum & Seminar class towards Practicum hours.

Hours are not the final determination of the student's fulfillment of Practicum requirements, and the CSWE-mandated 900 hours are a minimum standard.

For more information on CSWE guidelines:

<https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/78815b36-1a82-47de-be69-fe3191c08762/2022-EPAS-Interpretation-Guide.pdf>

Maintaining Practicum Hours

Timesheets

Timesheets are maintained using the Practicum Placement Platform and are submitted biweekly to the Field Liaison after being verified by the Field Instructor or Task Supervisor. Timesheets are expected to accurately reflect work conducted for each time period.

Students are concurrently completing Practicum hours while also attending classes.

A student who is having difficulty completing the required hours or anticipates missing Practicum hours are expected to inform the Field Instructor and Field Liaison to discuss options as soon as possible. If a student anticipates missing Practicum hours, they are expected to discuss ways to make up days with the Field Instructor and Field Liaison. Any missed hours must be made up during the semester they are missed. In extenuating circumstances, with written permission by the Field Instructor and the Practicum Education Team, accommodations may be made to ensure completing the required hours. Accommodations and plans for completion of Practicum hours must be clearly specified in the permission document.

Evaluations

Field Performance Evaluations must be completed for each semester the student is in Practicum. There is a separate Field Performance Evaluation for each semester of Practicum. The Field Performance Evaluation includes the core competencies and specific practice behaviors and tasks which the student is expected to experience and master for the assigned semester. Toward the end of each semester, the Field Instructor will be contacted by The TSSW Practicum Education Team regarding the completion of the Field Performance Evaluation. This is done via the Practicum Placement Platform. The Field Performance Evaluation must be completed and electronically signed by the Field Instructor and the student before a grade can be given for the course. The student's signature does not necessarily mean agreement or concurrence with evaluation, but it simply indicates that the student has read it. If there is serious disagreement, the student is invited to write a rebuttal as an addendum to the Field Performance Evaluation. This becomes a part of the official record.

If a student is experiencing difficulty, or the Field Instructor has concerns about the student's performance, it is expected that the Field Instructor will discuss this with the student and inform the Field Liaison. Field Performance Evaluations that have not been signed by BOTH the student and the Field Instructor may result in the student receiving a grade of Unsatisfactory "U" (FAIL).

Any deviation from the expectation of Satisfactory "S" (PASS) performance means the Field Liaison and Field Instructor should have had discussions at the point at which an issue or concern became evident. The Field Liaison is responsible for issuing the final grade. For the student who is experiencing trouble serious enough to place them in an Unsatisfactory "U" (FAIL) or Incomplete "I" grade category, a detailed policy is available for the procedures to be followed. Students who are not expected to have a Satisfactory "S" (PASS) completion should be brought to the attention of the Practicum Education Team at least one (1) month before the end of the semester.

Evaluation Scale

Field Performance Evaluations are based on a 3-point scale and are an instrument to address the student's performance on practice behaviors associated with the nine (9) core competencies. Students MUST have 80% of their ratings at 2 or above on the 3-point scale. Failure to do so can result in an Unsatisfactory "U" (FAIL) for the course. A student's failure to meet the minimum number of Satisfactory "S" (PASS) ratings on the core competency standards of the Field Performance Evaluation (determined by a score of at least 2 on each evaluation) will result in the grade of Unsatisfactory "U" (FAIL).

The evaluation rating scale is shown in the **Field Performance Evaluation Rating Scale Table** below:

Field Performance Evaluation Rating Scale Table

Field Performance Evaluation 3-Point Rating Scale	
1	Does not demonstrate basic competence in knowledge and skills and is practicing well below satisfactory level in this area. (This is not to be used for skill areas that the student has not had an opportunity to perform.)
2	Demonstrates emerging or basic competence in applying knowledge to practice in this area.
3	Demonstrates superior competence and approaches mastery of the skill in diverse and difficult contexts.

Site Visits

Students are responsible for scheduling and ensuring completion of the site visit once per semester (in-person or virtually), which must include the Field Instructor, Task Supervisor, or External Field Instructor.

The site visit allows the Field Liaison to provide an evaluation of the Practicum site and the quality of instruction provided by the Field Instructor or Task Supervisor and External Field Instructor. Site visits also provide an opportunity for the Faculty Liaison, the Field Practicum site, and the student to have an open discussion of all aspects of the site and the overall performance of the student.

Evaluation of the Practicum and Field Instructors

Evaluation of the Practicum and Practicum faculty is an ongoing process and is a major responsibility of the Practicum Education Team. The evaluation includes the perspectives of The TSSW, the Practicum site, and the student. Factors under scrutiny include quality of Practicum sites, Field Instructors, and assurance that learning experiences provided are congruent with the Practicum requirements mandated by The TSSW.

Regular and as needed conferences by Faculty Field Liaisons with the Practicum sites ensure continuous communication. At the end of the field year Faculty Field Liaisons provide an evaluation of each Practicum site and the quality of instruction provided.

The strength and quality of the Practicum at The TSSW is assured by:

- The number and range of Practicum sites which constitute the professional community in the metropolitan New Orleans area and throughout the United States
- The commitment of the Practicum sites to participate in the graduate professional education of social work students.
- The competence of staff and the quality of the carefully nurtured relationship between Practicum sites and The TSSW, based on trust, mutual understanding, and mutual need.

Students never supplant staff or fill gaps in personnel in Practicum sites. However, their presence augments Practicum site services as a quid pro quo for the major investment by the Practicum sites in student education. The value placed by Practicum sites on this relationship with The TSSW is evidenced by the fact that Practicum sites continue to offer placements over time. The changing number of students and variability in practice interest from year to year may pose a dilemma for the Practicum Education Team in regard to utilization of Practicum sites. The Department may not be in a position to utilize all of the excellent Practicum sites each year, and this could strain the relationship. To mitigate this situation and to maintain Practicum site ties, some Practicum sites which have afforded primary placements are asked to provide secondary or “supplementary” placements, as needed. Further, if there is a hiatus in the utilization of a Practicum site, the Faculty Field Liaison and Director of Field Education will maintain ongoing communication with that setting for possible future use.

The design of the Practicum is valued by The TSSW, the practice community, and the students. The 12-month and 24-month continuous placement affords an opportunity to move the student into increasing service responsibility within the Practicum site structure and to gain experience within the full range of Practicum site’s programs and services.

VII. Addressing Problems in Practicum

A problem that surfaces in the Practicum setting may be identified initially by either the student or the Field Instructor. Regardless of who identifies the problem, the first step is a meeting between the student and Field Instructor to discuss the situation. It is anticipated that the majority of problems related to the Practicum can be resolved at this level. However, if the situation is not resolved between the Field Instructor and the student, either the Field Instructor or the student should promptly bring the problem to the attention of the Field Liaison.

Once a problem has been brought to the attention of the Field Liaison, the Field Liaison will meet with both the student and the Field Instructor to mediate and address the problem. When the Field Liaison holds the meeting with the student and Field Instructor, the Field Liaison will document the meeting, including the identified problems and the proposed methods to remedy the problems. This document (which can be an email) will be sent to the Director of Field Education and the Program Managers / Senior Field Education Coordinators for review and then shared with the student and Field Instructor.

Notwithstanding the process outlined above, both the Practicum site and The TSSW have the unfettered discretion to immediately remove a student from the Practicum site setting if either the Practicum site or The TSSW believes such removal is warranted.

Identifying the Student Who is Experiencing Problems in the Practicum

Students have different learning styles and subsequently progress at different rates in development and skill attainment. Despite varied learning patterns, it is expected by the time any student has completed the Generalist and Specialized field semesters, they will be capable of providing MSW level practice intervention, as indicated by “Satisfactory” ratings on the Core Competency standards on the Field Performance Evaluation.

When there is concern about a student’s progress (for whatever reason), the Field Instructor must hold a face-to-face meeting with the student to attempt to resolve the concern. If this does not rectify the problem, the process above should be followed.

Some areas of performance which may cause concern include, but are not limited to the following:

- Failure of a student to meet the expected level of performance at any given stage in the curriculum;
- Excessive absences or tardiness;
- Failure to keep records current;
- Failure to prepare appropriately for supervision;
- Apathy or failure to engage and invest in the Practicum placement learning opportunities;
- Inappropriate or questionable professional behavior.

Possible Outcomes

To remain in good standing, students **MUST** have 80% of their ratings at 2 or above on the 3-point scale. A student’s failure to meet that score on the Field Performance Evaluation could result in one (1) of the two (2) options noted below.

The grade of Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) can be given in the following situations:

- If the problem is sufficiently serious;
- If the student does not meet expectations on more than 20 percent of the Competency standards on the Field Performance Evaluations.

This grade may require that the student undergo a SASR. But, at a minimum, the student will have to repeat the course for which the Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) was earned.

The grade of Incomplete “I” can be given in the following situations:

- If due to illness or extraordinary circumstances, the student lacks the required time to meet expectations according to the Performance Evaluation and must make up the time and work;
- An Incomplete “I” must be converted into a Satisfactory “S” (PASS) or an Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) during the semester following the one in which it was given.

The proposed plan to make up hours must be approved by both the Director of Field Education and the Director of the MSW Programs and cannot be issued in a student's final semester.

Removal of a Student from Practicum: Reasons for Removal

A student may be removed from the Practicum placement if either the Practicum site or the Practicum Education Team believes such removal is warranted.

Situations where removal will be considered warranted include but are not limited to the following:

- Level of student performance in the placement is below standards. Using the Competency standards on the Field Performance Evaluation for the appropriate level of Practicum (Generalist or Specialized), the Field Instructor determines that the student is far below standards and has little or no chance of achieving a level of Satisfactory "S" (PASS) for the semester. The Field Instructor and Field Liaison attempted to remedy sub-standard performance areas, but those efforts were unsuccessful in bringing the student up to the Satisfactory "S" (PASS) level for that given semester and its competency standards. For either semester, evidence to the contrary of the above expectations, given appropriate efforts by the Field Instructor and Field Liaison to remedy deficiencies, will constitute grounds for a SASR to determine the student's continuation in the MSW program.
- A student's failure to meet the expected standards for ethical practice as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics, Louisiana Professional and Occupational Standards, assigned Practicum site policies or procedures, or TSSW policies and procedures.
- A Practicum site's failure to provide learning experiences and/or appropriate supervision to allow the student the opportunity to meet the competency standards as defined on the Field Performance Evaluation.
- Unexpected events in the life of the student or in the Practicum site which prevent the attainment of the competency standards as defined on the Field Performance Evaluation.
- The student has demonstrated an inability to work positively and instructively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals.
- The student has attempted to harm him or herself or someone else.
- Inappropriate behavior which is inconsistent with the principles and practices of the social work profession and is not limited to the classroom or the Practicum placement.
- Repeated tardiness or absences from the Practicum site without notification or approval.

Procedures for Addressing Issues in Practicum

The student, Field Liaison, and Field Instructor work together as a team to address issues as they arise. It is incumbent upon the student and the Field Instructor to identify, discuss, and attempt to mediate problems as they occur. If they are unable to reach a solution, they should contact the Field Liaison as soon as possible for further assistance.

Upon notification that there are problems with the Practicum placement that need further assistance, the Field Liaison will:

1. Apprise the Practicum Education Team of the situation.

2. Meet with the student and Field Instructor to determine the specific problems and attempt to remediate the situation with a plan for corrective action, specifically articulating the behavioral indicators that would show that the problems are being resolved.
3. Document the findings of the meeting and share that documentation with the Director of Field Education, the student, and the Field Instructor.
4. If a solution cannot be worked out that will allow the student to remain in the Practicum setting, then the Field Liaison will convey this in writing to the Director, who can attempt further remediation efforts or terminate the placement.

The Director of Field Education will:

1. Initiate appropriate “next steps” with the student and the Practicum Education Team to facilitate placement in another setting or request a SASR to determine the student’s standing in the MSW program.

To protect students, Practicum sites, and The TSSW from prematurely changing Practicum placements, every effort will be made to ensure a student will not be removed from the Practicum placement without going through the above-mentioned process.

- If necessary, the student may be placed on leave from the Practicum placement by the Field Liaison and Director of Field Education during this process.
- Field Instructors are notified of the process for addressing concerns during orientation and receive a copy of the Field Education Appendix outlining procedures.

If the Field Instructor and Practicum site believe that immediate dismissal of the student without prior notification is warranted, the Field Liaison and Director of Field Education will obtain information from the Field Instructor and student to determine appropriate next steps.

Dismissal from a Practicum placement may result in a SASR and could result in immediate dismissal from the program.

A student who terminates a Practicum without permission may receive an Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) for the semester. The Unsatisfactory “U” (FAIL) will result in losing credit for the hours worked and a SASR to determine the student’s standing in the MSW program.

VIII. Practicum Appendix 1 – The Nine (9) Core Competencies

The Nine (9) Social Work Competencies

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.
- Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels.
- Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

- Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels.
- Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work

research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

- Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs.
- Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

- Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies.
- Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

- Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies.
- Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

- Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals.
- Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and

anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes.
- Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

From: Council on Social Work Education. (2022). Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. <https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-EPAS.pdf>

IX. Practicum Appendix 2 – The Practicum Placement Interview

Once you have been assigned your tentative Practicum placements, you will interview at the Practicum sites. You will contact your assigned Field Instructors and set up the interviews. Remember, the interview is a two (2)-way interaction; Field Instructors will interview you, and you will interview them. The purpose of the interview is to clarify expectations that both the Field Instructor and student may have and to discuss mutual objectives related to the Practicum work experience.

What the Practicum site may want to know about you:

- What relevant experience (paid, volunteer, or life experience) can I speak to?
- What are my learning goals for Practicum?
- What personal or professional values do I bring into social work?
- What strengths do I have that would benefit this Practicum site?
- What are your immediate goals and long-range career goals? Why did you opt for the social work profession and the MSW degree over other professional possibilities?

What you may want to know about the practicum site:

- What populations of people does your Practicum site primarily serve?
- What are some of the most common issues or challenges your clients face?
- What types of tasks and responsibilities are typically assigned to Practicum students?
- Will I be involved in team meetings, trainings, or interdisciplinary collaboration?
- What does a typical day or week look like for a Practicum student here?
- What should I do if I have questions or concerns between supervision sessions?
- What specific skills do students usually develop in this placement?

To prepare for the interview:

- Review the Practicum site
 - Refresh yourself on the Practicum site's mission, programs, and population served and think about how your experience connects.
- Prepare Your Materials
 - Bring a copy of your resume.
 - Have a notebook and pen or device for notes.
 - Dress professionally.
- Know Your Talking Points
 - Be ready to explain why you're interested in this placement and what you hope to learn.
 - Have two to three (2–3) strengths or experiences you can highlight.
 - Prepare three to five (3–5) thoughtful questions to ask the Field Instructor or Practicum site.

On the day of the interview:

- Speak clearly, be yourself, and show enthusiasm for the opportunity.
- Answer questions honestly — it's okay to say, "I haven't done that yet, but I'm eager to learn."
- Ask your own questions — this shows initiative and helps you assess fit.

After the interview:

- Send a polite thank-you email within 24 hours. Express appreciation and restate your interest in the placement.
- Jot down your impressions — what felt like a good fit, what questions you still have, and anything you'd do differently next time.