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INTRODUCTION

The MSW curriculum consists of coursework in five areas: social work practice, human behavior in the social environment (HBSE), policy, research, and field education. Coursework is divided into foundation courses and concentration courses. Since students with many different bachelor’s degrees are accepted into the MSW program, the foundation coursework is designed to bring all students to a common level of knowledge and set the stage for the advanced practice coursework. For some students, course content will be totally new; for others, some of it will be a review of previously learned information. For all students, the social work perspective, values, and ethics will be integrated in the coursework. Foundation courses are targeted at generalist social work practice knowledge and skills. Concentration courses are focused on the area of the student’s interest, either clinical or community empowerment and program development, during the second half of the program.

Field Education is considered by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to be the “signature pedagogy” for social work education. This emphasizes the importance of learning through practice experience in an actual social work setting. It is where the other four areas of coursework come together to bring knowledge to application. Field practice with MSW supervision is the aspect that differentiates social work education from that of other professions.

Field education constitutes 15 credits of the 60 credits required to earn the MSW in the full program and 12 of the 40 credits in the advanced standing program. The University of Georgia School of Social Work requires 240 clock hours or two days per week for one semester for foundation field practicum (3 credits) and 720 clock hours or three days per week for two semesters for concentration field practicum (6 credits each semester). Advanced standing students complete the equivalent foundation field education practicum during their senior year of their BSW program so they complete only the concentration practicum hours during their MSW.

The foundation field placement is a generalized social work practice experience. This means that each student will focus on practicing basic skills and understanding how human service programs are developed, implemented, and evaluated. All students should have the opportunity to interact directly with the agency’s clients, most often completing needs assessments and providing information and referrals to clients. Students may also be directed to assist in program activities, such as collecting information about the community, budgeting, grant writing, fund raising, and attending interagency community meetings.

The concentration field placement is compatible with the student’s choice of their concentration of study. Students choose either Community Empowerment and Program Design or Clinical Practice for their concentration. Clinical social work is defined by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) as:

Clinical social work shares with all social work practice the goal of enhancement and maintenance of psychosocial functioning of individuals, families, and small groups. Clinical social work practice is the professional application of social work theory and methods to the
treatment and prevention of psychosocial dysfunction, disability, or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders. It is based on knowledge of one or more theories of human development within a psychosocial context.

The perspective of person-in-situation is central to clinical social work practice. Clinical social work includes interventions directed to interpersonal interactions, intra-psyche dynamics, and life-support and management issues. Clinical social work services consist of assessment; diagnosis; treatment, including psychotherapy and counseling; client-centered advocacy; consultation; and evaluation. The process of clinical social work is undertaken within the objectives of social work and the principles and values contained in the NASW Code of Ethics.
CHAPTER 1

FIELD EDUCATION OFFICE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Field Education Office is responsible for the overall administration of the field program. The Field Education Office works under the direction of the SSW Dean and in collaboration with the MSW and BSW program directors and Gwinnett MSW program coordinator. The Field Education Office coordinates agencies, faculty liaisons, students, and field instructors to provide the best learning experiences possible.

FIELD EDUCATION OFFICE ROLE

The Field Education Office is responsible for the total field education program of the School of Social Work. The Field Education Office is led by the Director of Field Education who oversees field education for both the MSW and the BSW programs. There are four Coordinators of Field Education; one who is responsible for all BSW field placements; one who is primarily responsible for metro-Atlanta area concentration placements; one who is primarily responsible for Athens area concentration placements; and one who is primarily responsible for Athens and Atlanta areas foundation placements. The field office faculty works as a team to match all students to placements.

Field Education Office responsibilities include:

1. Evaluation and maintenance of a bank of agency resources to adequately meet students’ learning needs
2. Identification of openings for students at practicum sites
3. Coordination of student placements with agency openings
4. Coordination of student interviews at agency and follow-up confirmations of placements
5. Assignment of faculty liaisons to agencies
6. Provision of orientation to faculty liaisons
7. Provision of agency and student information to faculty liaisons
8. Training and orientation of field instructors
9. Provision of orientation to students to the practicum process
10. Maintenance of legal documents necessary for agency-university affiliations
11. Provision of information to academic advisors and students about the variety, quantity, quality, and nature of practicum offerings

12. Provision and distribution of necessary field placement educational materials (for example, application forms, informational resources, syllabi, evaluation forms, teaching/learning materials, practicum calendars, etc.) to appropriate persons

13. Provision of consultation to faculty liaisons, academic advisors, students, field instructors, and administrators concerning a variety of issues impacting the school-agency relationship and the quality of the individual student’s learning experience

14. Recruitment of new agencies and completion of agency evaluations for potential practicum sites

15. Maintenance of file of professional student liability insurance policies to ensure insurance is current

16. Sponsorship and organization of field education conferences as allowed by budget

**FACULTY ADVISOR ROLE**

During practicum, the faculty advisor may be called upon as a student advocate and/or as a consultant to the faculty liaison or agency field instructor concerning the student’s progress and learning in the practicum. The faculty advisor plays a pivotal role by helping the student identify learning needs and future career goals.

The faculty advisor is involved in the field process as follows:

1. Prior to concentration placement:

   (a) Assists student to identify areas of interest

   (b) Encourages student to clarify career goals and assists in determining priorities of learning needs

   (c) Identifies strengths and limitations of student to share in the field matching meetings with Field Education Office

   (d) Provides, as needed, appropriate resources and referral to faculty liaisons or Field Education Office
2. During practicum:

   (a) Serves as a student advocate as needed

   (b) Serves as a consultant to the liaison concerning student’s progress and learning in the practicum as needed

**FACULTY LIAISON ROLE**

The faculty liaison is actively involved in the execution of the field program. His/her responsibilities are as follows:

1. Working with the student and field instructor to develop the learning potential of the setting and specific learning opportunities when needed for a particular student (Learning Plan)

2. Working collaboratively with the field instructor to handle problems or issues which may arise related to the overall learning experience or in regard to a particular student

4. Notifying the Director of Field Education of any administrative or policy issues that may arise between the agency and the school

5. Being actively involved with field instructor, student, and Director of Field Education should there be a need to terminate the practicum (termination process is discussed on pages 29-33)

6. Scheduling regular face-to-face contact with each practicum site each semester to assess if the student’s learning assignment includes experiences in each of the practice behavior areas designated by the social work program. At least one visit occurs during the MSW foundation field placement, and at least three visits occur during the MSW concentration placement. Additional visits or telephone contacts are scheduled if needed.

7. Providing feedback to Field Education Office concerning any changes in field instructor or agency policies that affect student learning

8. Completing a Site Visit Report form

9. Submitting all evaluation materials related to the agency/student to the Field Office not later than two weeks following the end of each semester

10. Evaluating agencies as to continued effectiveness as a practicum site
11. Identifying new placement opportunities at sites

**Teaching role:** During the internship, the faculty liaison provides educational support and consultation if needed with the field instructor and/or agency, evaluates assignments, and participates in the evaluation of the learning outcomes. The teaching role is fulfilled in the following ways:

1. **Regular contact:** Feedback from field instructors indicate that accessibility to the faculty liaison and faculty liaison’s timely responsiveness are crucial to maintaining a positive working relationship. It is expected that the faculty liaison will have regular contact with the student by reviewing the students’ monthly reports. Refer to page 35 for foundation liaison responsibilities and to pages 39-40 for concentration liaison responsibilities. Purpose for these contacts is:
   (a) Monitor the progress of the student
   (b) Provide educational support to the student and field instructor, if needed
   (c) Identify potential problems early and initiate procedures for corrective action

2. **Grade Assignment:** The faculty liaison is responsible for assigning the academic grade for every practicum according to the specifications of the practicum syllabi and grading criteria. Grading should be discussed with the field instructor and student in the evaluation conference (where all are present) at the end of each semester. The faculty liaison carries the responsibility for interpreting the application of the grading criteria to the specific situation being graded. The faculty liaison may not assign a grade without reviewing the student’s performance (assignments and evaluation materials are specified with each practicum syllabus) and without discussion/consultation with the field instructor.

3. **Termination:** On behalf of the School, the faculty liaison and field director carry the responsibility for a decision to terminate a student’s practicum experience and for guiding processes (with the agency or within the School) that will facilitate a sound decision. When it appears that the termination of a student’s placement may be the eventual outcome, the faculty liaison is expected to consult with the field director and academic advisor as early in the process as possible. Refer to pages 29-33 for detailed termination procedures.

**FIELD INSTRUCTOR ROLE**

**Planning role:** The field instructor carries an important planning function for the student’s internship. In some agencies, some or all of these activities may be carried out
by the agency’s administrator or a coordinator for social work student placements. These planning functions include:

1. Communicating information to the Field Education Office about potential practicum openings and any information that may impact the nature or quality of the practicum.

2. Following receipt of the student’s practicum application from the Field Education Office, the field instructor reviews the application to verify that it appears to be appropriate for their organization and responds to the student’s request for scheduling an interview.

3. Should the field instructor learn information in the interview that leads her/him to question the viability of the practicum, s/he is responsible to discuss the concerns with the appropriate field coordinator for immediate appropriate action.

4. After the interview, the field instructor should complete the interview tracking form indicating whether or not the student is accepted for placement. This form is signed by the student and then forwarded by the student or the field instructor to the Field Education Office. Chapter 4 (Foundation Field) and Chapter 5 (Concentration Field) provide more detailed information on the placement process.

**Teaching Role:** Throughout the field placement, the field instructor’s primary role is as a teacher and facilitator of student learning. To this end the field instructor:

1. Provides for the student’s orientation to the agency’s policies and procedures, ethical standards, and safety precautions (see Appendix B).

2. Negotiates and plans student assigned tasks in accordance with the competencies and practice behaviors identified in each practicum syllabus (see Field Education website - MSW Syllabi SOWK 6055/SOWK 7055).

3. Provides face-to-face educational supervision/field instruction for each student at least one hour per week (see Appendix C).

4. Serves as an advocate for the student within the agency, by facilitating the student’s access to productive learning experiences and other learning activities/resources (for example, student participation in activities outside the agency such as professional conferences or field visits to other programs) during the practicum.

5. Evaluates the student’s performance in the agency with regard to the specified practicum competencies/practice behaviors.
OFF-SITE MSW FIELD INSTRUCTOR

In selected situations and with prior approval from the Director of Field Education, an off-site MSW field instructor may be utilized by a field agency that does not have an MSW employee available for field instruction. These situations usually occur in new, “cutting edge” areas of practice where social work is just beginning its impact and which the School of Social Work wants to develop. Off-site MSW field instructors are selected jointly by the targeted agency and the Director of Field Education in consultation with the field education faculty. Responsibilities for field education using this model are outlined below.

Off-Site MSW Field Instructor

1. Must meet criteria for field instructors (page 14)
2. Collaborates with the on-site task supervisor in assisting the student with the development of the Learning Plan
3. Meets weekly with the student in a supervisory session to review progress of student toward demonstration of competencies/practice behaviors and to assist student with the integration of practice realities and theoretical concepts from a social work perspective
4. Meets periodically with student and on-site supervisor to evaluate student performance and modify the Learning Plan if necessary
5. Assumes primary responsibility for submitting to the School the written evaluation and grade recommendation for the student at the end of each semester
6. Assumes primary responsibility for meeting with the assigned faculty liaison and student during the semester to review student progress, and for alerting the liaison in a timely manner of any problems or potential problems that might interfere with a successful educational outcome.

On-Site Task Supervisor

1. Assumes primary responsibility for orienting the student to the agency, to agency staff, and to work projects; Appendix C provides additional information to assist with orientation planning
2. Works with the off-site MSW field instructor and student to create the Learning Plan, which includes competencies/practice behaviors and practice tasks
3. Assumes primary responsibility for supervising the daily work of the student as described in the Learning Plan; Appendix C provides some supervision ideas.

4. Meets periodically with the student and the off-site MSW field instructor to evaluate student performance and modify the Learning Plan, if necessary; the on-site supervisor may meet with the faculty liaison to review student progress, at the request of the student, the off-site MSW field instructor, or the liaison.
CHAPTER 2

SELECTION OF SETTINGS AND INSTRUCTORS FOR FIELD PLACEMENT

AGENCY CRITERIA

**Developing and Maintaining Practicum Settings**

Developing and maintaining practicum settings is viewed as a collaborative process between the Office of Field Education, School of Social Work faculty, and local community social service agencies. This collaborative process is ongoing and entails responsibilities for the social work program, the student, and the agency. While each partner has specific responsibilities in the educational process, the overall guiding principle for developing and maintaining settings is the interest in and willingness of the agency to provide high quality learning experiences for graduate social work students.

An attempt is made to maintain a diversity of settings with respect to type of clients served, problems addressed, and intervention approaches utilized. The following criteria for practicum settings, criteria for selection of practicum instructors and faculty liaison responsibilities are viewed as necessary ingredients for sound learning experiences.

The School draws on the following criteria for field site selection:

1. **Administrative policies regarding service to clients, to other agencies, and to the community should be written and consistent with the sound standards of best practice appropriate to the particular type of agency.**

2. The agency should show stability of program and of financial support; alternatively, it may be at the cutting edge of innovative programming or practice; the agency may not be dependent on the work of students to maintain the functioning of the program.

3. **The agency should show capacity to respond to the changing needs of the students and community.**

4. **Adequate facilities must be available. These include provision of office space, work materials, and equipment as needed for the student. The student’s use of agency cars must be included in the agency’s insurance policy if driving an agency car is expected of students.**

5. **The agency should show capability for accommodating students; this includes a willingness to designate a single, professionally-trained social worker as the agency practicum instructor who has sufficient professional practice experience, time, and interest to implement a quality learning experience for the student.**
6. Preference is given to agencies that can provide stipends to financially needy students (online, section titled “Financial Support/Stipends”)

7. The agency must be endeavoring to meet progressive standards of practice; this should include providing a wide variety of diverse practice behavior learning experiences appropriate for masters level social work students and use of best practices for the clients served

8. The agency setting must function in a manner consistent with social work values and ethical principles

9. The agency must provide consistency with the School’s MSW program mission statement, program goals, and core competencies

10. The physical resources necessary for a quality learning experience must be available

11. The agency should have formal, written safety policies and procedures (pages 11-13 and Appendix B)

12. The agency should have the potential for school/agency cooperative efforts (joint research projects, consultation, and in-service training)

13. There must be commitment on the part of the agency to enter into a long-term relationship with the School involving the training of numerous students over time

14. The agency and school will enter into a contractual agreement regarding the mutual expectations for affiliation (see Appendix F).

The decision to include a particular agency setting in the array of possible social work practicum placement is made after a minimum of one meeting at the agency by the Director of Field Education or field coordinator with relevant agency personnel. The meeting is for the purpose of sharing information about respective programs and interests, and an articulation of the potential practice behaviors learning experiences that will be available. Because social welfare agencies are constantly changing, the faculty liaison must assess the continuing adequacy of the social work practicum setting.

FIELD INSTRUCTION CRITERIA

1. The agency must offer a favorable setting and atmosphere conducive for learning

2. The agency must provide training opportunities in general practice
methods and/or in interventions applicable to the School’s curriculum

3. The agency must have one or more staff members who qualify as field instructors

4. Field instructors who are licensed professionals, must be free of disciplinary actions and sanctions by their professional licensing board

5. Adequate facilities must be available. These include provision of office space, work materials, and equipment as needed for the student. The student’s use of agency cars must be included in the agency’s insurance policy if driving is expected of students.

6. The agency must allow all field instructors time for attending field instructor training offered by the School of Social Work.

7. The agency must allow all field instructors time for preparation for student instruction, for regular conferences with the student, consultation with School faculty, and, if needed, attendance at meetings held at the School.

8. The agency must share the agency policy regarding reimbursement for any costs (such as background checks or travel expenses) incurred in the course of accepting or carrying out a practicum at the agency at the student’s interview for placement. Agencies may not require students to transport clients.

9. The agency agrees that no student trainees accepted by the agency will be discriminated against on the basis of race/ethnicity, gender, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, disability, Vietnam-era veteran status, or sexual orientation.

10. As required by federal and state law and by University of Georgia policy, field placements, as a whole, must be accessible to students with disabilities. The “as a whole” requirement means that students with disabilities should have the same kinds of educational opportunities—including field placements in particular kinds of settings—as students without disabilities. However, given the wide range of disabilities, it is possible that not every placement site will have the capability to accommodate every student. It may not be feasible, for example, for a site to accommodate students who use wheelchairs because of the site’s location and existing architecture, but this same site could easily accommodate students with visual or hearing impairments. Every effort is made by the Field Education Program in consultation with the Office of Disability Services to ensure equal access to practicum opportunities.
AGENCY SAFETY GUIDELINES

Most agencies are under enormous pressure. Reduced budgets and clients with increasingly critical needs and histories of negative involvement with social services have resulted in increasing tensions in social work settings. As a result, social workers have experienced a variety of threatening situations, and some have been harmed. Social work students cannot be completely insulated from the realities of professional life, nor should they be. On the other hand, students frequently lack the experience and skills that help more seasoned practitioners assess danger and take appropriate precautions. The School recognizes its responsibility to help prepare students to handle potentially dangerous situations by providing students with safety training and classroom content on safety issues. Appendix B on Personal Safety should be carefully reviewed by field instructors and students. However, we also need to make a serious effort to try to reduce risk in field settings.

The following guidelines are designed to supplement the School’s agency selection criteria. Modification of guidelines for particular students and special circumstances may be made in the student’s educational agreement with the explicit approval of the faculty liaison to the agency and the Field Education Office. Moreover, it is recognized that the implementation of these guidelines may take some time. A liaison may determine that, while an agency is not currently meeting all guidelines, it is making a good faith effort to do so and current conditions are sufficiently safe to proceed with a field placement.

1. A field agency should have a policy and/or procedures on safety covering the following matters:

   (a) Building and office security

   (b) Emergency procedures, including when and how to summon security or police assistance

   (c) Staff responsibilities and procedures governing the management of violent clients

   (d) Safety on home visits, including when, where, and under what conditions visits should or should not be made, when the student should be accompanied, and how backup is provided (see four and five below). Students are not allowed to transport clients and they should never be asked to give clients their home or cell phone numbers.

   (e) Alcohol and drug use policy formulated and posted

   (f) Guns and other weapons policy formulated and posted
(g) Procedures for documenting and communicating with staff and students all incidents or threats of violence

(h) Policy for aftermath of assault and threat of assault. Provision of support services for victim’s family and/or staff and clients who may have witnessed the assault

(i) Relationship with police should be established.

2. The agency should provide each student with a copy of the above policies as part of the student orientation to the agency, and provide training on safety issues and procedures. Consideration should be given to in-service training on clinical and administrative management of violent clients and violent situations outside the agency. The agency and each of its programs should have a well rehearsed specific plan of action in which students know exactly what to do in case of danger, from recognition of the signs of agitation to code words for signaling for help, when to call for police, clearing the building, etc. This plan of action should be rehearsed with students placed at the agency and reviewed on a regular basis.

3. Though a student has the right to refuse a dangerous assignment, a common understanding about the kinds of assignments that are appropriately safe should be reached by the student, the field instructor, and the faculty liaison. The following types of activities should be discussed with either the faculty liaison to the agency to determine if these activities should be assigned to a student:

(a) Physical restraint of clients

(b) Treatment of a client with a history of emotionally volatility

(c) Home visits to areas that are high risk (see #5)

(d) Treatment of a client with a history of violence

4. The student’s field instructor should know, or be able to easily ascertain, the student’s location during fieldwork hours and should discuss with the student any activities that require special planning with regard to safety

5. Thorough preparation should be made for student home visits with consideration given to the following elements:

(a) Selection of clients and home environments that are not assessed to be dangerous to the student
(b) Provision of a safe means of transportation, whether by agency vehicle, the student’s car, or public transportation where such can be judged to be normally safe

(c) Discussion of the neighborhood, including any potentially dangerous areas

(d) Discussion of appropriate risk-reducing behaviors in the neighborhood and in the client’s home

(e) Clarification of the purpose and development of a specific plan for the visit

(f) Discussion of what to do should the client or anyone else present a threat to the student

(g) Provision of appropriate support and backup. Depending on the situation and the student’s experience with home visits, this may range from an accompaniment by another worker or security person to immediate availability of telephone consultation. The student’s field instructor should know when a visit is to take place and at a minimum, telephone consultation must be available.

(h) In some situations, the student should be given permission not to make the home visit

6. Consideration should be given to the following features pertaining to the agency facilities:

(a) Adequate lighting inside and outside the agency

(b) Adequate phone system for signaling emergencies

(c) Arrange office furniture for an easy exit of client and worker

(d) Minimize amount of unescorted traffic within the agency

*If a student is threatened or injured while in placement, or involved in an incident where his/her safety is or could be compromised, the incident should be reported immediately to the faculty liaison, to the agency, to the Field Education Office (706) 542-5419, or to the Office of the Dean (706) 542-5424.*

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF FIELD INSTRUCTORS

Field instructors are identified by the agency and approved by the School to provide practicum instruction to students. Field instructors select specific student assignments and instruct students in the skills necessary to fulfill these assignments in relation to the student’s course work.

Field instructors for foundation students should have an MSW. However, field instructors with a BSW and several years of human services experience may be approved. Field instructors for concentration students must have an MSW and at least two years post-MSW human service experience. It is expected that field instructors have had formal training and experience in one of the school’s concentration areas. Typically, the student is assigned to a field instructor on the basis of the student’s major concentration choice. The instruction of students can be shared between various agency personnel, but the School-appointed field instructor assumes overall responsibility for field instruction.

Field instructors must be on-site and on duty for at least 10 hours per week for foundation students and 16 hours per week for concentration students. During those periods when field instructor availability is not possible, other professional staff members must be available for backup or consultation to the students.

Field instructors are strongly encouraged to participate in field instructor training provided by the Clark Atlanta University, Georgia State University, and University of Georgia Field Education Collaborative. Detailed information about field instructor training workshops will be provided on a regular basis to all agencies that have a student assigned to them.

Persons identified as field instructors should be members of an agency staff who show:

1. evidence of competence in the practice of social work
2. concern for continuing professional development
3. commitment to the teaching function of social work education
4. possession of the interest in and have the time available for the regular instruction of students
5. a record free of a history of licensing board sanctions or disciplinary action for ethical violations.
CHAPTER 3

PRACTICUM POLICIES

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The following are general policies that apply to field education. Students are expected to read and adhere to these policies. Prior to entering field, all students will sign a contract acknowledging their agreement to these policies.

Academic Eligibility

Foundation Practicum: MSW students must earn a minimum grade of B or better in the direct practice course (SOWK 6033) in order to enroll in foundation practicum (SOWK 6055). All foundation courses must be completed satisfactorily prior to entering the concentration practicum (SOWK 7055).

Concentration Practicum: Students must earn a minimum grade of B in Foundation Practicum (SOWK 6055) in order to advance to the concentration year. Students cannot enter concentration practicum with Incompletes (I) in any course. Thus, all I’s must be completed before the beginning of the semester in which the student is scheduled to enter practicum. Failure to complete full responsibilities for coursework will delay a student’s entry into concentration practicum. Additionally, students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher before they can enter concentration practicum. Students in concentration practicum must receive a minimum grade of B in the first semester of SOWK 7055 to continue in practicum for the second semester. If a student earns a grade of B- or lower in SOWK 7055, the student will be required to repeat the course.

Background Checks: Students must be willing to submit to a possible background check on issues such as prior arrests and convictions for felonies and misdemeanors, abuse of illegal drugs, and certain motor vehicle offenses. If there are previous records or criminal charges pending against the student, s/he must schedule an appointment with a field faculty member to discuss the situation prior to submitting the field application. Additionally, students are advised to review any criminal background record for accuracy and completeness prior to having a practicum agency conduct its own review. The expense of a criminal background check may be covered by the agency, but the student may be required to sustain the cost at some agencies. Students who cannot pass a criminal history background check should carefully consider their plans for a career in social work. The School cannot guarantee that the student will be accepted into a field placement as most agencies currently require a clear background check and drug screen. Agencies are not willing to accept students with a felony conviction and/or a positive drug screen test. Students who have a criminal history need to be aware that this may also affect their future ability to obtain a social work license.
Inadequate Performance in Practicum: If a student fails foundation practicum (grade of B- or lower), the student must retake the course. If the student fails foundation practicum (grade of B- or lower) a second time, the student will be dismissed from the MSW program. If a student fails concentration practicum (grade B- or lower) in either of the two semesters, the student will be subject to an academic review with the intent to determine the student’s suitability for continuation in the program. If the student is offered the opportunity to retake the concentration practicum course and fails it again (grade B- or lower), the student will be dismissed from the program. If a student fails one foundation practicum course (grade B- or lower) and then fails a concentration practicum course (grade B- or lower), the student will be dismissed from the MSW program. If a student fails field practicum (grade B- or lower) twice (either concentration or foundation or one of each), the student will be dismissed from the MSW program.

Credit for Work Experience

In accordance with the Council of Social Work Education standards, no credit can be given for work experience.

Students Working Full-Time

Students working full-time should expect to significantly reduce or discontinue their work commitments to accommodate to the demands of the two required practica. The competing demands of practicum, academic classes, and full-time employment tend to detract from the overall learning experience of field education. Therefore, it is imperative that students adjust their schedules in order to focus on their field learning experience.

Night and Weekend Placements (Non-Traditional Placements)

There are NO sites that offer all evening and/or weekend hours. Very few offer any evening or weekend hours at all. Under no circumstance will the educational objectives of the curriculum be compromised for a non-traditional placement. The field instructor must be available on-site for at least 10 hours per week for foundation students and 16 hours per week for concentration students. The field office cannot guarantee that a student will have evening and/or weekend hours as part of their field placements.

Financial Support/Stipends

Field practicum settings, whenever possible, are encouraged to provide some financial support for students, who are typically undertaking extraordinary expenses to attend graduate school. While the field education program strongly encourages agencies to offer stipends, the agencies that do so vary and the decision is entirely up to the agency. Sometimes agencies offer stipends depending upon the amount of time the student can give to the agency, or to make the placement more attractive to students. Agencies may receive grants that allow the agency to give the student a small amount of funds.
are some specialized grants such as the Title IV-E child welfare grant, the HRSA training grant, and VA Hospitals (Atlanta and Augusta), which provide funding. The amounts vary, and there may be specific commitments that the student must make, such as taking specific elective courses or accepting specific employment following graduation. Students can discuss stipend availability with a field faculty member. Students should also be aware that some of the practicum policies (especially those related to vacation and other leave time) may be altered for students who are receiving a stipend from the agency.

**Professional Liability Insurance and Health Insurance**

Prior to the beginning of the practicum, students are required to provide evidence that they have purchased liability insurance that provides appropriate coverage of any claims that might be entered against them in the discharge of their professional responsibilities during their student internship. NASW provides a reasonably priced policy for student members; application forms for NASW membership and Professional Liability Insurance through NASW are available on-line.

**UGA student fees provide for student treatment at the University Health Services on campus. Students who are in field placements are advised to be sure their health coverage will provide for any injuries, accidents, or illness that may be incurred in the practicum site.**

The UGA SSW Memorandum of Understanding (appendix F) specifies that health insurance and liability insurance coverage rests with the student not with the agency. In addition to obtaining health coverage, students are urged to discuss any concerns about their potential health or safety hazards in the practicum site with their field instructor and/or faculty liaison.

**Use of a Car**

Many agencies (e.g. healthcare, mental health, family services etc.) are becoming increasingly community-based. This necessitates that students have transportation in order to perform field assignments that involve outreach, home visits, and community work. Additionally, most placements are located outside the Athens area, so it is to the student’s advantage to have a vehicle, or be prepared to car pool with other students for travel to and from the agency. Unfortunately, not having a car severely limits field placement options. Students without cars may need to compromise their interests to be accommodated locally, or near their homes. Many local agencies, however, also require the use of a vehicle that further limits choice of practicum sites for those students without a vehicle.
Safety

The safety of students in practicum is of prime importance to the School and to field agencies. It is imperative that students feel safe in order to carry out their responsibilities in the field. If safety concerns arise for a student, it is important that the student discuss these safety concerns with their field instructor. If, after gathering information to realistically assess the situation and to learn how to provide appropriate protection, the student still does not feel safe in order to carry out assignments, she/he is encouraged to renegotiate those assignments with the help of the field instructor. When appropriate, she/he should also consult the faculty liaison for assistance. Guidelines for personal safety and risk reduction are provided on pages 11-13 and in Appendix B.

Sexual Harassment

The University of Georgia is committed to providing a professional working environment that is free of sexual harassment. The sexual harassment policy extends to fieldwork and can be found in the MSW Program Handbook.

Student Use of Automobiles to Transport Clients and Use of Personal Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to transport clients in their own automobiles or use agency vehicles to transport clients unless the agency’s automobile insurance policy has specified the coverage is applicable to students (agency insurance coverage for “volunteers” is not sufficient). Students are not allowed to give agency clients their personal cell phone numbers. Students should contact the field office if the field instructor or agency staff requests that the student do this.

Freedom of Information

Information about a student intern that a field instructor shares with the Field Education Office may be shared with the student. Similarly, students are free, if they wish, to see any forms or notes Field Education Office faculty sometimes maintain on students to assist in planning and developing placements for them and assigning them to particular placements. All of these forms and notes are destroyed when students graduate.

Schedule

The weekly schedule for all of the practica is established on an individual basis with the agency in which the student is placed. Schedules are to take into account the needs of the agency, school, and individual student. Students will, from time to time, extend their clock-hours beyond the hours allocated to the practicum in order to meet professional responsibilities or obtain access to special activities. When students have been engaged more than the needed weekly clock hours, they may take "compensatory" time off from their practicum. To assure that the time off will not disrupt the student's practicum responsibilities, this should be arranged with the approval of the field instructor. All
students will remain in their field placement sites throughout the entire semester; i.e., "compensatory time" may not be used to shorten the length of the practicum.

Some practicum sites have incorporated evening and weekend hours in order to respond to the needs of their clients. However, most agencies still provide the majority of client services during the typical workweek of Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. It is of utmost importance that students be in agencies when there are maximum opportunities for interaction with clients and other professional staff to facilitate student participation in professional decision-making and collaborative work.

**Commute time to and from an agency and the student’s home may not be counted as part of the field clock hours**, however, time spent driving during agency business (e.g. doing home visits, going to meetings in the community) is counted as part of the field clock hours. Lunch breaks are also **not** counted as part of the field clock hours.

Students need to clarify agency expectations for their practicum hours at the time of the initial interview with the agency. No student is allowed to start the practicum until the semester begins. Formal agency orientation with no contact with agency clients is the exception and may be counted if approved by the field office and field instructor.

**Vacations, Holidays, Agency Furlough Days, Semester Breaks, other Absences from the Practicum**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving (one week recess) are holidays observed by the University of Georgia; students are expected to be absent from the practicum on those days. In addition, students may take any holidays observed by the agency without penalty as long as the student has verified that the clock-hour requirements of the practicum are not compromised. Students will be excused from practicum if the University is closed because of **inclement weather**, but these hours will need to be completed on another day. Additionally, students will be excused from practicum for fall and spring breaks. It should be noted that students in a school setting take their breaks on the school’s not the university’s schedule. **However, the total number of clock hours for practicum must still be met.**

It is understood that occasional illness or other emergency may necessitate absence from the practicum. Students are expected to work out these arrangements with the field instructor; this can usually be accomplished by using compensatory time that most students build up by putting in extra hours (e.g., for evening hours).

If the absence is more than a few days, the faculty liaison should be notified. In no instance will arrangements be approved that result in a practicum deficit in the required total clock hours or the specified time-span.

Occasionally, a class instructor will make special plans for an activity that is not on a regularly scheduled class day. In such cases, the student and field instructor must assess
whether the student can be absent from the practicum at that time; appropriate plans must be made by the student for professional attention to agency responsibilities.

Students often have the opportunity to attend professional conferences, which may be scheduled during practicum days. The student must negotiate with the field instructor as to whether or not this time can be applied to their practicum hours. Generally, if the training/conference is compatible with the field agency’s mission and responsibilities, the hours could be counted as practicum hours. The student must negotiate these requests early enough to arrange for coverage as needed.

In all instances where a student is absent from the field, the agency must be notified of the absence at the earliest possible time in order to arrange for coverage. Absences from the field are allowable for good and compelling reasons. However, absences must be made up before a grade can be earned for that semester. It is anticipated that students who need to make up absences from the field will typically be able to do so during the final week of the semester, which is designated as the exam period on the academic calendar. However, there may be circumstances in which a student is absent for good and compelling reasons from the field for such an extended period of time that the absences cannot be made up in the semester in which they occurred. In such a case, if a plan is approved by the field instructor and the faculty liaison to make up the absences in a subsequent semester, then the grade of “I” (Incomplete) will be entered by the faculty liaison and removed once the absences are made up.

**Student Continuation in the Agency and/or with Clients of the Agency after the End of the Placement**

Occasionally, agencies seek to employ a student with whom they have worked in the practicum. Should that situation arise while the student is still in the practicum, the student and the field instructor must bring that to the attention of the School by discussing those arrangements with the faculty liaison and the Director of Field Education. In such instances, the faculty liaison and field director will assure that the necessary safeguards are in place to protect the integrity of the learning experience of the student. Should the point of employment be after the termination of the practicum, no special arrangements need to be made.

Following the end of a student's practicum, it is strongly recommended that the student not continue to provide service in the agency as a volunteer. Only in response to a request by the agency, and only in rare circumstances even then, should a student ever plan to continue to render professional services to a client to whom he/she was assigned as part of the practicum.

**Student Continuation of Practice Initiated During the Practicum but not Continued Under the Auspices of the Agency**
Continuation of service to clients of the agency after the completion of the practicum, unless specifically requested to do so by the agency, will be considered a breach of professional social work ethics.

**Professional Ethics**

It is understood that students will adhere to the expected standards for professional, ethical conduct and to the agency's policies and procedures as long as these are not in conflict with the NASW Code of Ethics. The NASW Code of Ethics is included as Appendix D for reference concerning the expected standards for professional conduct. A salient issue for students during the practicum is that of confidentiality of case records and recordings. Students are expected to review their work with clients (tapes, written materials) and agency records pertinent to their assignments as an important component of their preparation for work with clients and supervisory sessions with field instructors. However, the supervisory review of student work does not extend to anyone outside the agency. In short, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES may students remove client information, interview recordings (written, audiotaped, or videotaped), evaluation summaries, etc., from the agency without the explicit written permission of the field instructor. Students must comply with agency policy regarding the records of clients. If given permission to copy part of a client’s case record, students must make every effort to remove client identifiers from materials to ensure confidentiality.

A student’s failure to adhere to the expected standards for professional, ethical conduct will be considered grounds for termination of the practicum, a failing grade in the practicum, and/or termination of the student from the MSW program.

**Cultural Competence**

As set forth in the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) policy standards, students are expected to engage in culturally competent practice. Standards for culturally competent practice can be found in Appendix E.

**Policy Conflicts**

Should conflicts arise between agency and School practicum policies, the field instructor and/or the student should immediately notify the faculty liaison who will endeavor to work out a solution that is satisfactory to both the agency and the School. No alternative policy may be established which conflicts with the Memorandum of Understanding established between the University and the agency.
II. THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

The responsibility for approving and selecting agencies and initiating placement arrangements rests with the Field Education Office. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CONTACT AGENCIES WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE FIELD OFFICE FACULTY.** Field education faculty assesses the suitability of agencies as student training sites and approves those that meet the School’s requirements. Only School-approved sites can be used for field education.

Field education faculty routinely gathers information from approved agencies as to the number of students that can be effectively accommodated, the type and variety of practice assignments afforded, the availability of qualified supervision, and other pertinent data. Field education staff and faculty work cooperatively with agencies to enlarge and improve opportunities for field placements.

The timeline for placement of foundation students is provided in Chapter 4. The timeline for the placement of concentration students is provided in Chapter 5.

The field education faculty will arrange the placement matches between student and agency. Students will be assigned to interview at one agency and the responsibility of “being accepted by the agency” rests with the student. If there is not a match, the field faculty will discuss feedback from interviews with the student and arrange another placement interview. If a student is not accepted by an agency after two ‘good faith’ matches, an academic review will be requested to examine options. If the student declines the placement after the interview (concentration students), the student cannot then request to be placed at that agency should subsequent interviews be less desirable.

**Note:** Students are not intentionally assigned to agencies where they will be competing against each other for acceptance. However, agencies interview students from many universities and they select students based on the best candidate or “fit.” This makes this process competitive and it is therefore vitally important that students interview and confirm placements in an expedited manner.

**Agency Assignment Process for Students with Disabilities**

The placement procedures discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 generally apply to students with disabilities. However, students with disabilities, particularly those with physical impairments and learning disabilities, are strongly urged to contact the Field Education Office to discuss special considerations and to help arrange for aids or services that students may need to negotiate the practicum. In situations where a student is registered with the Office of Disability Services, the Field Education Office will consult with Disability Services personnel as necessary to arrange appropriate accommodations in internship.
As required by federal and state law and by the University of Georgia policy field placement as a whole, must be accessible to students with disabilities. This “as a whole” requirement means that students with disabilities should have the same kinds of educational opportunities – including field placements in particular kinds of settings – as students without disabilities. However, given the wide range of disabilities, it is possible that not every placement site will have the capability to accommodate every student. It may not be feasible, for example, for a site to accommodate students who use wheelchairs because of the site’s location and existing architecture, but this same site could easily accommodate students with visual or hearing impairments. Every effort is made by the Field Education Office to ensure equal access to practicum opportunities.

**Agency Reassignment Process (Before Field Work Begins)**

The student will receive notification of the assigned placement with an interview tracking form. If the student wishes to appeal this assignment, the following procedure must be followed:

**Prior to interview**

1. Student must contact the field coordinator who arranged the placement to discuss concerns about the placement

2. The field coordinator will take action as necessary that may or may not include reassigning the student. The student may be asked to fulfill the commitment to the agency.

3. If the student is released from this match, the student must call the agency to let the field instructor know, and the student must sign and return the interview tracking form to the Field Education Office, indicating that the agency is not a match.

4. Once the documentation from the student has been received in the Field Education Office, the field coordinator who initially placed the student will then re-assign the student to an agency that better meets the learning needs of that student.

**After confirmation interview with signed interview tracking sheet**

Requests for a change in placement, once a placement has been accepted, are discouraged and will only be considered as a result of extenuating circumstances. Once the student has signed the interview tracking sheet indicating acceptance of the placement, the student must follow the process (below) to request a change:

1. Student must contact the field coordinator who arranged the placement to discuss concerns about the placement
2. Student must submit a completed form, “Student Appeal to Assigned Field Placement Agency” to the field coordinator/field director.

3. The field coordinator will take action as necessary that may or may not include reassigning the student. The student may be asked to fulfill the commitment to the agency.

4. If the field coordinator agrees to re-assign the student, the student must speak to the field instructor on the phone, then write an email to confirm the conversation to the field instructor within seven working days, providing a thorough explanation for not accepting the placement. The student must copy the field coordinator on the email and turn in the signed interview tracking form declining the placement to the Field Education Office. The field office will follow-up with the field instructor.

5. Once the documentation from the student has been received in the Field Education Office, the field coordinator who initially placed the student will then re-assign the student to an agency that better meets the learning needs of that student.

6. If the field coordinator denies the student’s request, that faculty member will submit all documentation and rationale to the Director of Field Education.

7. The student may appeal any decision of the field coordinator, in writing, to the Director of Field Education.

8. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Director of Field Education, he/she may take the request to the Associate Dean.

Note: A student must first decline a placement before the field education faculty will work on a new placement. There is no guarantee that an appropriate new placement will be available. This process may delay practicum start date, require students to make up lost hours, and impact the program of study sequence.

III. UNIQUE PLACEMENT REQUESTS

There can be many demands on students; the Field Education Office will attempt to work with those students who have special circumstances, as long as the educational objectives of the curriculum are not compromised. These variations can be requested, but there is no guarantee that they will be approved.
Worksite Practicum

Students interested in a worksite practicum (concentration only) should submit an application (available on-line) to the Director of Field Education describing the agency and program where they work, their current position and duties, work schedule, and name and title of supervisor. The request also should include a description of the proposed field work program, assignments, MSW field instructor, and placement schedule. The request should be signed by the student, current supervisor, and proposed field instructor. Submitting a request for a worksite practicum does not guarantee approval of the request. All requests are considered on an individual basis. Academic credit cannot be given for previous work experience.

Students may do only concentration practicum at their worksite. Students may have their placement located within their employing agency providing the following conditions are met:

1. The agency is an approved practicum site
2. The field site is administered in accordance with the pattern established for all students
3. The student and the School are assured that the student and the field instructor will have release time for academic/field work and field instruction respectively
4. Field instructor assignments and student supervision are educationally focused rather than centered on agency services
5. The activities and assignments for fieldwork are specifically related to the field course competencies/practice behaviors and are tasks that are typically assigned to an individual possessing an MSW
6. The practicum field instructor meets the criteria that are established for all other field instructors
7. The activities and assignments for the practicum are clearly delineated and separate from other work assignments in that:
   a) they consist of a different set of tasks
   b) they are located in a different work unit or division
   c) the field instructor and work supervisor are different persons
   d) they MUST be new learning activities
8. The responsible agency administrator signs the worksite application signifying acceptance of the conditions above. In addition, a general plan shall be presented identifying the nature and quantity of the student’s intended assignments, as well as a proposed schedule showing time allotted for practicum and work.

9. Each proposal that meets the above criteria will be reviewed by the field director. Worksite placements will be approved if the criteria noted above are clearly going to be met. Approval of a worksite placement does not affect the total number of practicum credit hours a student must earn.

**New Job as Practicum**

**Note:** All conditions of Worksite Practicum apply to New Job as Practicum.

In rare and unusual circumstances, a student may request that a new job in a new agency be approved as a field placement. The following criteria must be met:

1. The agency must be an approved (or eligible for approval) practicum site
2. The start date for the new job must **begin no earlier than two months** prior to the start of the semester in which the student is to begin practicum
3. If the student has confirmed and is obligated to another agency for practicum prior to receiving the new job, the student must follow the process outlined in “Agency Reassignment” above.

The procedure to request a new job as a practicum is as follows:

1. The student must submit an application for “New Job as Practicum” (available on-line) to the Field Education Office **no later than 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the semester** in which the practicum will begin
2. The student must provide documentation from the agency verifying the employment start date
3. The student must complete a **tentative** learning contract that will be attached to the application to ensure that the competencies/practice behaviors of the practicum can be met in this new job
4. The student must provide proof of insurance coverage for the new position as a student, prior to the beginning of the practicum
International Field Placements

The Field Education Office of the School of Social Work offers the option of two international field placement opportunities as a clinical or CEPD concentration placement. For selected part-time or full-time students, the international field placement occurs during the summer prior to the final academic year of the student’s program of study. This opportunity is currently available to part-time or full-time students for their concentration field placement. This changes students’ Program of Study as SOWK 7055 is taken during the extended summer session and fall semester rather than fall and spring semesters. An international field placement may also be taken as a three-credit elective course (SOWK 7908). The approved global field placements meet the following conditions:

- CSWE accreditation standards
- Field curriculum standards
- Professional level credentialed supervision

Students must apply for international field placements through the Office of Field Education and must be approved by the director of field education. When approved, the student will complete 40 clock hours of orientation and placement preparation in May and 320 clock hours during eight weeks (during June and July) in Peru or Ghana. During fall semester, the student will be placed in a local agency that provides services to a refugee population or similar services to a local population. For example, if a student were placed in Ghana providing services to adults diagnosed as HIV+ there, then could be placed at a Georgia agency providing services to HIV+ clients for the second semester of the concentration placement.

The international field placements are only currently approved for the locations listed below. Due to the length of time necessary for the field office to develop new placements, students are not able to propose a new placement site. International field placement sites are subject to change.

**Lima, Peru** through Cross Cultural Solutions and **Tema, Ghana** through Palm Institute are currently available.

Opportunities are available in each setting to work with several different populations for either MSW concentration.

**Requirements:**
- Completed concentration field application after obtaining approval from the student’s academic advisor to change the student’s Program of Study
- Completed international field placement application turned in to the field office by November 30
• Completed Statement of Purpose with the international field placement application
  o What led you to be interested in an international field placement
  o How does an international field placement prepare your for your career goals
  o What prior experience have you had which may prepare you for an international field placement
• Indication of the student’s concentration
• Availability to start the extended summer session in mid-May
• Interview with the director of field education
• Approval by the director of field education

**Off-Schedule Practicum**

In special circumstances, for a variety of reasons, a student may request to alter his/her program of study. This change in program of study must be due to extenuating circumstances and discussed and supported by the academic advisor. In these cases, it may be requested that the practicum be taken out of sequence. The request for a change in program of study is evaluated by the MSW program director who consults with field director as to the feasibility of taking practicum-out-of-sequence; the associate dean makes the decision to approve or disapprove the plan. Some considerations for each level of practicum are listed below.

**Foundation:**

1. Students must attend an integrative field seminar, which means that foundation practicum cannot be taken during the summer unless a course for multiple students has been scheduled and approved by the field director, MSW program director, and associate dean.

2. Students in the part-time program may take practicum in the spring instead of the fall and will be required to attend an integrative seminar with the full-time cohort. There is usually at least one Gwinnett-based seminar.

3. Students in the full-time program can request to take practicum in the fall of their second year; but must participate in the integrative seminar held at the Gwinnett campus.

**Concentration:**

1. Concentration practicum is for two consecutive semesters in the SAME agency

2. All foundation courses must be completed prior to entering concentration practicum
3. Students must take certain concentration courses either prior to or concurrently with concentration practicum

4. Off-track students can request to take practicum in the spring and summer semesters or the summer and fall semesters; this must be approved by the field director.

5. There must be a faculty liaison available to support a practicum that includes a summer session.

6. As the summer session is shorter than a regular semester, students will need to complete the practicum during the extended summer session and will need to work more than 24 hours a week to complete the practicum hour requirements.

7. Certain placements, such as school settings are not feasible. Additionally, as agencies are usually at their capacity for interns during spring semester, students must understand that choices for practicum may be significantly fewer for spring/summer concentration placements.

There is no guarantee that a field placement will be available for students who are off-schedule.

III. TERMINATION PROCEDURES

A student's practicum may be terminated by the student, field instructor, an agency administrator, faculty liaison, or Director of Field Education for any of the following reasons:

1. **Level of student preparation for the practicum:** For the foundation practicum, it is assumed that the student has acquired the competencies expected for participation in the work-world (e.g., arriving on time, managing one's schedule and communicating it to others as appropriate, presenting and conducting one's self in a professional manner—including dress and other aspects of self-presentation as well as engaging in appropriate interpersonal interactions). In addition, for the concentration practicum, it is expected that the student has acquired the necessary knowledge for "entry level" professional practice (reflected in foundation competencies/practice behaviors and foundation curriculum of MSW programs) prior to the beginning of the concentration practicum. For either practicum, evidence to the contrary of the above expectations—given appropriate efforts by the field instructor and liaison to assist the student in remedy of these deficits—will constitute grounds for the agency's withdrawal of the practicum for that student and for the initiation of an Academic Review of the student's standing in the MSW program.
2. **Failure to comply with the Code of Ethics**: Students must meet the expected standards for ethical professional practice as noted in the section, “Professional Ethics” (page 21) and comply with the NASW Code of Ethics (Appendix D). Students terminated from their practicum due to failure to comply with the Code of Ethics will be referred for an Academic and Professional Review.

3. **Agency breach of MOU**: The agency is expected to provide the expected learning experiences and/or appropriate supervision to meet any of the other expectations identified in the Memorandum of Understanding between the agency and the University. (See Appendix F).

4. **Unexpected events**: There may be times in the life of the student or in the agency where continuing in that practicum setting might jeopardize the quality of the student's learning experience (e.g. personal trauma, agency re-organization, etc.).

5. **"Mismatch"**: Sometimes, differences in learning or interpersonal styles between the field instructor and/or agency and the student emerge as the student and field instructor begin to work together, rendering the practicum less than optimally productive for a student's learning. Such circumstances are rare but they may generate recommendations for a change in the practicum arrangements.

Any number of the circumstances cited above are not necessarily anyone's fault. In some instances, termination of the practicum reflects the fact that the practicum is highly successful in helping the student discover that social work is not what she/he expected and is not appropriate for her/him. Sometimes, it is possible for a change to be made in the student's assignment, either to another unit of the agency or to another agency altogether. This action may necessitate extension of the student's program of study. Any change/termination of a practicum requires the student and field instructor to complete a brief form, “Change/Termination of Field Placement” to be submitted to the Director of Field Education.

Whatever the reasons prompting consideration of practicum termination, the student, field instructor, faculty liaison, and academic advisor, and director of field education will work as a team to resolve problems and to come up with appropriate solutions. The procedures that follow describe the process to terminate practicum, if the situation cannot be resolved.

**Field Instructor Initiated Termination**

If the field instructor identifies issues that may place the practicum in jeopardy, it is incumbent upon the field instructor to discuss *(as soon as possible)* any such problems
with the student and the faculty liaison. If issues cannot be resolved, the field instructor can request termination of the placement. It is important that the field instructor clearly identify those areas that still need further development in order for the student to be successful in another practicum site. Once all avenues have been explored with the student and faculty liaison and the only option left is to terminate the current practicum, the FACULTY LIAISON will:

1. Inform the Director of Field Education or appropriate field coordinator that the placement needs to be terminated

2. Instruct the student to review the field manual and follow procedures as it relates to termination of practicum, and advise the student to meet with his/her academic advisor and Director of Field Education

3. Ask the field instructor to complete a “Statement of Practicum Termination” form and “Change/Termination of Field Placement” to be submitted to the Director of Field Education (available in the Field Education Office). If the field instructor is not willing/able to complete this form, the liaison should complete it with as much detail as possible

4. Ensure the student has the opportunity to add to and sign the form indicating that the student understands the terms of termination and factors on which to work for future professional growth and development

5. Add a summary of the termination decision (including the event(s) prompting the termination and the reasons for it). Additionally, the liaison will either recommend to the field director that the student be placed in another setting or request an academic review

6. Sign the form and submit it to the Field Education Office for placement in the student file. The student should maintain a copy of this document for his/her records.

7. The Field Education Office will provide the academic advisor and faculty liaison a copy of the termination form.

**Student Initiated Termination**

Some students, for various reasons, wish to leave their placement agency. Some students are seeking a placement change and will continue their fieldwork in another agency. Other students may be withdrawing from field and/or the MSW program. Changing field practicum sites can only be requested due to compelling circumstances. This procedure requires the student to undergo another orientation to the new agency and start-up delays are inevitable. Before any decision regarding a change is made, the student should:
1. Discuss any concerns with the field instructor

2. Arrange to meet with the faculty liaison to discuss the nature of the educational concerns and the steps already taken to address them with the field instructor

3. Decide with the field instructor and the faculty liaison if the current placement can be adjusted in some ways for the student

4. Work with the field instructor and faculty liaison to determine if a transfer is recommended, to develop termination procedures and a time frame within which the transfer is appropriate and feasible; alternative placement within the agency will be considered before those external to the agency

5. Submit to the director of field education a **Petition to Terminate a Field Placement** signed by the academic advisor, faculty liaison, and the field instructor. This form can be picked up in the Field Education Office and must include a written explanation from the student’s liaison noting the educational rationale for the proposed change, the steps taken to modify the student’s assignments in the original placement, and a termination plan.

**Practicum Termination Consequences**

Termination from practicum can have serious consequences to include, but not limited to:

1. The completion of **50 additional hours** beyond the minimum requirements, which may result in delay of graduation. If less than 50 hours have been completed, then the student will lose those hours and begin again in earning the 360 required hours. This is **mandatory** with a change of placement so that the student can be oriented to a new agency and have time to shadow the field instructor to learn the assigned tasks for the new placement. A new Learning Plan must also be developed with the new field instructor.

2. Failing grade which will result in repeating the course

3. An Academic Review to discuss various options for the student. The faculty liaison, field faculty member, or field director can request an Academic Review if the practicum termination raises question(s) as to whether the student should continue in the MSW program or whether the student's Program of Study should be significantly altered.
4. A grade of “Incomplete” if the student’s fieldwork was considered to be “passing” at the time that the placement was disrupted.

5. Assignment to a new agency that the field faculty feels is the best match for the student; this may be an available agency rather than the student’s choice of agencies.

The consequences depend upon the circumstances of the termination. The student will work with a field coordinator or the field director to develop options. The faculty liaison will provide recommendations with feedback from the field instructor.
CHAPTER 4

FOUNDATION FIELD EDUCATION

The foundation field experience is an integral part of the MSW curriculum, providing an opportunity for students to develop basic practice skills while also linking theory to practice. The foundation field experience draws upon courses taken in the foundation year, either prior to or concurrently with practicum. A short description of these courses can be found in the MSW Student Handbook. It is also recommended that field instructors ask students to share their course syllabi in order to maximize the field learning experience. The syllabus and competencies and practice behaviors for SOWK 6055 (Foundation Field) can be found on the School’s Field Education website.

STRUCTURE

The foundation practicum is structured as follows:

1. The practicum is 16 hours per week during one semester, usually the spring semester for full-time students and fall semester for part-time students, for a total of 240 clock hours. Lunch breaks and drive time to and from the placement are not counted in the placement hours.

2. The major focus for foundation field is to develop generalist social work practice skills through direct practice with clients and organizations. As a foundation field intern, the student applies generalist social work skills, utilizes critical thinking, begins to integrate practice and theory, and develops a conscious use of professional self, which is consistent with social work values and ethics.

3. Students also participate in a weekly integrative practice field seminar (SOWK 6055) that is facilitated by a faculty member. The field seminar hours are not included in the 240 hours at the agency setting. The seminar provides opportunities for critical thinking, case presentations, agency analysis, process recordings, sharing of agency information, and possible interventions when working with similar clients or situations, and evaluation of student performance in the field agency.

4. Students must provide proof of liability insurance in order to register for and remain in placement.

5. Students must be academically eligible to enter foundation practicum as described on page 15.
FACULTY LIAISON ROLE

The faculty field liaison functions as an important nexus among the students, the school, the agency, the field instructor, and the Field Education Office. All faculty field liaisons are invited to attend field instructor training events and encouraged to communicate promptly to the Field Education Office their evaluations and concerns about any agency or field instructor. Faculty field liaisons provide both an administrative function and an instructional function for the Foundation Field Program. General roles and tasks are to:

1. Implement the syllabus and to ensure learning competencies and practice behaviors are demonstrated
2. Monitor working relationships with the field instructor and agency
3. Facilitate and problem solve, when indicated, the supervisory relationship between the student and the field instructor
4. Consult with the field education faculty
5. Provide clear guidance and assistance to new field instructors to ensure understanding of curricula
6. Monitor worksite placements (concentration placements only) to assure that competencies and practice behaviors are being demonstrated and CSWE standards are met.

Specific Administrative Tasks

Specific administrative tasks for the foundation field faculty liaison are as follows:

1. Maintain student file for learning plans and evaluations (forms are found at http://ssw.uga.edu/academics/field/msw_field_resources.html)
2. Establish contact with field instructor during first week of the semester
3. Review and make approvals to the learning plan no later than week #3
4. Conduct an on-site visit for the mid-term evaluation between weeks 6-9. Suggested questions for mid-term visit can be found on page 47.
5. Conduct telephone conference (or on site visit) with student and field instructor for the final evaluation
6. Provide feedback to field faculty about any concerns to assist with appropriate future placements.
Specific Instructional Tasks:

Instructional tasks for foundation faculty field liaisons are:

1. Implement and teach according to the master syllabus for SOWK 6055
2. Maintain instructional focus on integrating theory and practice and in developing generalist social work skills and competencies
3. Seek field instructor’s input in student evaluation, and assign the course grade.

FIELD INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR

Throughout the semester of placement, students meet weekly in a seminar to integrate their field experiences and to complete course assignments. The instructor for the course is the faculty field liaison. The field director assigns students to a section of SOWK 6055; students do not select an instructor for SOWK 6055 as they do with other courses. It is most common for students to have to register for this particular course during the drop/add period at the beginning of the semester. A sample syllabus for the SOWK 6055 field integrative seminar is included in Forms and Resources on the Field Education website.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to student responsibilities stated elsewhere in this manual, foundation field students are required to complete 16 hours per week for the 15 week semester, (total of 240 hours) as an intern at the assigned field agency. Students are expected to make any necessary adjustments to their personal and work schedules in order to fulfill this requirement. Students are to keep a time sheet (online), which is signed and verified by the field instructor. Please refer to policies on attendance and liability insurance in Chapter 3. Additionally, students are expected to participate fully and professionally in the field integrative seminar.

TIMELINE AND THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

Students are placed at approved practicum sites within the Athens, northeast Georgia, and Atlanta areas. Field education faculty matches the student with the agency, with the goal of promoting the student’s opportunity to demonstrate the competencies and practice behaviors for foundation field education. The placement process is as follows:

1. Students attend an orientation to field education that is held during the semester prior to the semester the student will enter foundation field placement. During the orientation process, the students are given a
timeline with specific due dates and deadlines for submission of all necessary paperwork.

2. Students complete a field application online and are provided with an Interview Tracking Form that identifies their field placement by the date noted on the placement timeline (November for full-time students; April for part-time students).

3. Students contact the field instructor to set up an interview at the assigned agency.

4. Students must confirm their placements by submitting the signed Interview Tracking Form to the Field Education Office as soon after the interview as possible.

5. Evidence of proof of professional liability insurance coverage must be submitted to the Field Education Office prior to beginning practicum, otherwise the student’s start date will be delayed.

6. The field director assigns students to seminars and reviews the confirmation of placements on the Interview Tracking Form.

7. Full-time students report to the field agency during the first week of spring semester and part-time students during the first week of the fall semester.
CHAPTER 5

CONCENTRATION FIELD EDUCATION

Concentration field placement is an advanced educational experience in an agency or community setting. This practicum builds on the foundation year and continues to provide opportunities to integrate theory and practice while practicing at an advanced, more in-depth level. Students take advanced academic courses either prior to or concurrently with concentration practicum. Brief course descriptions can be found in the MSW Student Handbook. This practicum provides opportunities to demonstrate the competencies and practice behaviors for SOWK 7055 that are provided in the syllabus (online).

STRUCTURE

The concentration practicum is structured as follows:

1. The practicum setting must support the concentration (either Clinical Practice or Community Empowerment and Program Development) the student has selected.

2. The practicum is 24 hours a week for fifteen weeks for two (2) consecutive semesters in the same agency (usually fall and spring) for a total of 720 clock hours. Hours cannot be banked during the fall semester and carried over into spring semester. Any learning experiences that are agreed upon by the student and field instructor outside the agency (e.g., conferences, workshops, library work, processing of practice experience, preparations for supervision, etc.) can be included in these hours. In short, the clock hours are allocated for demonstrating the competencies and practice behaviors in the most efficient way possible. Clock hours do not include travel time to and from the agency or lunch break.

3. In addition to the information presented on pages 19-20, students may only take a maximum two-week break between the fall and spring semesters, unless otherwise negotiated with the field instructor. Although the minimum requirement for practicum hours can be completed in each fifteen-week semester, students must fulfill their professional obligations to clients. If the field instructor feels that the student needs to work specific additional hours during the winter break in order to provide continuity of care, this request must be honored by the student. These schedule commitments must be negotiated between the field instructor and the student, preferably during the interview. Students may not shorten their practicum as a result of any additional hours. They are obligated to remain at the agency until the last official day of classes. It is very common for most students to exceed the required number or practicum hours.
4. The concentration practicum is in a different agency than the foundation practicum unless there are other compelling reasons for this.

5. There is no concurrent seminar with concentration practicum.

6. Students must maintain current liability insurance in order to register and remain in placement. Should insurance lapse, students will be immediately removed from practicum and will be required to make up any lost hours.

7. Students must be academically eligible to enter concentration practicum.
   a) **Incomplete**: Students will not be allowed to carry a grade of Incomplete or “I” for social work courses into their concentration practicum. Thus, all “I’s” must be completed by the beginning of the semester in which the student is scheduled to enter practicum. Failure to complete full responsibilities for course work will delay a student’s entry into concentration practicum.
   
   b) **Academic Probation**: Additionally, students may not enter concentration practicum when they are on Academic Probation (an overall GPA of less than 3.00).
   
   c) **Other restrictions**: Refer to pages 15-16 for further information on grades that are required in certain courses to be eligible for practicum.

8. Concentration teams that consist of faculty from each concentration are actively involved in the placement process at a “matching meeting” during which they suggest appropriate placements for “goodness of fit.”

**FACULTY LIAISON ROLE**

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in Chapter 1, the following is specific to concentration practicum faculty liaisons:

1. The liaison should contact the field instructor within the first two weeks of the semester to ensure that the practicum is progressing appropriately.

2. Liaisons should provide students with a syllabus including assignments, due dates, expectations, etc. early in the practicum. Assignments are provided in the master syllabus (online), and detailed descriptions of these assignments are found in Appendix A.

3. The liaison will visit the agency at least three times during the two-semester internship; once early in the placement (approximately four weeks into the semester) to review the learning contract and provide
feedback; and once at the end of each semester prior to the end of each grading period. Goals for scheduled visits are:

a) Review roles of field instructors, faculty liaison, and student

b) Review and approve the Learning Plan

c) Evaluate the student’s learning outcomes related to the practicum competencies and practice behaviors.

STUDENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The student is responsible for his/her learning and is therefore expected to actively participate in the field placement process. The student’s responsibilities include:

Prior to Placement:

1. Attend mandatory field orientation session, scheduled during the last semester of the foundation year

2. ACQUIRE LIABILITY INSURANCE

3. Meet with academic advisor to discuss personal needs, goals, and interests. It is important for students to articulate their learning needs clearly as this assists faculty in the matching process.

4. Research practicum information, for example, through discussions with faculty liaisons who are assigned to specific practicum sites, contact with former or current students placed in agencies of interest, and review of information available on the field office website, including links to agencies’ websites

5. Complete application form as instructed by the Field Education Office

   a. Convey to Field Education Office any constraints or special circumstances regarding placement on the confidential form

   b. Complete background checks where applicable

8. Once assigned to a specific agency, arrange and participate professionally in an interview with the field instructor to assure a goodness of fit between the student and the agency

9. Confirm placement with Field Education Office by turning in the tracking form or identify concerns immediately
10. Contact field instructor two to four weeks prior to the beginning of the semester to confirm a starting day. Please note that some settings may require background checks and/or may have a mandatory “new employee” orientation that may need to be completed prior to the semester if there is a conflict between orientation days and class schedule.

**During Placement:**

1. Contact the assigned faculty liaison early in the semester for syllabus, assignments, and any additional instructions

2. Develop a Learning Plan (online) within the first three to four weeks of each semester, with assistance from the field instructor

3. Arrange for weekly supervision time with your field instructor and be prepared for supervision. Discuss methods for preparation for supervision, i.e., written agenda with questions, learning needs, etc.

4. Complete evaluations (online) in a timely manner. Students are also asked to evaluate the agency, field instructor, faculty liaison, and themselves. This feedback is of utmost importance in order to continually improve the field education program. These evaluations will not be reviewed prior to graduation, and the identification of the student will be kept in confidence.

5. Keep Field Education Office informed of any changes in field instructor’s name, phone number, address, and/or email address

**TIME-LINE AND PROCEDURES FOR PLACEMENT OF CONCENTRATION STUDENTS**

1. Students are assigned by the field faculty with input from the faculty concentration teams.

2. Each November agencies are canvassed by the Field Education Office concerning their capability and interest to support students. Each agency has a designated contact person (who may or may not be a field instructor) who works with the agency staff to forecast the number of students that can be accommodated by the agency for the upcoming academic year.

3. The agency contact person submits to the Field Education Office specific slot information (such as the number and type of student placement positions available within the agency). From this information, the Field
Education Office compiles a Placement Slot List that contains all placement opportunities for the academic year.

4. Students attend a field orientation meeting where they will be provided with the placement process time-line with deadlines, information on how to complete the application, and a listing of where current concentration students are placed.

5. Information about the student’s concentration choice, area of interest, and location are the major factors that influence placement decisions. It is recommended that students contact their academic advisors early in this process to discuss their key interests and their questions about the profession. They then identify the types of settings in which the student’s educational goals and interests could be accommodated.

6. Before completing the application form, students may obtain more information on agencies by:
   a) meeting with a field faculty coordinator
   b) researching particular agencies on-line
   c) talking to students who are or have been placed at particular agencies

**PLEASE NOTE:**

In researching possible placements, STUDENTS MAY NOT CONTACT AGENCIES DIRECTLY.

All placements must be arranged by the Field Education Office. Students must not initiate contact with any agency to seek a placement within that agency without prior approval of the Director of Field Education. Any placements initiated without the knowledge of the Director of Field Education will not be approved.

If student is interested in a site not currently approved, it should be discussed with the Director of Field Education for further exploration as soon as possible following orientation.

Additionally, students may not interview at more than one agency at a time.

The field education faculty cannot guarantee that students will be placed in one of their preferred slots or agencies, but student requests will be used to help determine appropriate sites.
7. The student completes the online application and attaches a copy of his/her résumé, and submits the confidential page and to the administrative assistant in the Field Education Office. Resumes should be of professional quality, e.g., well formatted, free of errors. No agency assignment will be made until the entire, signed, dated application with all attachments are received. Deadlines for submission of these forms will be provided during orientation and those applications received after the due date will have lower priority than those received on time.

8. Applications are initially reviewed by the Director of Field Education and the field coordinators. Final field assignments are made with input from the appropriate concentration team.

9. Student applications (minus the confidential pages) with resumes are sent to the field instructors. A tracking form (figure 5-1) is provided to each student; this includes the agency name, contact person, and contact information for the assigned agency.

10. Students will contact the field instructor within one week to schedule the interview. Student should review below sections for more information on the interview process.

11. After the interview, the student returns the signed interview tracking form indicating whether or not there is a match. Both the student and the field instructor sign this form. Additionally, the student signs a contract to confirm that the student has read the field policies and is committing to the placement.

12. If the placement is confirmed, a confirmation letter indicating the liaison assignment will be forwarded to both field instructor and student. If it is not a match, the Field Education Office will work with the student until a placement site is confirmed.

**PREPARING FOR THE AGENCY INTERVIEW**

Placements require a preliminary interview. Once the student receives his/her assignment, he/she should *immediately* contact the agency to arrange an interview. The interview is arranged by calling or emailing the agency contact person, whose name appears on the tracking form. Multiple attempts at contact may be necessary due to the busy work schedule of the agency staff. The student should also leave his/her name, a return number, and the best time to be reached by the contact person. When leaving phone messages, students should also mention that they are University of Georgia graduate social work students and are calling to set up an interview for field placement.
Once the agency contact person is reached, a date and time for the interview are set. Placement interviews should be handled like job interviews, which require appropriate professional attire, behavior, and some background knowledge about the agency. Before the interview, the student might find it helpful to talk to the field faculty for description of the agency, the kinds of experiences students have had there in the past, what might be reasonable expectations from the agency, and so forth. Students can also check with students who are currently placed at the agency.

Students should review the Field Manual prior to their interviews. Students should pay particular attention to the next section titled, “The Interview.”

The Interview Tracking Sheet (figure 5-1) should be taken to and completed at the interview, and returned to the Field Education Office. However, sometimes either the student or field instructor may need additional time to valuate the “match” prior to deciding on whether or not to confirm the placement. In such cases, the student must be tactfully proactive in following up with the field instructor.

THE INTERVIEW

During the interview, the student learns about the requirements of the particular placement and the educational opportunities available at the agency. The interview is a two-way process. Students should have clear goals and learning priorities and be prepared to ask specific questions about learning experiences available, clients served, skills that can be developed, type of setting (structured or unstructured), and methods of supervision, etc. Suggested questions are provided on page 47.

Students should be prepared to answer questions about their background, educational and career goals, and why they might desire that particular placement. At the interview, agency personnel assess the student’s level of interest and suitability for the general type of assignments they have in mind. Typically, it is at this point that placement decisions are finalized. However, if there are well-founded reservations about the suitability of the match between the agency and the student, the Field Education Office should be informed at once by the student and/or the field instructor.

Students should discuss and make arrangements with the agency regarding their schedules. Students may also inquire whether stipends are available at the agency. Students should ensure they comply with agency requirements such as background checks, drug screens etc. prior to the start of the practicum. Many agencies hold orientations at the beginning of the week, which are typically class days for full-time students. Students must make sure that they make arrangements to attend any required orientations prior to the start of the semester.

If there is a problem at the agency that is identified before fieldwork begins, the student or agency should contact the Field Education Office immediately. See the section titled “Agency Reassignment Process” on page 23 (before the field work begins).
**Figure 5-1 Sample Interview Tracking Form**

**MSW Foundation Field Practicum – Interview Tracking Form**

University of Georgia  
School of Social Work  
Field Education Office, Room 111  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-542-5423 Fax: 706-354-3921  

**Instructions:** Please contact your potential field instructor as soon as possible to arrange an interview at the organization indicated below. Identify yourself as a MSW Foundation student who will be in practicum for Spring semester for sixteen hours per week.

If you have any questions or concerns about this placement please contact your field coordinator:

This tracking form is an important part of your interview process. Take it with you to the interview and be sure to have it signed by the field instructor.

Your field placement is not considered to be confirmed until this signed form is received by Mrs. Roberts; turn in the hard copy to her office (room 111), mail to Mrs. Roberts’ attention to the address above, or fax it to the number at the top of the form. DO NOT SCAN AND EMAIL THIS FORM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Instructor:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interview Results**

____ Yes, the student and agency are in agreement, the placement is confirmed, and letter of verification should be sent.

____ No, either the student or the agency is not in agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Instructor’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5-2 Concentration Practicum Confirmation

SAMPLE CONCENTRATION PRACTICUM CONFIRMATION

Please read the below information, sign and return the BLUE copy to Cindy Roberts, Room 111, School of Social Work building as soon as your interview has taken place and the tracking form is signed by you and your field instructor. It may be mailed to Cindy Roberts, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Athens, GA 30602 or faxed to (706) 354-3921.


I understand that it is my responsibility to:

1. Ensure that I am scheduled to complete any mandatory agency orientation and/or background checks prior to the beginning of the semester. Confirm my starting date, schedule, location, and point of contact at the agency prior to the beginning of the semester.

2. Ensure that I have liability insurance prior to the start of the practicum. I understand it is my responsibility to have liability insurance coverage throughout my practicum and that a copy is on file in the Field Education Office. I understand that I will be removed from placement until this requirement is met.

3. Read and follow the policies and guidelines outlined in the field manual with special attention to policy regarding winter break and consequences of terminating practicum.

4. Contact my faculty liaison at the beginning of the semester to ascertain requirements for this course to include due dates for learning plan and assignments.

5. Contact my faculty liaison immediately should I have concerns/questions regarding my practicum experience.

I certify that I have read the Field Manual, understand the above comments and agree to follow the policies and procedures regarding concentration practicum.

____________________________________  __________________________________
Student Signature                                      Date
Suggested Interview Questions

1. What kind of activities and programs does this agency undertake?
2. What activities, tasks, and/or projects will I be able to undertake?
3. What specific skills will I be able to develop at this agency?
4. Does this agency have a particular theoretical approach to intervention?
5. What are general characteristics of clients and communities served by this agency?
6. What is the approach to and structure of supervision?
7. What amount of interaction does a student have with other students and with permanent staff?
8. What opportunities exist for interprofessional collaboration or cooperation?
9. What types of in-service training or workshops and conferences will be available to me?
10. What kinds of cases and/or projects do you anticipate assigning to me?
11. What kinds of skills to you hope a student will bring to the agency?
12. How much independence and initiative do you expect me to demonstrate?
13. How are students helped to handle issues of diversity regarding age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability on both staff and client levels?
APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS
I. Agency Information
   - Name of Agency
   - Address (including city and zip code)
   - Primary contact/field instructor name and degree level
   - Telephone number of primary contact/field instructor

II. Agency Analysis
   
   A. Agency Description
      - Describe the agency setting (non-profit, hospital, school, rural, urban, structured or unstructured, etc.)
      - What is the mission and/or purpose of the agency?
      - What types of clients does the agency serve?
      - What social problems are being addressed by the agency?
      - What services does the agency provide?
      - Do these services support the agency’s stated mission?
      - Describe the organizational structure and/or politics of the agency.
        (Include organizational chart if available)

   B. Agency Funding
      - How is the agency funded? Who provides funding?
      - Funding constraints?
      - Who oversees funding?

   C. Agency Resources and Barriers
      - What role does the agency play within the community?
      - How is the agency viewed by its clients and other community agencies?
      - With what other community agencies does the agency collaborate with, provide referrals to, and access additional resources from?
      - What presents barriers to the agency and its clients? How are these barriers addressed? If they are not being addressed, in what ways can these barriers be addressed?

   D. Agency Policy
      - Identify major federal, state and local policies that service delivery

   E. Ethics
      - Identify significant ethical issues in working with clients in the assigned agency
F. Cultural Competency Within the Agency
   - How does the agency address issues of diversity (e.g. staff, clients, location, services provided).
   - Please rate the agency using the Cultural Competence Scale on page 137.

G. Evidence-Based Practice
   - Provide an example of how evidence-based practice is demonstrated at your agency.

III. Role of the Social Worker
   - What is the role of the social worker in the agency? How does this role differ from other disciplines within the agency?
   - What are the specific activities performed by and expected of the social worker?
   - How is the social worker viewed by other disciplines within the agency?

IV. Role of the Social Work Intern
   - What is the role of the social work intern within the agency?
   - What are the specific activities performed by and expected of the social work intern?
   - How is the supervision of the social work student structured?
   - Describe the specific characteristics, skills, and qualities that a social work student would need in order to thrive in this agency setting.
   - Describe the type of social work student who would not be a “good fit” for this agency setting.
1. Role of the Social Worker in the Agency

After reviewing the job description of the social worker in your agency, describe the primary job responsibilities. What does the social worker actually do in a “typical day?” Next, conduct an interview with a professional in the agency who is not a social worker (e.g., nurse, principal/administrator, teacher, psychologist) to get his/her perspective of the role of the social worker in the agency. Does role confusion exist? How might this be resolved?

2. Power Hierarchy in the Agency

Review the agency’s organizational chart. Who has administrative responsibility for the social worker(s) in the agency? What are the implications of the position of the social worker in the organizational hierarchy?

3. Policy

Identify two public policies that guide service delivery in your agency. What underlying assumptions, values, and beliefs about people and their needs/problems are reflected in these policies? How do the policies impact service delivery?

4. Social Justice

How are clients made aware of their rights to service? Is there an appeal process in place to resolve disputes with clients?

5. Theory

What theoretical frameworks (e.g., systems theory, feminist theory, object relations, etc.) guide intervention in your agency?

6. Evidence-Based Practice

How is evidence-based practice used in your agency? Identify a specific model of treatment/intervention that is used and describe the major components of the model.

7. Cultural Competence

Using the attached scale, please rate the level of cultural competency in your agency. What action has the agency taken/fail to take that justify your response? Describe specify evidence of cultural competency (e.g., physical setting – decoration, literature available, physical access; diversity of staff in relation to diversity of clients served; board membership; training available to staff; availability of interpreters). Identify any gaps in cultural competency and describe the steps you would take to close the gaps.
8. Ethics

How do personnel in your agency deal with ethical questions and resolve ethical dilemmas (e.g., discussions at staff meetings, presentations at an ethics committee, consultation with experts)? Which ethical codes/standards of practice govern ethical behavior (e.g., NASW Code of Ethics, NABSW Code of Ethics, agency code of conduct, International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work – Statement of Principles.)
SOWK 7055 CEPD AGENCY STUDY

AGENCY/ COMMUNITY STUDY
I. Agency Information
   - Name of Agency
   - Address (including city and zip code)
   - Primary contact/field instructor name and degree level
   - Telephone number of primary contact/field instructor

II. Agency Analysis
   A. Agency Description
      - Describe the agency setting (non-profit, hospital, school, rural, urban, structured or unstructured, etc.)
      - What is the mission and/or purpose of the agency?
      - What types of clients does the agency serve?
      - What social problems are being addressed by the agency?
      - What services does the agency provide?
      - Do these services support the agency’s stated mission?
      - Describe the organizational structure and/or politics of the agency.(Include organizational chart if available)
      - What is the agency’s relationship with other community based agencies or services?
      - Describe the community models used by the agency.
   B. Agency Funding
      - How is the agency funded? Who provides funding?
      - Funding constraints?
      - Who oversees funding?
   C. Agency Resources and Barriers
      - What role does the agency play within the community?
      - How is the agency viewed by its clients and other community agencies?
      - With what other community agencies does the agency collaborate with, provide referrals to, and access additional resources from?
      - What presents barriers to the agency and its clients? How are these barriers addressed? If they are not being addressed, in what ways can these barriers be addressed?
   D. Agency Policy
      - Identify major federal, state and local policies that service delivery
   E. Ethics
      - Identify significant ethical issues in working with clients in the assigned agency
   F. Cultural Competency Within the Agency
      - How does the agency address issues of diversity (e.g. staff, clients, location, services provided).
      - Please rate the agency using the Cultural Competence Scale.
   G. Evidence-Based Practice
      - Provide an example of how evidence-based practice is demonstrated at your agency.

III. Role of the Social Worker
   - What is the role of the social worker in the agency? How does this role differ from
other disciplines within the agency?
- What are the specific activities performed by and expected of the social worker?
- How is the social worker viewed by other disciplines within the agency?

IV. Role of the Social Work Intern
- What is the role of the social work intern within the agency?
- What are the specific activities performed by and expected of the social work intern?
- How is the supervision of the social work student structured?
- Describe the specific characteristics, skills, and qualities that a social work student would need in order to thrive in this agency setting.
- Describe the type of social work student who would not be a “good fit” for this agency setting.
The NASW Code of Ethics, found in Appendix F, has been the “bible” on professional conduct and ethical behavior for social work practitioners. The code provides guidelines for social work practice. Over the years, the Code has been modified to better reflect contemporary practice.

There are two parts to this paper:

1. Review your agency policies and practices. Describe a practice or policy which is not supported by the Code of Ethics. Thoroughly explain your choice, substantiating it with examples from your field placement.

2. Propose a new policy or practice that is supported by the Code of Ethics and what would be your plan to have this new practice or policy implemented?
WHERE DOES YOUR AGENCY LIE ALONG *THE CULTURAL COMPETENCE CONTINUUM*?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Destructiveness</th>
<th>Cultural Incapacity</th>
<th>Cultural Blindness</th>
<th>Cultural Pre-competence</th>
<th>Cultural Competence</th>
<th>Advanced Cultural Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Cultural Destructiveness** – agency’s policies, programs, practices, and attitudes are destructive to cultures and, hence, to individuals of the culture; ignores cultural differences, but systematically denies people from different cultures access to their natural helpers, removes children from their families to be placed in “socially acceptable” homes, purposely risks the well being of minority individuals by putting them in harms way without their knowledge or consent; believes its actions are desirable/justifiable.

**Cultural Incapacity** – agency’s policies, programs, and practices are destructive but these negative effects are unintended and unrecognized; does not intend to be culturally destructive but rather lacks the capacity to help culturally different clients or culturally diverse communities; believes in the supremacy of dominant culture helpers.

**Cultural Blindness** – agency does not recognize important differences; functions with the belief that color or culture make no difference and that all people are the same, therefore, all clients can and should be treated the same; there is the belief that helping methods traditionally used by the dominant culture are universally applicable.

**Cultural Pre-competence** – agency recognizes its inability to properly serve those who are culturally diverse and is working to improve service; a false sense of accomplishment (or failure) based on the achievement of one goal or activity seen as fulfilling an obligation to the minority communities. Examples include hiring minority staff, seeking cultural knowledge, recruiting minority members to serve on boards of directors or advisory committees.

**Cultural Competence** – reflected in agencies that are characterized by acceptance and respect for difference, continuing self-assessment regarding culture, careful attention to the dynamics of difference, continuing expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, and a variety of adaptations of service models in order to better meet the needs of culturally diverse populations.

**Advanced Cultural Competence** – in addition to the items in “cultural competence,” the agency strives to develop new knowledge in culturally competent practice/policies and is an advocate for changes within the wider human services arena and throughout society.

The process recording is an evaluative tool used to assess a student’s communication skills and increase self-awareness in the professional use of self. It is a verbatim account of an interview with a client system. Most students are unable to tape record their interview, therefore, a “verbatim” account should be to the best of the student’s memory.

While transcribing the interview from a tape or notes, or writing from memory, the student should not attempt to alter the interview. The exercise of a writing process recording allows the student to reflect on the interview and observe communication exchanges and worker responses that could have been handled differently. This is part of the learning process. Remember it is used as a tool for receiving feedback from one’s field instructor or faculty liaison as well as for student self-evaluation. There is no “grade” given on a process recording.

There are various formats for writing process recordings. Your field instructor may request a different format from what is presented here. It is fine to use a different process recording format for your instructor. Check with your faculty liaison as to your use of format for the process recordings due at seminar. The following format, with distinct columns, should be used for writing the process recordings.
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## PROCESS RECORDING

**Student:** __________________________________________  **Client’s First Name:** __________________________________________  **Date:** ________

**Liaison:** __________________________________________  **Agency:** ________________________________________________

**Presenting Issue(s):**

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

**Purpose of Interview:** __________________________________________

**Plan for Next Interview:** __________________________________________

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<th>Gut Reaction</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Field Instructor’s Comments</th>
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Liaison: ___________________________  Agency: ___________________________

Date: ________________________________
Potential processing sources include, but are not limited to, critical analysis of the following:

**Administrative practice**
- Leadership/management of staff meetings, multi-disciplinary team meetings, community meetings, board meetings, etc.
- Program planning, development, implementation, management, and evaluation
- Grant research, development/writing, management, and evaluation
- Budgets and funding sources

**Organizational practice**
- Organizational behavior, structure, function, practice paradigm, ethics, etc.
- Accreditation process, purpose, benefits, and challenges

**Policy practice**
- Organizational, local, state, national, and international of policy and its impact on people
- Legislative process

**Community practice**
- Community meetings, power analysis, engagement, awareness, needs assessments, organizing, etc.

**Advocacy**
- Client, organizational, community, and political

**Issues**

I. Context of Activity (or meeting, policy, situation, social issue, etc) - Set the scene for a full understanding of what is involved with the activity/situation.

a. Brief description of activity/situation
   - Identify activity or situation and give full context of background information

b. Participants
   - Who is part of this activity/situation? What role do they have? Are you a participant? What role do you have?

c. Content
   - What happened?
   - Who are the stakeholders?
   - Who made decisions? What decisions were made? How were the decisions made?
   - Were there any plans made for a next step? If so, what were they?

d. Observations
   - What are your initial thoughts or observations about the activity/situation?
   - How do others participate in the process? Are others able to participate?
   - What is the setting like for the activity/situation (physical, political, emotional)?
   - What do you notice about the decision-makers, stakeholders, participants, etc.?
II. Assessment

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the activity/situation: leaders, policymakers, grant proposal/process, program evaluation, meeting, organizational structure, advocacy effort, etc.?
- What are the implications of the activity/situation?
- How does this impact social and economic justice?
- What is the cost/benefit analysis of the outcome? What are the unintended consequences of the outcome?
- What cultural considerations need to be addressed?
- Who has power in the situation? What power do they have? Where does the power come from?
- What is the political context of the activity/situation and its outcome?
- What barriers and challenges impede resolution to the issue?
- What is your evaluation of previous attempts to resolve the issue?
- What are the ethical considerations in this situation?

III. Next Steps

- What is the next step for this activity/situation? Or, what should be the next step?
- What is your role in that?
- What are the implications for further action? What are the implications for further inaction?

IV. Analysis of Social Work Practice

- How did you impact the outcome?
- What were your feelings during the activity or about the situation?
- What biases or preconceived notions influenced your practice? Are your perceptions different now?
- What indirect and direct social work practice skills did you use?
- How would you do things differently if you could do it again?
- Connection to academic material (organizational paradigms; theories: organizational, systems, conflict, HBSE etc.; social justice; ethics; management and leadership styles, policy process analysis, etc.)
- Connection of actions to the Core Competencies
SUPERVISORY METHOD: JOURNALING

FORMAT: Journaling

MATERIALS: Written log kept by student; optional for structured/semi-structured journal; specific questions for student to reflect upon (see attached questions).

FOCUS: Interactive written communication with self and instructor about practice experiences, which validates student’s personal contribution to learning achievements. Written reflections can include relation to new concepts to current knowledge; exploration of personal experiences and feelings; impediments, personal or systematic, to work with clients; and thoughts regarding ethical practice issues. Emphasis is on exploratory, reflective cognition.

FEATURES:
• Journals may be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. Entries may be evaluated for course grades.
• Instructor must be clear about focus of entries and about how journal will be used, i.e. whether it will be evaluated, graded, shared with others, etc.
• Frequency of entries may be flexible, but minimum of three per week is recommended
• Timely, regular, and thoughtful written feedback in the journal from the field instructor is essential to student’s learning
• Facilitative, not punitive, responses from instructors or others responding to the journal is critical
• Emphasis should be on expressive, rather than formal or grammatically correct, language

LIMITATIONS:
• Student may initially be hesitant about disclosing personal feelings or self-identified weakness in this format, particularly if journal is graded.
• Supervisee’s ability to think and process information beyond the descriptive level
QUESTIONS FOR SEMI—STRUCTURED JOURNALING

Semi-structured journaling uses prompts or trigger questions which the student responds to, along with free or unstructured writing.

Suggested prompts to choose from:

1. Which interactions with clients impacted you the most today and why?
2. What were some of the things you already knew about what you observed with this client? What surprised you?
3. What do you feel good about regarding the way you handled this interaction?
4. Is there anything you would change about what you said or did if you were to be faced with this situation again? Why?
5. What obstacles did you have to deal with that impacted this interaction?
6. If you could change anything about how your agency supports or doesn’t support this client, what would it be?
7. What ethical issues entered into this interaction? How did you deal with those?
8. What feelings were you left with after you had this interaction with the client?
9. What additional information or skills do you feel you need to help this client?
10. How do you think the client would describe interacting with you?
**Reflection Paper/Journal Guidelines**

Choose a situation/interaction/task/project (or a portion of a task or project) and reflect upon it using the structure outlined below. Each section must be clearly labeled.

1. **Description**  
   Describe in detail a situation/interaction/task/incident/experience etc. that occurred as part of the field placement. Choose one that was significant to you, was an “eye-opener” and/or created a dilemma for you in terms of what to say or do.

   **Example:** Another worker started talking to me about her feelings toward a client while we were standing in the hallway….

2. **Reaction**  
   In detail, discuss your reactions and feelings about the situation, task, etc. Why was this situation significant? What dilemma was posed to you? How was this a “trigger” situation to you?

   **Example:** I felt uncomfortable talking about this situation in the hallway because of confidentiality issues. Even though I was uncomfortable, I did not say anything to the worker. She is the professional and I am “just” the student…..

3. **Conceptualization**  
   Apply academic knowledge to the practice-based situation you have described. What professional issues or underlying social work knowledge, values, and skills can be applied to enhance understanding of the situation? This conceptualization may include the application of theory and/or the critique of theory.

   **Example:** In my experience of co-facilitating the group, I was aware of power and control issues. Specifically, when Mr. A. said…, I observed tense group dynamics (People avoiding eye contact, visual tightening of posture, silence). In our group’s class, the readings identify….

   Another area of knowledge that I can apply to this situation relates to communication skills of confrontation and immediacy…

4. **Action**  
   Think critically about the situation. What would you do differently if confronted with a similar situation? Which action seems best to you now and why do you think it is a better response? If you decide that you would not handle the situation differently, why not? Support your position.

   **Example:** Group dynamics need to be understood when facilitating a meeting. Next time, I need to…This is important because…..
5. **Relation to learning outcomes**
   Discuss how this situation relates to one or more of your skill sets and the corresponding objective(s).

   Example: This situation relates clearly to the skill set of assessment as I must be aware of group dynamics…The challenge for me…..This situation also relates to the skill set of communications….

   In order to respect confidentiality, please **do not** use any client or individual names in this assignment.

Adapted from Georgia State University Field Manual
SUPERVISORY METHOD: REFLECTIVE PRACTICE EPISODE

FORMAT: Individual Conference most frequently but may be adapted for Group Conference.

MATERIALS: Reflection exercise form (see attached example)

FOCUS: Student’s reflections about some practice experience. Attends to student’s integration of experience with theoretical, ethical, and/or professional issues.

FEATURES:
• Requires thoughtful review, analysis, and reflection by student prior to supervisory conference.
• Attends to the meaning of an experience for the student.
• Provides valuable data for evaluation (work sample).
• Provides launching point for discussion of broad range of professional issues.
• Provides data for on-going reflection and point of reference from which instructor and student can track the student’s improvement in thinking about practice.
• Encourages student to think “beyond” the observational/descriptive level.
• Offers some safety to student in initially broaching some sensitive or taboo topics with the instructor.
• Best if is incorporated as a regular format for inclusion in supervision conferences (e.g., student submits a prescribed number of reflection episodes in a given period of time, like one week.)
• May be incorporated into the Journaling method.

LIMITATIONS:
• Student must risk and can be vulnerable to having instructor learn about ideas, concerns, questions, and issues troubling to student.
• Student’s ability to think and process information beyond the descriptive level.
GUIDELINES FOR REFLECTIVE PRACTICE EPISODES
AND SEMINAR DISCUSSION

1. Describe a situation you experienced in your practicum that you would like to reflect on. The situation can be an ethical dilemma, a practice issue, or a question about the relevancy of theory; policy issue, diversity issue; the situations can be any issue that has affected you in practice that you want further discussion about. (Identify the problem.)

2. How do you describe the situation as a problem relevant to social work practice? (Framing the problem.)

3. What did you do in response to the problem? Do you think this was the best solution to the problem? Why? How did you come up with the solution? (What information did you use to reach a solution: theoretical knowledge, intuition, previous experience, anything else?)
4. If you haven’t done anything to solve the problem, what do you think you should do and how would you proceed?

5. Discuss how this situation relates to the practice of social work.

6. Does this problem and your solution fit into your definition of social work practice? Explain.

Developed by Geraldine Jackson-White, October, 1994
The issue I want to reflect upon, which is one I’m sure to encounter again and again as a social worker, is how to handle terminating with clients who I have emotionally bonded with and who are ready to move on. I met with a family tonight for our final session and after working with them for twelve weeks, it was very hard to say goodbye. My feelings are very mixed- I’m really happy about the progress this family has made but I also wish we could have an ongoing working relationship.

This problem is very relevant to social work because, as pointed out by Compton/Galaway, social work intervention is always time-centered and should be directed towards measurable, achievable goals. We should also keep client empowerment as one of our central tasks and should work with clients in way that, as quickly as possible, ensure that they become self-sufficient in solving their problems and making changes in their own lives. These goals are certainly an integral part of the in-home Family Intervention Program.

I responded genuinely to the feelings of the family when they said they would miss our visits with them by telling them I would miss them too, and that I had enjoyed working with and learning from them. I then changed the focus to re-emphasizing, as I had in many previous sessions, how they had been responsible for the success of our work and what strengths that would continue to be able to call upon. The dilemma that remains for me is how to let go emotionally of my relationship with this family- which I know will just take time.

I feel the issue is pretty well resolved with this family and will just need to be something I am sensitive to and careful about down the road as I become attached to the people I work with.
5. Discuss how this situation relates to the practice of social work.

The practice of social work has a lot to do with caring about people and I feel all social workers need to bond with people, yet not create unhealthy dependency or allow finishing up with people to be too traumatic for them or the social worker.

6. Does this problem and your solution fit into your definition of social work practice?

Yes, the issue and solution fit my definition of social work practice and I feel comfortable with the idea of having time-limited interventions with people as much as possible. I think it will be helpful to me personally to work in settings and with models that are similar to the in-home model—that is limited in duration and focused on intervention.

Developed by Geraldine Jackson-White, October, 1994
The purpose of this assignment is to help you identify key information for a community needs assessment. Write a brief analysis using the following questions as a guide.

1. Describe the contents of the community needs assessment you prepared in SOWK 7153 or SOWK 7106.

2. Describe the contents of the community needs assessment you completed in your practicum.

3. Compare how these two community needs assessments are similar and how they are different.

4. Discuss the strengths and limitations of each approach.

5. Based upon your experience with these two models, what do you see as the key components to be included in a community needs?

Adapted from Georgia State University Field Manual
Please choose one of your clients with whom you have worked at your field site. As a social worker, your clients may range from an individual to a community. As Kirst-Ashman and Hull (1999) in *Understanding Generalist Practice* (p.31) have stated:

Social workers help people deal with problems ranging from personal relationships to lack of resources to blatant discrimination. A social worker may need to address the problem of a battered woman who is economically and emotionally dependent on her abusive husband and who also has three children to protect, a social worker might have an adolescent child who has committed a number of serious crimes and is heavily involved with an urban gang, a social worker may need to advocate and fight for change in public assistance policy.

Regardless of the size of your client system or the nature of the problem, the problem-solving process is similar. For this assignment, please choose an individual, couple, family, or group as your client system. Use the following problem-solving outline in writing your case presentation. Clearly label each of the five problem solving phases and type the final product.

**1. Exploration and Assessment**

Briefly describe your client system. Identify significant, micro, mezzo, and macro factors, as well as elements of human diversity that may be impacting your client. What are your client’s strengths? Define the problem situation. Discuss your multidimensional assessment of the client’s problems.

**2. Planning and Contracting**

Describe your plan of action. How did you and your client decide which problem(s) to address? What are the short and long term goals that you and your client have agreed to work on? What is the contract, i.e. the working agreement, between you, the client, and anyone else involved in the action plan? What parties are responsible for carrying out the specifics of the contract? How is progress going to be evaluated?

**3. Intervention**

Discuss the implementation of the plan of action. Describe the client progress during the intervention. Discuss any issues, situations, and conditions that have altered the plan. How is progress being monitored? How did you choose your interventions?

**4. Evaluation**

What were the results of your interventions? How do you know the client reached set goals? What methodology was used for evaluating your practice?

**5. Termination and Follow-Up**

Discuss the reasons for termination in this case. Describe the process of disengagement, i.e. client transition from dependence on worker to making decisions and functioning
independently, and stabilization, i.e. maintenance of change and continued client growth following termination. Discuss client need and any plans for follow-up.

6. Comments-
In reviewing your work with your client, what would you do differently?
Use critical thinking to address the gaps, omissions, oversights, etc. in your work.
Discuss your strengths and weaknesses as you evaluate your role.

Adapted from Georgia State University Field Manual
SOWK 7055 Clinical Practice
Case Plan/Treatment Plan Assignment

Case Planning/Treatment Planning for Direct Practice

A. Define the **problem** that will be the focus of social work intervention (not all the problems that the individual has)

B. Identify the **signs** of the problem (i.e., what can be seen or heard that is a result of/or shows that there is a problem)

C. Identify the overall **goal** which should directly address the problem (e.g., reduce depression, eliminate purging, improve self-esteem)

D. Identify the **objectives** (at least three) which should be the changes that you want to observe (see or hear) in the symptoms (use “as evidenced by…..”) and then identify a target date for the objective to be met

   Objectives should be SMART:
   - Specific
   - Measurable
   - Attainable
   - Reasonable
   - Timely

E. Identify **action steps** (at least three for each objective) to reach each objective which should be accomplished in a relatively short time (1-2 weeks) and a target date for accomplishment should be identified

The plan should be written so that when the client accomplishes the steps, the objectives will be met and the overall goal will be attained.

**Clinical Treatment Planning Example:**

A therapist identifies that the client meets the criteria for a diagnosis of major depression, moderate. The goal is the reduction of depression and the objectives are the reduction/elimination of the symptoms of depression, i.e., crying, sleep disturbance, loss of appetite, lethargy. The action steps are then smaller steps that work toward reducing the symptoms (“client will take a walk for 30 minutes three times per week instead of watching television”).

**Case Planning Example:**

A DFCS worker would identify the problem as the maltreatment that was substantiated in a case. The symptoms would be the specific instances of maltreatment (e.g., leaving a 3 year-old home alone). The goal is usually the overall safety of the child. The objectives would be centered around the correction of the specific types of maltreatment (e.g., “child will be supervised by an adult at all times”). Then, the action steps are the smaller steps to meet the objective (“mother will find a day care center that allows ‘drop-ins’ so that there will be an alternative for appropriate care when mother is unable to provide it”).

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Case Plan/Treatment Plan

Social Worker’s Name: 

Identified Problem:

Signs of the Problem:

Overall Goal:

Treatment Modality:

Objective #1:

Step #1

Step #2

Step #3

Evaluation Plan for Objective #1:
Objective #2:

Step #1

Step #2

Step #3

Evaluation Plan for Objective #2:

Objective #3:

Step #1

Step #2

Step #3

Evaluation Plan for Objective #3:
FIELD EDUCATION - EVALUATION OF PRACTICE PAPER

The application of research in social work practice is critical in providing competent social work services. According to Westerfelt and Dietz (1997), there are two major arguments that support such application: (1) The NASW Code of Ethics emphasizes the responsibility of social workers to understand, utilize, and conduct research (please see Section 5.02- Evaluation and Research), and (2) Social workers are accountable to clients, and therefore, services that make a difference should be provided.

One option in fulfilling this research role is to evaluate one’s practice. The most common method to evaluate practice is the application of the single-subject design. The focus of this paper is to evaluate your intervention process with a single “subject” in your practice. “Subject” can be one individual, one family, one group, or one community.

Please address the following items in your paper:

1. a. State your research question. What do you want to know and why?
   Begin to ask yourself- what would you like to know? What would the agency like to know? What would the client system like to know?

   b. Conduct a brief literature review on your research question.
   Summarize your findings.

   *Note- any agency based research project must be discussed with and approved by your field instructor and all agency protocol (e.g. consent form) must be followed. Clients should not be forced to participate and non-participation should not affect a client’s receipt of or eligibility for services.

2. Describe your dependant variable(s) and the chose measures (indicators) for each variable.

3. Describe your independent variable. Specify your intervention and include location, specific activities, duration, frequency, etc.

4. Describe your single-subject design. Include the base-line measures, intervention(s), and design. Discuss why you chose this single-subject design for your research.

5. Describe how you conducted your data collection. Attach copies of consent forms, agency protocol, research instruments, etc.

6. Summarize your findings. Do not use actual names of clients in reporting data.

7. Discuss the limitation of both your measurement scale and the research design. Address reliability and validity of your research.
8. What are your conclusions? How do your results relate back to your initial research question?

Adapted from: A. Westerfelt and T. J. Dietz (1997). *Planning and Conducting Agency-Based Research*. NY/Longham

Adapted from Georgia State University Field Manual
FIELD EDUCATION- CODE OF ETHICS PAPER

The NASW Code of Ethics, found in Appendix F, has been the “bible” on professional conduct and ethical behavior for social work practitioners. The code provides guidelines for social work practice. Over the years, the Code has been modified to better reflect contemporary practice.

There are three parts to this paper:

1. Choose a subsection of the Code of Ethics you think best supports your field agency’s practice. Thoroughly explain your choice, substantiating it with examples from our work at your field placement.

2. Choose a subsection of the Code of Ethics that you think least supports your field agency’s practice. Thoroughly explain your choice, substantiating it with examples from your field placement.

3. Create an addendum to the Code of Ethics that reframes the least supportive subsection that you chose in Part II so it better supports your field agency’s practice.

Adapted from Georgia State University Field Manual
FIELD EDUCATION – FINAL PAPER

The final paper is a synthesis of the student’s experiences in field education. The organizational/community analysis section (Part I) assists the student in revisiting the field site to provide a context for understanding practice. Part II is designed to help the student assess his/her learning experiences related to the competencies/practice behaviors. Please type.

Part I: ORGANIZATIONAL/COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

Please address the following items:

1. Define and describe the community in which the field site operates. Assess its strengths, resources, and specific issues/problems.
2. Describe the field site’s purposes and goals. What is the site’s function and role in the community? How does it address the needs/issues of the community?
3. Describe the field site’s structure. How is the service delivery carried out? How are policy decisions made within the setting?
4. What are the funding sources for the field site? How are the social workers funded?
5. How do the field site’s activities reflect its stated purposes and goals? Distinguish between the field site’s stated goals and what actually happens in practice.
6. Describe the barriers/obstacles you have encountered that seem to stand in the way of effective social work practice. Why do these barriers/obstacles exist? What can be done to diminish or eliminate such barriers/obstacles?
7. Give an example of an existing community partnership initiative between the field site and the community. Critically analyze its strengths and weaknesses. If none currently exists, what recommendations would you make to the field site for the creation of a community partnership?

Part II: LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. Please use your individualized learning plan in completing this section. Review each of the learning outcomes, including your specific personal outcomes and address the following for each learning outcome:

Choose an activity or task in which you were involved that relates to the specific learning outcome. (One activity might have addressed more than one learning outcome.) Perform a self-assessment on your competence/success in completing each outcome. Provide an explanation and a rational to support your assessment.
B. Please address the following questions:

1. What did you find most challenging in your field experience?
2. How does this field education experience impact your future decisions about career choices, volunteer work, community activism, etc.?

Adapted from Georgia State University Field Manual
Please develop a concise self-assessment in preparation for your end of the semester evaluation. Feel free to add any information that you feel is particularly relevant to your experiences that may not be captured by the questions.

1. Describe your strengths and how they impacted your work.

2. Describe areas that you feel you still need and/or desire more experience and/or exposure.

3. Reflect upon what you have learned and identify how your practicum has specifically contributed to the acquisition of your skills and knowledge.

4. Discuss how you evaluated your practice.

5. Please identify any one learning experience from this semester that you feel contributed the most to your professional development. Briefly explain how this was beneficial.

6. Please identify any one learning experience you wanted to have in your practicum that did not occur. Discuss how this is still relevant to your learning goals, and how you plan to incorporate this learning in your continued professional development.
## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

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<th>Learning Resources and Strategies</th>
<th>Evidence of Objectives</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
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Approved by: ______________________ (Student): ______________________ (Field Instructor): ______________________ (Faculty): ______________________
## WORKSHEET FOR DEVELOPING CONTINUING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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APPENDIX B

PERSONAL SAFETY/RISK REDUCTION
GUIDELINES ON PERSONAL SAFETY

Due to increasing incidents of violence against social workers, the School is attempting to make students aware of safety issues and be better prepared to handle potentially dangerous situations. Training in personal safety is provided to all new students early in the first term of enrollment; content includes awareness, prevention, and management of dangerous situations at home, on the street and while traveling, in public places, and in the field. Handouts on this content are provided at the training session. Also, agency safety guidelines and information on student health care safety preparation appear in this Manual. Because safety issues relate to field work, campus life, and many other settings, general information about risk assessment and reduction is also included in this section. This information can be used to assess environmental risk levels, to determine if a client or another individual could be dangerous, to make decisions about managing risky situations, or to protect oneself or clients.

It is very difficult to predict when dangerous behavior will occur. The factors most often considered to be predictors are: history of violent behavior, male clients, abuse of drugs and/or alcohol. Aggressive behavior may be direct or indirect; determinants include fear, anger, over-stress, chemical alteration, need for attention or power, and paranoia. The important variable is the intent or perceived intent of the individual who appears to be dangerous. It is important to determine whether the behavior is a characteristic adaptive style or if it is reactive to a particular or current situation. However, the best protection in a threatened or actual assault is to follow your intuition. Problem-solving skills are also transferable to risky situations: gather data, evaluate the information, decide on a course of action based on the evaluation, implement it, evaluate the outcome and adjust accordingly. This process may occur in an instant or over a longer period.

The goals of risk prevention and management strategies should be:

1. protect the client, staff, and others in the environment
2. help the individual gain control with the least amount of pain and guilt
3. help the individual focus on the source of anger, fear, frustration, etc.
4. assist the individual to express these feelings verbally rather than in actions

GENERAL RISK REDUCTION GUIDELINES

1. Walk with a sense of purpose. Be aware of body language.
2. Be alert to people around you. Beware of strangers who approach and speak to you. Keep at a safe distance and keep moving.
3. Do not walk on side of the street where people are loitering. Walk on the outside of the sidewalk, away from possible hiding places.

4. Be aware of safe places such as stores, library, school, and community centers to use as refuge.

5. Do not carry a purse or bag. If you must carry one, conceal it or use a shoulder bag or backpack.

6. Wear sensible appropriate clothing, low heeled shoes, and no jewelry which could be snatched off or wrapped around your neck.

7. Do not give money to people who ask for it.

8. Assess multi-story buildings for safety. If you take the elevator, observe elevator interior before entering. If the elevator appears unsafe, wait for the next elevator or consider taking the stairs; be aware of who is in the stairwell and how far apart the exits are. If a suspicious person enters the elevator after you have entered it, exit before the door closes. Stand next to the control panel. If accosted, press all buttons.

RISK REDUCTION GUIDELINES IN FIELD WORK

Students should receive a specific orientation to agency policies and procedures regarding risk management. If the field instructor does not provide this orientation, students must ask for it. Students should also learn about the agency’s informal methods for assessing and handling risk situations.

Each situation is different, but the guidelines that follow may generally apply in the management of potentially dangerous situations.

1. Appreciate realistic limitations. Be reasonable about what is and is not possible. Know when to stay and leave. (A sound preventive approach is to avoid seeing clients with reputations for unprovoked assaults or those in acute paranoid psychotic distress in an empty office without backup staff or security available.)

2. Keep your work area as safe as possible, keeping it clear of items which could be harmful to anyone involved in a physical intervention. For example, keep objects which can be used as weapons (ashtrays, sharp objects, a hot cup of coffee) away from clients.

3. Where possible, alert staff members that assistance may be needed before entering the crisis situation.
4. Act calmly. Keep the scream out of your voice. An emotional or aggressive response to a distraught individual is likely to reinforce that person’s aggression. Remember, clients and others who are violent are often reacting to feelings of helplessness and loss of control. Therefore, you need to be in control of the situation.

5. Take a non-threatening posture to avoid appearing confrontational, but take a protected posture as well. This usually means standing slightly sideways to the individual, at a safe distance away from sudden lunges, punches, and kicks, with arms and hands held near the upper body for possible quick self-protection. Avoid a “stare down” by periodically breaking eye contact.

6. Don’t walk away from the individual who is escalating. Acknowledge the individual’s feelings and attempt to talk him/her down. Encouraging the individual to sit down may sufficiently delay or divert the possibility of attack. Usually a one-to-one situation with available staff at a distance works well. The most appropriate staff member to be with the individual is the one who has the best rapport with him/her, not necessarily the staff with the most authority or rank.

7. Observe the progress of the aggression and the stages of escalation. Identify those actions on your part which serve to calm and those which serve to inflame the individual, and act accordingly.

8. Avoid sudden movements or the issuance of strident commands, as these may only inflame the individual. Whenever possible, allow the individual to make behavioral choices. Directives or alternatives should be stated concretely and in terms of actions which can be performed immediately. Depending on the cognitive abilities of the individual, limit-setting may take two forms:

   1) Direct: state clearly and specifically the required or prohibited behavior
   2) Indirect: allow the individual to choose between two acceptable behavioral alternatives

9. Do not touch the individual unless you are willing to restrain him/her, and only when there is sufficient staff power to do so in a manner consistent with the agency’s “take down” or containment policies.

10. In the event of the physical intervention where the individual is placed in a quiet room or in seclusion, the isolation should be as brief as possible. Placing an individual in isolation will not help him/her learn about the experience during
this critical learning period. The verbal and cognitive work begins here in helping clients understand and predict their own violent impulses.

**WHAT TO DO IF ATTACKED OR SERIOUSLY THREATENED DURING FIELD WORK**

1. Follow agency procedures to manage the immediate situation and to report the incident informally.

2. Get any needed medical care and debrief with your field instructor.

3. Immediately notify the School (the faculty liaison or the Director of Field Education).

4. Recognize that a physical attack or threatening behavior is frightening and that you may respond emotionally to the stress. Seek help to resolve the crisis responses.

APPENDIX C

ORIENTATION/SUPERVISION
ORIENTATION TO THE AGENCY

The School provides the student with a general orientation to the profession and to field education.

The agency is responsible for agency-based orientation, which typically occurs during the first week of field work. In general the orientation should consist of acquainting the student with the various services offered by the agency, and the range of scope of possible assignments. Planning for these assignments should begin right after the orientation period, and specific initial assignments should be identified. The student should use the orientation period to begin developing a written learning contract, which will serve as a guide for the current and subsequent terms of field work experience (see Appendices A and B).

The School’s rationale for the agency orientation to field instruction is twofold. First, before the student engages with clients, agency staff, communities, etc., s/he should have some knowledge of professional roles and relationships, the ethics of the profession, and the nature of service delivery systems, as well as some acquaintance with various theories of human behavior. Second, students are expected to gain knowledge about the range and type of specific agency services, agency structure and staff roles and responsibilities, as well as inter-agency and community relationships. A well-planned and organized orientation within the agency will not only provide information useful for student performance but will serve the agency by enhancing the potential for greater student productivity.

Agencies may wish to take different approaches to the agency orientation. One approach is to schedule various activities which could include reading reports and other agency documents, interviews, and observation within the agency and at other agencies and facilities. A somewhat richer approach is to schedule all of the above and to begin to introduce related tasks into the assignments. For example, a student who is scheduled to visit another agency may be asked to obtain information needed by the placement agency. Another student preparing to work with a client group may conduct initial interviews with prospective members.
SOME IDEAS FOR A WELL-PLANNED, COMPREHENSIVE PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE

• Initial Orientation Session for Students

• Intern Packet
  - useful information about the agency, personnel, helpful terminology, organizational chart, etc.
  - various readings about population, settings or other helpful “orienting” contextual information
  - special paperwork, forms

• Agency Tour
  - meet personnel, supervisory staff, secretarial staff, etc.
  - faculty tour and student’s space of their own
  - formally introduce student at agency staff meeting

• Inform intern of agency policies and procedures

• Supply student with some office supplies

• Arrange for lunch plans on the first day so student doesn’t feel isolated or alone

• Have the student “shadow” you on the first day or two (or at least for a few hours) to help acclimate them to the setting

• Give student an opportunity for client contact in the first two days

• Meet with student at the end of every day the first week

• Meet with the student both formally and informally the first week – plan on discussing at least one case to set the tone for supervision

• Plan regularly scheduled supervision blocks of time each week in addition to informal “chats”

• Allow for the student to take initiative for their own learning and plans for their time

• Help student to develop a “project” that they could accomplish over the course of the term
PREPARING STUDENTS FOR ORIENTATION TO FIELD PLACEMENT SITE

Micro Level of Orientation

1. Orientation Plan
2. Learning plan
3. Supervision
   - Learning styles
   - Supervisor role and style
   - Previous experiences with supervision
   - Weekly supervision times
   - Who sets agenda for supervision meetings
   - What is discussed in supervision
   - How to discuss goals, fears, issues, assignments
   - Integrating class and field
   - Evaluation of learning outcomes

4. Professional Behavior
   - Expectations
     - Agency boundaries: what’s okay to talk about; what’s not okay
     - Time off for illness, holidays
     - Make-up days

Mezzo Level of Orientation

1. Purpose, function, and structure of the agency/organization
   - Mission
   - Governance
   - Policies
   - Funding

2. Who’s Who
   - Organizational charts
   - Job descriptions
   - List of people to meet

3. Clients/Consumers/Constituents
   - Who they are
Service provision/delivery (what and how)
How they get connected
Intake process
Costs for services
Service outcomes/evaluation

4. Layout of agency/organization
   Tour of agency
   Student’s office, desk, phone, files, etc.
   Copy and fax machines
   Lunch/break room

5. Information flow
   Telephone
   Computer use/access
   Routing material
   Mail (in and out)
   Messages
   Meetings required

6. Documentation
   Format
   When and where
   Confidentiality issues
   Jargon, abbreviations
   Statistical records
   Forms

7. Confidentiality
   Interview locations
   Consent for release of information
   Confidential and privileged information
   Legal requirements to report; other legal parameters

8. Safety and Security Issues
   Office
   Home Visits
   Use of personal car

9. Resources
   For clients/consumers/constituents
   For students
   For staff
   Bibliography of important books and articles
   Internet availability
Library journal access
Cellular phones
Mileage and/or parking reimbursement
Stipend
Staff development
Additional learning opportunities

### Macro Level of Orientation

1. Map of the community
   History of the community
   Strengths of the community
   Major issues
   Aspects of diversity
   Community leadership

2. Social Service System
   Visits to area agencies and organizations
   Resource list of area agencies and organizations
   How this agency/organization fits in with similar agencies/organizations elsewhere
   How this agency/organization coordinates with other types of agencies/organizations
   How this agency/organization partners with other agencies/organizations/groups
   Coalitions/networking groups in the community
   History/perceptions/strengths/limitations of agency/organization in the community

3. Social Policies
   Local, state, federal government mandates or sanctions
   Regulatory bodies
   Regulatory processes
   Legislation affecting clients/service provision and/or delivery

SUPERVISION

Typically, field instruction of students occurs through a variety of styles and methods, including formal conference time with the field instructor, group of team supervision, demonstration, coaching, and team meetings. The choice of which activity best fits the student and the assignments are left to the field instructor. However, the pattern of instruction must be by design and minimum contact time must be established. The School requires a minimum of one hour of supervision per week, but recommends more. The plan should bear a direct relationship to the competencies/practice behaviors of the relevant practicum course statement and the student’s goals as expressed in the educational agreement. This appendix provides some descriptions of activities that can be used in the supervisory session.

The student is expected to take a proactive stance in regard to the use of instructional time. This can mean formulating questions, topics, and/or agendas and any relevant written materials (such as case notes or reports or drafts) for field instruction conferences or meetings. The following pages provide some ideas on how to assess the student, suggests possible learning activities, and describes some ways to evaluate competence. Descriptions for some of these assignments can be found in Appendix C.
Knowing what one needs to learn is an obvious prerequisite to achieving professional mastery. The student achieves such mastery through engagement in self-assessment and the field instructor’s assessment, and subsequent written evaluation, of the student’s abilities and performance.

It is important for the field instructor to have a sense of the knowledge and skills a student brings to the field placement. The initial challenge to the field instructor is figuring out the student’s level of competence at the beginning of the field placement. Students come with a range of experiences and nothing should be assumed or predetermined prior to the student’s arrival at the field site. In addition, the amount of experience alone does not guarantee competency. Therefore, each student should have an individualized baseline assessment. From this baseline data, the field instructor and student can develop a plan to provide learning opportunities that fit with the individual student.

Some suggestions for establishing a baseline assessment of the student’s abilities:

- have the student write a brief summary of his/her strengths and weaknesses
- have the student observe your practice—discuss the student’s observations about the client, the problem situation, assessment and intervention, social work roles, values and ethics, etc.
- have the student write a summary of an observed transaction between client and field instructor
- observe the student’s practice of beginning-level tasks
- assess the student’s verbal communication skills through role play situations
- assess the student’s written communication skills through case summary, letter, meeting notes, etc. using the format required by the agency
Selection of Learning Experiences

The following is a list of learning experiences to help stimulate thinking about identifying learning experiences for social work students. This list is not exhaustive, some of the items may not apply to your setting, and there may be additional learning opportunities unique to your specific agency/organization or area of practice to consider.


1. Read case records, committee meeting minutes, and agency reports/newsletters/web page

2. Read journal articles and review websites pertaining specifically to the agency/organization or area of practice

3. Observe the field supervisor or other appropriate agency personnel in interactions with clients, colleagues, and other community organizations. Prepare a summary or assessment of the interaction. Write an assessment of the client.

4. Listen to a tape-recorded interaction or lecture or watch an audio-visual presentation. Prepare a critique for discussion.

5. Attend a meeting (e.g., staff/team, agency committee, agency board, community group). Take notes on the dynamics of the discussion. Provide a written summary of the content.

6. Visit the agency in the evening or on weekends to observe agency activities during these “off-hour” times.

7. Audio or video-tape an interaction with a client. Review and critique it.

8. Interview the field supervisor and take a social history. Discuss the interview process.

9. Sit in the waiting area and observe the atmosphere, behaviors of individuals, and interactions between clients and staff.

10. Be responsible for a caseload of clients (number assigned may vary based on responsibilities involved and School of Social Work requirements). Conduct interviews with clients and provide direct services.

11. Visit other community agencies and organizations (e.g., referral sources, collaborative partners).
12. Attend a court hearing.

13. Attend related professional workshops, seminars, and lectures in the community.

14. Attend in-service staff development programs.

15. Prepare an in-service staff development program.

16. Co-facilitate or lead a group. Participate in the pre-planning.

17. Co-facilitate or lead a meeting. Participate in the pre-planning.

18. Go out on home visits. Conduct or participate in the interview.

19. Take on-call (after hours) responsibilities.

20. Role play with the field supervisor to try out new skills and techniques.

21. Participate in orienting new students or staff to the agency/organization.

22. Keep a daily log of experiences and reactions to them. Use a critical thinking approach in reflecting on the experiences.

23. Prepare a process recording of an individual interaction, group session, meeting, or telephone contact.

24. Participate in a one-way mirror observation as an observer or as a subject.

25. Interview administrators, managers, or other staff to gather specific information about their roles.

26. Assist in writing or revising the agency’s policy and procedures manual.

27. Assist in writing or revising the agency’s manual/resource file for student interns.

28. Assist in gathering information for and prepare an annual program or agency budget.

29. Develop, or assist in developing, a grant proposal.

30. Identify new funding opportunities.

31. Assist in writing a newsletter. Prepare a web page item.

32. Assist with a marketing or public relations project.
33. Participate on an agency committee to plan an event (e.g., fund-raising, educational workshop, community activity).

34. Develop outcome measures for a program or special project.

35. Design and conduct a research project.

Don’t forget your “wish list” of activities you have on your Things To Do list (written or otherwise) that could match well with the student’s competencies/practice behaviors. These activities may be great learning opportunities for the student. For example, that coalition meeting you never have time for may be perfect for your student. Perhaps your student can update the agency’s community resources directory. What about those clients who need a follow-up phone call after having received services from your agency? Even within the parameters of competencies/practice behaviors, you can be creative in identifying learning experiences for the social work intern.
Evaluation of student performance is an ongoing, interactive process between student and supervisor culminating in an end-of-semester written evaluation. For a fair and complete assessment of student performance, the field instructor should employ a variety of measures along with the repetition of such measures. This approach will increase accuracy and fairness in evaluating student performance and provide the field instructor with more opportunities to offer professional direction, guidance, and specific feedback. Listed below are methods of evaluation that can be made use of over the course of the field placement to evaluate the student’s performance as related to the educational outcomes in the learning plan and the final evaluation instrument. Outlines for some of these assignments can be found in Appendix C. Methods of evaluation include (but are not limited to):

1. **Observation**
   Direct observation of a student allows for direct assessment on all aspects of a student’s interviewing skills. While students may feel uncomfortable at this prospect, most realize that it is an invaluable opportunity to gain feedback. One suggestion is to phase in observation by starting with the student observing the field instructor and processing what took place, then conducting a joint interview followed by discussion, and, finally, the field instructor observing the student conducting an interview.

2. **Role Play**
   Simulating placement-specific situations can be used to identify the student’s strengths and weaknesses. A role play can be used to deal with challenges and obstacles that confront a student in practice. For a role play to be most beneficial, it should be carefully planned and structured. Some field instructors use role play situations to develop benchmarks for specific skills and to determine assignment of student tasks.

3. **Case/Task Summary**
   The student’s ability to apply social work knowledge, skills, and values to practice can be assessed through a written case/task summary. Multiple summaries over time offer an opportunity to view how the student gathers and organizes information, makes assessments, sets goals, and identifies appropriate interventions. Through a written summary, the student’s writing abilities, familiarity with professional style, and ability to be clear and concise while highlighting significant data can be demonstrated. A case/task summary may be required agency practice or requested specifically by the field instructor as a method of student evaluation.
4. **Process Recording**
This type of recording is specifically used for teaching purposes. Most of the time it is not placed in agency records. The process recording is a verbatim documentation of an interaction between the student and a client or a transaction between the student and another worker (e.g., information gathering on a project). It requires the student to write down both the verbal and non-verbal communications of the student’s interactions along with the student’s reflections and analysis. Although somewhat tedious, the process recording is a very effective method for assessing the student’s professional skills, knowledge, and values. The student engages in self-assessment and, in addition, receives feedback from the field instructor. Two or three process recordings per semester are suggested.

5. **Video/Audio Taping**
The use of video and audio taping allows for an extensive evaluation of the student’s performance by the supervisor and provides an opportunity for self-evaluation. Both strengths and weaknesses can be identified. A student may be asked to submit a self-evaluation with the actual tape prior to the supervisor’s critique. Clearly, field instructors must be selective about the transactions students are allowed to tape. The student must follow agency protocol in securing client permission to video or audiotape. Such protocol must include the acknowledgement of voluntary client participation in taping with continuation of receiving services not contingent upon participating, the educational purposes of taping, and tape disposal.

6. **Forms, Reports, Professional Letters, and Additional Disseminated Materials**
A student’s ability to write clearly and professionally, retrieve information from a variety of sources, and organize material in writing is intrinsic to the process of evaluating a student’s performance. It is helpful to offer opportunities for the student to write, in full or in part, court reports, grants, reports to funding sources, intakes, newsletter articles, program/agency descriptions for brochures/websites, informational handouts for clients, letters, etc. Although field instructors may be able to complete forms by rote, this is a new task for the student. Having the student fill out forms can provide the field instructor with information about the student’s knowledge of the agency, ability to gather data, basic writing skills, and ability to focus on purpose of the task.

7. **Written Assignments**
In addition to the variety of written items as part of routine agency practice, the field instructor may ask the student to complete a written assignment in order to assess the student’s knowledge, values, and/or skills. Such assignments may be in addition to any assignments the student must complete for field seminar. A student and field instructor may agree to use a required field seminar assignment (e.g., agency summary, critiques of articles, daily/weekly logs, process recording) for evaluation purposes as well.
8. **Staff Presentation**
   The student’s ability to gather, organize, and verbally present information can be evaluated through the student’s participation in agency meetings (e.g., staff, program, committee) and community opportunities (e.g., meetings, special events/projects, collaboratives). As an active participant, the student is not only able to increase his/her understanding of the agency, the community, and their interrelatedness, but is able to enhance his/her sense of professional self and connection to the agency.

9. **Supervisory Conference**
   Weekly formal supervision enables the student to process his/her tasks and field experiences on a regular basis. Initially, the field instructor may set the structure for the supervisory conference, but eventually the student should take on more responsibility in preparing an agenda and identifying challenging situations. Through the supervisor’s support and constructive criticism, there should be evidence of the student’s professional growth. It is recommended that both the supervisor and the student maintain written summaries of supervisory sessions to be used in completing the student’s final written evaluation.

10. **Feedback from Others**
    Most students have the opportunity to work with agency staff in addition to the primary field instructor. Some students may be assigned task supervisors. Other students may work on a joint project with a professional from another agency. In any case, a student will benefit from being given the opportunity to work with others, each with his/her own professional style. In addition, feedback from these other professionals can be useful in assessing student performance. The field instructor should build in a mechanism for obtaining such feedback.

11. **Student Self-Report**
    The student’s ability to recognize his/her strengths and limitations, personal biases/prejudices, and areas of professional growth are critical to the educational process. The final evaluation form may be used as a pre- and post-test measure to observe how the student evaluates his/her performance over time in the field placement. The supervisor may ask the student for a written self-assessment separate from the final evaluation.
SUPERVISORY METHOD: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE

FORMAT: Individual Conference

MATERIALS: Written materials on practice situation:

May be case materials (summary of situation and/or session(s), verbatim process recording of interaction(s), psychosocial summary, intake or assessment information, genograms, ecomaps, etc.) OR

Summary of group, community, or organizational practice situation, OR

Reflection exercise, critical incident report, communication skills checklist, OR

Taped recording of client interaction, AV or Audio playback

FOCUS: May vary: May focus on analysis of practice situation, planning or of interventions, outcome evaluation, or tracking of interpersonal communication and/or intervention skills.

FEATURES:

• Conducted according to a regular schedule of planned sessions, providing follow-through in intervening time and to next session.
• Involves preparation by both student and instructor, e.g. materials should be prepared and submitted in advance for instructor to review before the conference.
• Consistent with adult learning/self-directed inquiry, giving student opportunity for self-assessment, assisted by consultation with instructor.
• Quality control: Instructor has direct access to the student’s work.
• Can be used to supervise practice at all levels (individual, family, community).
• Can utilize a wide range of process materials/methods.
• Provides direct feedback designed to improve understanding and performance.

LIMITATIONS:

• Vulnerable to the power differential between instructor and student and can feel threatening to the student.
• Limited by the quality of the preparation of the written materials and preparation of the participants.
SUPERVISORY METHOD: CLINICAL CASE CONFERENCE

FORMAT: Individual or Group Conference

MATERIALS: Written materials on practice situation:

- May be case materials (summary of situation and/or session(s), verbatim process recording of interaction(s), psychosocial summary, intake or assessment information, genograms, ecomaps, etc.) OR
- Summary of group, community, or organizational practice situation, OR
- Reflection exercise, critical incident report, communication skills checklist, OR
- Taped recording of client interaction, AV or Audio playback

FOCUS: May vary: May focus on analysis of practice situation, planning or of interventions, outcome evaluation, or tracking of interpersonal communication and/or intervention skills. Choices about materials prepared should be determined by questions for which the consultation/supervision is sought (see attached outline for questions that may be raised in the Case Conference.)

FEATURES:

- Presentation is organized, focused.
- Involves preparation by student, other group members, and instructor, e.g. materials should be prepared and submitted in advance for supervisor and other group members to review before the conference.
- Consistent with adult learning/self-directed inquiry, giving student opportunity for framing questions, focusing the presentation.
- Quality control: Supervisor has direct access to the student’s work.
- Can utilize a wide range of process materials/methods for case material (see attached guidelines for case presentations.)

LIMITATIONS:

- Student must risk and can be vulnerable to power differential in supervisory relationship.
- Limited by the quality of the preparation of written materials and preparation of the participants.
POTENTIAL QUESTIONS IN CASE DISCUSSIONS


1) What are your impressions of this client and the client’s “world”? What do you like about the client? What do you see as the client’s strengths? What is unique, impressive, or interesting about the client?

2) How does the client want their life to be different? What does the client want to change? What does the client want instead of what is happening now?

3) How do you think the client sees you? What do you think the client is wanting or expecting from you (in general and in specific interactions)? How do you want the client to perceive you?

4) What is the dominant feeling you have about this client when you are anticipating seeing the client, when you are with the client, or when you are thinking about the client? What does that tell you about your “beliefs” about the client or your relationship with the client?

5) Theoretically, what are the ideas that are shaping the way you see this client and your interventions in this session (or in general) with the client? What do you know and what do you need to know in order to understand the situation better and to develop some alternative hypotheses and plans?

6) What are the dominant patterns in this case: patterns of personality or behavior? Life events? Interaction with others? Interaction in the session?

7) What was the major focus, dominant theme, and subtext of this session? What are some alternative meanings you can imagine for these?

8) What are you wanting the client to do or not do? What are you wanting to happen next? What can you imagine as the next small step for the client in getting “on track” toward the goals you have set together?

9) What are you going to do next with this case and what ideas underpin your plans? How might your plans empower or threaten to disempower the client? What meanings might the client give to your plans and how will you identify cues for those meanings?
SUPERVISORY METHOD: ROLE PLAY

FORMAT: Individual conference most frequently but may be adapted for Group Conference.

MATERIALS: Appropriate space: private area with limited distractions, protected from intrusions while role play is in progress.

FOCUS: Instructor and student’s co-creation of possibilities in practice situation through rehearsal of potential interaction, skill-building for student, the “voice” of the client or others in the role play situation.

FEATURES:
- Requires comfort with spontaneity, risk taking, and imagination of instructor and student
- Requires relationship of trust between instructor and student
- May provide launching point for discussion of broad range of professional issues
- Encourages student to think “on his/her feet”
- Providing rehearsal desensitizes student to taboo topics that may be anxiety producing for student to broach with client (or others)
- Encourages student to try out new possibilities
- Encourages application of theories, methods (moving concepts from descriptive to application/integration levels of knowing)
- Engages affective and psychomotor as well as cognitive domains of learning
- Bring the client’s “voice” actively and vividly into the supervisory session
- Encourages and intensifies identification with and empathy for the client’s world, feelings, and perspective

LIMITATIONS:
- Student must risk and be vulnerable to having instructor learn about ideas, concerns, questions, and (often) about issues troubling to the student
- Student’s ability to think and process information beyond the descriptive level
APPENDIX D

NASW
CODE OF ETHICS
Preamble

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

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

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

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

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

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

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

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

*For information on NASW adjudication procedures, see *NASW Procedures for the Adjudication of Grievances*.

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

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

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

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

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

The NASW Code of Ethics is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this Code does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the Code would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.
A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The *NASW Code of Ethics* reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

**Ethical Principles**

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

**Value: Service**

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

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

**Value: Social Justice**

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

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

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

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

Value: *Importance of Human Relationships*

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

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

Value: *Integrity*

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

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

Value: *Competence*

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

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

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

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

1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

1.01 Commitment to Clients

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

1.02 Self-Determination

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

1.03 Informed Consent

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.04 Competence

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

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

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

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

(a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and
society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.
(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

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

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

(a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

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

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

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

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.09 Sexual Relationships

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

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

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

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

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

1.11 Sexual Harassment

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

1.12 Derogatory Language

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

1.13 Payment for Services

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

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

(c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.
1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

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

1.15 Interruption of Services

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

1.16 Termination of Services

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

(b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

(c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

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

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

(f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.
2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

2.01 Respect

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

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

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

2.02 Confidentiality

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

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

(a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

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

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

(a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.
(b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

2.05 Consultation

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

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

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

2.06 Referral for Services

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

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

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

2.07 Sexual Relationships

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

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

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

2.09 Impairment of Colleagues

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

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

2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues

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

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

2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

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

(b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.
(c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

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

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

3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

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

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

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

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

3.02 Education and Training

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

(b) Social workers who function as educators or Field Instructors for students should evaluate students’ performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

(c) Social workers who function as educators or Field Instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.
(d) Social workers who function as educators or Field Instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and Field Instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.03 Performance Evaluation

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

3.04 Client Records

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

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

(c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.

(d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

3.05 Billing

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

3.06 Client Transfer

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

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

3.07 Administration

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

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

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

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

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

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

3.09 Commitments to Employers

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

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

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

(d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

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

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

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

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes

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

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

4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals

4.01 Competence

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

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

4.02 Discrimination

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

4.03 Private Conduct

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

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

4.05 Impairment

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

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

4.06 Misrepresentation

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

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

4.07 Solicitations

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

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

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

(a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

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

5. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

(a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

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

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

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

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

5.02 Evaluation and Research

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

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

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

(d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

(e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants’ well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society

6.01 Social Welfare

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

6.02 Public Participation

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

6.03 Public Emergencies

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

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

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

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

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

NASW

CULTURAL COMPETENCE
NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice

Prepared by the NASW National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity
Approved by the NASW Board of Directors June 23, 2001

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Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice

Standard 1. Ethics and Values—Social workers shall function in accordance with the values, ethics, and standards of the profession, recognizing how personal and professional values may conflict with or accommodate the needs of diverse clients.

Standard 2. Self-Awareness—Social workers shall seek to develop an understanding of their own personal, cultural values and beliefs as one way of appreciating the importance of multicultural identities in the lives of people.

Standard 3. Cross-Cultural Knowledge—Social workers shall have and continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding about the history, traditions, values, family systems, and artistic expressions of major client groups that they serve.

Standard 4. Cross-Cultural Skills—Social workers shall use appropriate methodological approaches, skills, and techniques that reflect the workers’ understanding of the role of culture in the helping process.
Standard 5. Service Delivery—Social workers shall be knowledgeable about and skillful in the use of services available in the community and broader society and be able to make appropriate referrals for their diverse clients.

Standard 6. Empowerment and Advocacy—Social workers shall be aware of the effect of social policies and programs on diverse client populations, advocating for and with clients whenever appropriate.

Standard 7. Diverse Workforce—Social workers shall support and advocate for recruitment, admissions and hiring, and retention efforts in social work programs and agencies that ensure diversity within the profession.

Standard 8. Professional Education—Social workers shall advocate for and participate in educational and training programs that help advance cultural competence within the profession.

Standard 9. Language Diversity—Social workers shall seek to provide or advocate for the provision of information, referrals, and services in the language appropriate to the client, which may include use of interpreters.

Standard 10. Cross-Cultural Leadership—Social workers shall be able to communicate information about diverse client groups to other professionals.

Introduction


NASW "supports and encourages the development of standards for culturally competent social work practice, a definition of expertise, and the advancement of practice models that have relevance for the range of needs and services represented by diverse client populations" (NASW, 2000b, p. 61). The material that follows is the first attempt by the profession to delineate standards for culturally competent social work practice.

The United States is constantly undergoing major demographic changes. The 1990 to 2000 population growth was the largest in American history with a dramatic increase in people of color from 20 percent to 25 percent (Perry & Mackum, 2001). Those changes alter and increase the diversity confronting social workers daily in their agencies. The complexities associated with cultural diversity in the United States affect all aspects of professional social work practice requiring social
workers to strive to deliver culturally competent services to an ever-increasing broad range of clients. The social work profession traditionally has emphasized the importance of the person-in-environment and the dual perspective, the concept that all people are part of two systems: the larger societal system and their immediate environments (Norton, 1978). Social workers using a person-in-environment framework for assessment need to include to varying degrees important cultural factors that have meaning for clients and reflect the culture of the world around them.

In the United States, cultural diversity in social work has primarily been associated with race and ethnicity, but diversity is taking on a broader meaning to include the sociocultural experiences of people of different genders, social classes, religious and spiritual beliefs, sexual orientations, ages, and physical and mental abilities. A brief review of the social work literature in the past few years points to the range of potential content areas that require culturally sensitive and culturally competent interventions. These include addressing racial identity formation for people of color as well as for white people; the interrelationship among class, race, ethnicity, and gender; working with low-income families; working with older adults; the importance of religion and spirituality in the lives of clients; the development of gender identity and sexual orientation; immigration, acculturation, and assimilation stresses; biculturalism; working with people with disabilities; empowerment skills; community building; reaching out to new populations of color; and how to train for culturally competent models of practice.

Therefore, cultural competence in social work practice implies a heightened consciousness of how clients experience their uniqueness and deal with their differences and similarities within a larger social context.

Definitions

The NASW Board of Directors, at its June, 2001 meeting, accepted the following definitions of culture, competence, and cultural competence in the practice of social work. These definitions are drawn from the NASW Code of Ethics and Social Work Speaks.

CULTURE

The word culture is used because it implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group. Culture often is referred to as the totality of ways being passed on from generation to generation. The term culture includes ways in which people with disabilities or people from various
religious backgrounds or people who are gay, lesbian, or transgender experience the world around them.

The Preamble to the NASW Code of Ethics begins by stating:

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.

And goes on to say, "Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice" (NASW, 2000a, p. 1).

Second, culture is mentioned in two ethical standards:


This means that social workers’ social change efforts seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity.

Value: Dignity and Worth of the Person and the Ethical Principle: Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.

This value states that social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.

COMPETENCE

The word competence is used because it implies having the capacity to function effectively within the context of culturally integrated patterns of human behavior defined by the group.

In the Code of Ethics competence is discussed in several ways. First as a value of the profession:

Value: Competence and the Ethical Principle: Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise. This value encourages social workers to continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

Second, competence is discussed as an ethical standard:
1.04 Competence

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

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

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

Cultural competence is never fully realized, achieved, or completed, but rather cultural competence is a lifelong process for social workers who will always encounter diverse clients and new situations in their practice. Supervisors and workers should have the expectation that cultural competence is an ongoing learning process integral and central to daily supervision.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Cultural competence refers to the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency or among professionals and enable the system, agency, or professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Operationally defined, cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services, thereby producing better outcomes (Davis & Donald, 1997). Competence in cross-cultural functioning means learning new patterns of behavior and effectively applying them in appropriate settings.

Gallegos (1982) provided one of the first conceptualizations of ethnic competence as "a set of procedures and activities to be used in acquiring culturally relevant
insights into the problems of minority clients and the means of applying such insights to the development of intervention strategies that are culturally appropriate for these clients." (p. 4). This kind of sophisticated cultural competence does not come naturally to any social worker and requires a high level of professionalism and knowledge.

There are five essential elements that contribute to a system's ability to become more culturally competent. The system should (1) value diversity, (2) have the capacity for cultural self-assessment, (3) be conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, (4) institutionalize cultural knowledge, and (5) develop programs and services that reflect an understanding of diversity between and within cultures. These five elements must be manifested in every level of the service delivery system. They should be reflected in attitudes, structures, policies, and services.

The specific Ethical Standard for culturally competent social work practice is contained under Section 1. Social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients.

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

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

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

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

Finally, the Code re-emphasizes the importance of cultural competence in the last section of the Code, Section 6. Social Workers Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society.

6.04 Social and Political Action

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

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

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

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STANDARDS

These standards address the need for definition, support, and encouragement for
the development of a high level of social work practice that encourages cultural
competence among all social workers so that they can respond effectively,
knowledgeably, sensitively, and skillfully to the diversity inherent in the agencies in
which they work and with the clients and communities they serve.

These standards intend to move the discussion of cultural competence within social
work practice toward the development of clearer guidelines, goals, and objectives
for the future of social work practice.

The specific goals of the standards are

- to maintain and improve the quality of culturally competent services provided
  by social workers, and programs delivered by social service agencies
- to establish professional expectations so social workers can monitor and
  evaluate their culturally competent practice
- to provide a framework for social workers to assess culturally competent
  practice
- to inform consumers, governmental regulatory bodies, and others, such as
  insurance carriers, about the profession's standards for culturally competent
  practice
- to establish specific ethical guidelines for culturally competent social work
  practice in agency or private practice settings
- to provide documentation of professional expectations for agencies, peer
  review committees, state regulatory bodies, insurance carriers, and others.
STANDARDS FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Standard 1. Ethics and Values—Social workers shall function in accordance with the values, ethics, and standards of the profession, recognizing how personal and professional values may conflict with or accommodate the needs of diverse clients.

Interpretation

A major characteristic of a profession is its ability to establish ethical standards to help professionals identify ethical issues in practice and to guide them in determining what is ethically acceptable and unacceptable behavior (Reamer, 1998). Social work has developed a comprehensive set of ethical standards embodied in the NASW Code of Ethics that "address a wide range of issues, including, for example, social workers' handling of confidential information, sexual contact between social workers and their clients, conflicts of interest, supervision, education and training, and social and political action" (Reamer, 1998, p. 2). The Code includes a mission statement, which sets forth several key elements in social work practice, mainly the social workers' commitment to enhancing human well-being and helping meet basic human needs of all people; client empowerment; service to people who are vulnerable and oppressed; focus on individual well-being in a social context; promotion of social justice and social change; and sensitivity to cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers clearly have an ethical responsibility to be culturally competent practitioners.

The Code recognizes that culture and ethnicity may influence how individuals cope with problems and interact with each other. What is behaviorally appropriate in one culture may seem abnormal in another. Accepted practice in one culture may be prohibited in another. To fully understand and appreciate these differences, social workers must be familiar with varying cultural traditions and norms. Clients' cultural background may affect their help-seeking behaviors as well. The ways in which social services are planned and implemented need to be culturally sensitive to be culturally effective. Cultural competence built on the profession's valued stance on self-determination and individual dignity and worth, adding inclusion, tolerance, and respect for diversity in all its forms. Cultural competence requires social workers to recognize the strengths that exist in all cultures. Cultural competence also requires social workers to struggle with ethical dilemmas arising from value conflicts or special needs of diverse clients. For example, helping clients enroll in mandated training or mental health services that are culturally insensitive, or lack of informed consent when a client group's immigration status or language barriers are ignored in service planning.

It requires social workers to struggle with ethical dilemmas arising from value conflicts or special needs of diverse clients such as helping clients enroll in mandated training or mental health services that are culturally insensitive. Cultural
competence requires social workers to recognize the strengths that exist in all cultures. This does not imply a universal nor automatic acceptance of all practices of all cultures. For example, some cultures subjugate women, oppress persons based on sexual orientation, and value the use of corporal punishment and the death penalty. Cultural competence in social work practice must be informed by and applied within the context of NASW's Code of Ethics and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

**Standard 2. Self-Awareness**—Social workers shall develop an understanding of their own personal and cultural values and beliefs as a first step in appreciating the importance of multicultural identities in the lives of people.

**Interpretation**

Cultural competence requires social workers to examine their own cultural backgrounds and identities to increase awareness of personal assumptions, values, and biases. The workers' self-awareness of their own cultural identities is as fundamental to practice as the informed assumptions about clients' cultural backgrounds and experiences in the United States. This awareness of personal values, beliefs, and biases inform their practice and influence relationships with clients. Cultural competence includes knowing and acknowledging how fears, ignorance, and the "isms" (racism, sexism, ethnocentrism, heterosexism, ageism, classism) have influenced their attitudes, beliefs, and feelings.

Social workers need to be able to move from being culturally aware of their own heritage to becoming culturally aware of the heritage of others. They can value and celebrate differences in others rather than maintain an ethnocentric stance and can demonstrate comfort with differences between themselves and others. They have an awareness of personal and professional limitations that may warrant the referral of a client to another social worker or agency that can best meet the clients' needs. Self-awareness also helps in understanding the process of cultural identity formation and helps guard against stereotyping. As one develops the diversity within one's own group, one can be more open to the diversity within other groups.

Cultural competence also requires social workers to appreciate how workers need to move from cultural awareness to cultural sensitivity before achieving cultural competence, and to evaluate growth and development throughout these different levels of cultural competence in practice.

Self-awareness becomes the basis for professional development and should be supported by supervision and agency administration. Agency administrators and public policy advocates also need to develop strategies to reduce their own biases and expand their self-awareness.
**Standard 3. Cross-Cultural Knowledge**—Social workers shall have and continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding about the history, traditions, values, family systems, and artistic expressions of major client groups served.

**Interpretation**

Cultural competence is not static and requires frequent relearning and unlearning about diversity. Social workers need to take every opportunity to expand their cultural knowledge and expertise by expanding their understanding of the following areas: "the impact of culture on behavior, attitudes, and values; the help-seeking behaviors of diverse client groups; the role of language, speech patterns, and communication styles of various client groups in the communities served; the impact of social service policies on various client groups; the resources (agencies, people, informal helping networks, and research) that can be used on behalf of diverse client groups; the ways that professional values may conflict with or accommodate the needs of diverse client groups; and the power relationships in the community, agencies, or institutions and their impact on diverse client groups" (Gallegos, pp. 7--8).

Social workers need to possess specific knowledge about the particular providers and client groups they work with, including the range of historical experiences, resettlement patterns, individual and group oppression, adjustment styles, socioeconomic backgrounds, life processes, learning styles, cognitive skills, worldviews and specific cultural customs and practices, their definition of and beliefs about the causation of wellness and illness, or normality and abnormality, and how care and services should be delivered. They also must seek specialized knowledge about U.S. social, cultural, and political systems, how they operate, and how they serve or fail to serve specific client groups. This includes knowledge of institutional, class, culture, and language barriers that prevent diverse client group members from using services.

Cultural competence requires explicit knowledge of traditional theories and principles concerning such areas as human behavior, life cycle development, problem-solving skills, prevention, and rehabilitation. Social workers need the critical skill of asking the right questions, being comfortable with discussing cultural differences, and asking clients about what works for them and what is comfortable for them in these discussions. Furthermore, culturally competent social workers need to know the limitations and strengths of current theories, processes and practice models, and which have specific applicability and relevance to the service needs of culturally diverse client groups.

**Standard 4. Cross-Cultural Skills**—Social workers shall use appropriate methodological approaches, skills, and techniques that reflect the workers' understanding of the role of culture in the helping process.
Interpretation

The personal attributes of a culturally competent social worker include qualities that reflect genuineness, empathy, and warmth; the capacity to respond flexibly to a range of possible solutions; an acceptance of and openness to differences among people; a willingness to learn to work with clients of different backgrounds; an articulation and clarification of stereotypes and biases and how these may accommodate or conflict with the needs of diverse client groups; and personal commitment to alleviate racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, and poverty. These attributes are important to the direct practitioner and to the agency administrator.

More specifically, social workers should have the skills to

- work with a wide range of people who are culturally different or similar to themselves, and establish avenues for learning about the cultures of these clients
- assess the meaning of culture for individual clients and client groups, encourage open discussion of differences, and respond to culturally biased cues
- master interviewing techniques that reflect an understanding of the role of language in the client’s culture
- conduct a comprehensive assessment of client systems in which cultural norms and behaviors are evaluated as strengths and differentiated from problematic or symptomatic behaviors
- integrate the information gained from a culturally competent assessment into culturally appropriate intervention plans and involve clients and respect their choices in developing goals for service
- select and develop appropriate methods, skills, and techniques that are attuned to their clients’ cultural, bicultural, or marginal experiences in their environments
- generate a wide variety of verbal and nonverbal communication skills in response to direct and indirect communication styles of diverse clients
- understand the interaction of the cultural systems of the social worker, the client, the particular agency setting, and the broader immediate community
- effectively use the clients’ natural support system in resolving problems—for example, folk healers, storefronts, religious and spiritual leaders, families of creation, and other community resources
- demonstrate advocacy and empowerment skills in work with clients, recognizing and combating the "isms", stereotypes, and myths held by individuals and institutions
- identify service delivery systems or models that are appropriate to the targeted client population and make appropriate referrals when indicated
- consult with supervisors and colleagues for feedback and monitoring of performance and identify features of their own professional style that impede
or enhance their culturally competent practice

- evaluate the validity and applicability of new techniques, research, and knowledge for work with diverse client groups.

**Standard 5. Service Delivery**—Social workers shall be knowledgeable about and skillful in the use of services available in the community and broader society and be able to make appropriate referrals for their diverse clients.

**Interpretation**

Agencies and professional social work organizations need to promote cultural competence by supporting the evaluation of culturally competent service delivery models and setting standards for cultural competence within these settings. Culturally competent social workers need to be aware of and vigilant about the dynamics that result from cultural differences and similarities between workers and clients. This includes monitoring cultural competence among social workers (agency evaluations, supervision, in-service training, and feedback from clients).

Social workers need to detect and prevent exclusion of diverse clients from service opportunities and seek to create opportunities for clients, matching their needs with culturally competent service delivery systems or adapting services to better meet the culturally unique needs of clients. Furthermore, they need to foster policies and procedures that help ensure access to care that accommodates varying cultural beliefs.

For direct practitioners, policymakers, or administrators, this specifically involves

- actively recruiting multiethnic staff and including cultural competence requirements in job descriptions and performance and promotion measures
- reviewing the current and emergent demographic trends for the geographic area served by the agency to determine service needs for the provision of interpretation and translation services
- creating service delivery systems or models that are more appropriate to the targeted client populations or advocating for the creation of such services
- including participation by clients as major stakeholders in the development of service delivery systems
- ensuring that program decor and design is reflective of the cultural heritage of clients and families using the service
- attending to social issues (for example, housing, education, police, and social justice) that concern clients of diverse backgrounds
- not accepting staff remarks that insult or demean clients and their culture
- supporting the inclusion of cultural competence standards in accreditation bodies and organizational policies as well as in licensing and certification examinations
- developing staffing plans that reflect the organization and the targeted client
population (for example, hiring, position descriptions, performance evaluations, training)
- developing performance measures to assess culturally competent practice
- including participation of client groups in the development of research and treatment protocols.

**Standard 6. Empowerment and Advocacy**—Social workers shall be aware of the effect of social policies and programs on diverse client populations, advocating for and with clients whenever appropriate.

Interpretation

Culturally competent social workers are keenly aware of the deleterious effects of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism or homophobia, anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism, classism, and xenophobia on clients' lives and the need for social advocacy and social action to better empower diverse clients and communities.

As first defined by Solomon (1976), empowerment involves facilitating the clients' connection with their own power and, in turn, being empowered by the very act of reaching across cultural barriers. Empowerment refers to the person's ability to do for themselves while advocacy implies doing for the client. Even in the act of advocacy, social workers must be careful not to impose their values on clients and must seek to understand what clients mean by advocacy. Respectful collaboration needs to take place to promote mutually agreed-on goals for change.

Social workers need a range of skills and abilities to advocate for and with clients against the underlying devaluation of cultural experiences related to difference and oppression, and power and privilege in the United States. The empowerment tradition in social work practice suggests a promotion of the combined goals of consciousness raising, developing a sense of personal power, and skills while working toward social change. Best practice views this as a process and outcome of the empowerment perspective (Gutiérrez, 1990; Simon, 1994). Social workers using this standard will apply an ecosystems perspective and a strengths orientation in practice. This means that workers consider client situations as they describe needs in terms of transitory challenges rather than fixed problems. According to Gutiérrez and Lewis (1999), empowerment is a model for practice, a perspective and a set of skills and techniques. The expectation is that culturally competent social workers reflect these values in their practice.

**Standard 7. Diverse Workforce**—Social workers shall support and advocate for recruitment, admissions and hiring, and retention efforts in social work programs and agencies that ensure diversity within the profession.
Interpretation

Increasing cultural competence within the profession requires demonstrated efforts to recruit and retain a diverse cadre of social workers, many of whom would bring some "indigenous" cultural competence to the profession as well as demonstrated efforts to increase avenues for the acquisition of culturally competent skills by all social workers. Diversity should be represented at all levels of the organization, and not just among direct practitioners.

The social work profession has espoused a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and affirmative action. However, available statistics indicate that in the United States social workers are predominantly white (88.5 percent) and female (78.0 percent). The proportion of people of color has remained relatively stable in the social work membership of the National Association of Social Workers over a period of several years: 5.3 percent identify themselves as African American; Hispanics, including Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and other Hispanic groups constitute about 2.8 percent of the membership; Asians and Pacific Islanders 1.7 percent; and American Indians/First Nations People 0.5 percent (Gibelman & Schervish, 1997).

Social work client populations are more diverse than the social work profession itself. In many instances, service to clients is targeted to marginalized communities and special populations, groups that typically include disproportionately high numbers of people of color, elderly people, people with disabilities, and clients of lower socioeconomic status.

Matching workforce to client populations can be an effective strategy for bridging cultural differences between social worker and client, although it cannot be the only strategy. The assumption is that individuals of similar backgrounds can understand each other better and communicate more effectively (Jackson & López, 1999). Yet an equally compelling fact is that "the majority of clinicians from the mainstream dominant culture will routinely provide care for large numbers of patients of diverse ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds increasing the numbers of culturally diverse social workers is not sufficient. Even these professionals will need to be able to provide care for patients who are not like themselves" (Jackson & Lopez, 1999, p. 8). In addition, culturally competent social workers who bring a special skill or knowledge to the profession, like bicultural and bilingual skills, or American Sign Language (ASL) skills, are entitled to professional equity and should not be exploited for their expertise, but should be appropriately compensated for skills that enhance the delivery of services to clients.

*Standard 8. Professional Education—Social workers shall advocate for and participate in educational and training programs that help advance cultural competence within the profession.*
Interpretation

Cultural competence is a vital link between the theoretical and practice knowledge base that defines social work expertise. Social work is a practice-oriented profession, and social work education and training need to keep up with and stay ahead of changes in professional practice, which includes the changing needs of diverse client populations. Diversity needs to be addressed in social work curricula and needs to be viewed as central to faculty and staff appointments and research agendas.

The social work profession should be encouraged to take steps to ensure cultural competence as an integral part of social work education, training and practice, and to increase research and scholarship on culturally competent practice among social work professionals. This includes undergraduate, master’s and doctoral programs in social work as well as post-master’s training, continuing education, and meetings of the profession. Social agencies should be encouraged to provide culturally competent in-service training and opportunities for continuing education for agency-based workers. NASW should contribute to the ongoing education and training needs for all social workers, with particular emphasis on promoting culturally competent practice in continuing education offerings in terms of content, faculty, and auspice.

In addition, the NASW Code of Ethics clearly states, "Social workers who provide supervision and consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries." This highlights the importance of providing culturally sensitive supervision and field instruction, as well as the pivotal role of supervisors and Field Instructors in promoting culturally competent practice among workers and students.

*Standard 9. Language Diversity—Social workers shall seek to provide and advocate for the provision of information, referrals, and services in the language appropriate to the client, which may include the use of interpreters.*

Interpretation

Social workers should accept the individual person in his or her totality and ensure access to needed services. Language is a source and an extension of personal identity and culture and therefore, is one way individuals interact with others in their families and communities and across different cultural groups. Individuals and groups have a right to use their language in their individual and communal life.

Language diversity is a resource for society, and linguistic diversity should be preserved and promoted. The essence of the social work profession is to promote social justice and eliminate discrimination and oppression based on linguistic or
other diversities. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act clarifies the obligation of agencies
and service providers to not discriminate or have methods of administering services
that may subject individuals to discrimination.

Agencies and providers of services are expected to take reasonable steps to
provide services and information in appropriate language other than English to
ensure that people with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can
effectively participate in and benefit from its programs.

It is the responsibility of social services agencies and social workers to provide
clients services in the language of their choice or to seek the assistance of qualified
language interpreters. Social workers need to communicate respectfully and
effectively with clients from different ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds; this
might include knowing the client’s language. The use of language translation should
be done by trained professional interpreters (for example, certified or registered
sign language interpreters). Interpreters generally need proficiency in both English
and the other language, as well as orientation and training.

Social agencies and social workers have a responsibility to use language
interpreters when necessary, and to make certain that interpreters do not breach
confidentiality, create barriers to clients when revealing personal information that is
critical to their situation, are properly trained and oriented to the ethics of
interpreting in a helping situation, and have fundamental knowledge of specialized
terms and concepts specific to the agency’s programs or activities.

_Standard 10. Cross-Cultural Leadership—Social workers shall be able to communicate
information about diverse client groups to other professionals._

Interpretation

Social work is the appropriate profession to take a leadership role not only in
disseminating knowledge about diverse client groups, but also in actively
advocating for fair and equitable treatment of all clients served. This role should
extend within and outside the profession.

Guided by the NASW Code of Ethics, social work leadership is the communication
of vision to create proactive processes that empower individuals, families, groups,
organizations, and communities. Diversity skills, defined as sensitivity to diversity,
multicultural leadership, acceptance and tolerance, cultural competence, and
tolerance of ambiguity, constitute one of the core leadership skills for successful
leadership (Rank & Hutchison, 2000). Social workers should come forth to assume
leadership in empowering diverse client populations, to share information about
diverse populations to the general public, and to advocate for their clients’ concerns
at interpersonal and institutional levels, locally, nationally, and internationally.

With the establishment of standards for cultural competence in social work practice, there is an equally important need for the profession to provide ongoing training in cultural competence and to establish mechanisms for the evaluation of competence-based practice. As the social work profession develops cultural competencies, then the profession must have the ability to measure those competencies. The development of outcome measures needs to go hand in hand with the development of these standards.

References


Perry, M. J., & Mackum, P. J. (2001), Population change and distribution: 1990-


National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity 1999–2001

- Saundra H. Starks, EdD, ACSW, LCSW
- Lina Fong, PhD, ACSW, LCSW
- Emma Montero, MSW
- Ada E. Deer, ACSW
- Inderjit K. Jaipaul, DSW, ACSW
- Carmen Ortiz Hendricks, DSW, ACSW
- Robert D. Showers, BSW
- Clara Simmons, ACSW, DCSW
- Nelrene Yellow Bird, MSW
- Halaevalu F. Vakalahi, DSW
- Irene Moreda, DSW

NASW Staff

- Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH, NASW Executive Director
- Leticia Diaz, MS
- Luisa López, MSW
- Tracy Whitaker, ACSW

APPENDIX F

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING
AFFILIATION OF STUDENTS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM

This is a Memorandum of Understanding on the part of ____________, hereinafter referred to as "Facility," and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia by and on behalf of the University of Georgia School of Social Work, hereinafter referred to as "University."

A. PURPOSE.

1. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to guide and direct the parties respecting their affiliation and working relationship, inclusive of anticipated future arrangements and agreements in furtherance thereof, to provide high quality practicum learning experience for students in the University's School of Social Work, while at the same time enhancing the resources available to the Facility for the providing of services to its clients.

2. Neither party intends for this Memorandum to alter in any way their respective legal rights or their legal obligations to one another, to the students and faculty assigned to the Facility, or as to any third party.

B. GENERAL UNDERSTANDING:

1. The courses of instruction (i.e. social work practicum) to be provided will be of such content and cover such periods of time as may from time to time be mutually agreed upon by the University and the Facility. The starting and ending date for each program shall be agreed upon at least one month before the program commences.

2. The number of students designated for participation in a practicum education program will be mutually determined by agreement of the parties, and may at any time be altered by mutual agreement. All student participants must be mutually acceptable to both parties and either party may withdraw any student from a program based upon perceived lack of competency on the part of the student, the student's failure to comply with the rules and policies of the Facility or the University, or for any other reason if either party reasonably believes that it is not in the best interest of the program for the student to continue.

3. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, disability, or veteran status in either the selection of students for participation in the program, or as to any aspect of the practicum training; provided, however, that with respect to disability, the disability must
not be such as would, even with reasonable accommodation, in and of itself preclude a student's effective participation in the program.

C. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. The Facility will retain responsibility for the services to clients and will maintain administrative and professional supervision of all patient care activities provided by students insofar as their presence and program assignments affect the operation of the Facility and its care, direct and indirect, of patients.

2. The Facility will provide adequate practice facilities for participating students in accordance with the practice objectives developed through cooperative planning by the university's departmental faculty and the Facility's staff.

3. The Facility will use its best efforts to make conference space and classrooms available as may be necessary for teaching and planning activities in connection with practicum training programs.

4. Facility staff shall, upon request, assist the University in the evaluation of the learning and performance of participating students.

5. The Facility shall provide for orientation of both University faculty and participating students to the facilities, philosophies, rules, and regulations and policies of the Facility.

6. Subject to the Facility's overall supervisory responsibility for patient services, it may, but is not obligated to, permit appropriately licensed faculty members to provide such patient services at the Facility as may be necessary for teaching purposes.

7. All medical or health care (emergency or otherwise) that a student or University faculty member receives at the Facility will be at the expense of the individual involved.

8. The Facility shall do or cause to be done the following:

   a. Provide an experienced Field Instructor(s) for MSW students who shall have responsibility for the field related educational program of the student including delivery and evaluation of the educational program. It is recommended that educational instruction be separated from administrative supervision, and that records of educational instruction not be included with administrative records.

   b. Provide administrative support for the identification and provision of educational opportunities for the student. These educational opportunities shall be incorporated into the Practicum Learning Plan.
The Practicum Learning Plan shall be drawn up at the beginning of each academic term in a conference including the designated Facility Field Instructor, the Faculty Liaison, and the Student. This plan must be approved by the Faculty Liaison. Educational opportunities will normally evolve from the work station of the student. However, it is expected that during the period of field instruction additional opportunities will be needed to fulfill the various objectives of the Practicum Learning Plan. The Facility agrees to work with the School in arranging these additional opportunities for the student.

c. Permit the student to utilize time in the work week for educational purposes in fulfillment of educational objectives identified in the student's Practicum Learning Plan and agreed to by the Facility Field Instructor of the student.

d. Permit the Facility Field Instructor to set aside designated time each week for instruction of student for educational purposes, and to attend meetings/training sessions for Field Instructors.

D. UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The University will use its best efforts to see that students selected for participation in the practicum training program are prepared for effective participation in the clinical training phase of their overall education. The University will retain ultimate responsibility for the education of its students.

2. Prior to the commencement of a practicum training program, the University will, upon request, provide responsible Facility officials with such student records as will adequately disclose the prior education and related experiences of prospective student participants.

3. The University will use its best efforts to see that the practicum training programs at the Facility are conducted in such a manner as to enhance client care. Only those students who have satisfactorily completed the prerequisite didactic portion of their curriculum will be selected for participation in a program.

4. The University will not assign any faculty member to the Facility in connection with the operation of the program who is not appropriately qualified.

5. a. The University will require all participating faculty and students to show proof of liability insurance in an amount satisfactory to the College and the Facility. Upon request, evidence of such insurance will be provided.

   b. The University will require all participating faculty and students to show proof of health insurance if required by the Facility, in an amount
satisfactory to the Facility. Upon request, evidence of such insurance will be provided.

6. The University will encourage student compliance with the Facility's rules, regulations and procedures, and use its best efforts to keep students informed as to the same and any changes therein. Specifically, the University will keep each participating student apprized of his or her responsibility:

   a. To follow the administrative policies, standards, and practices of the Facility when the student is in the Facility.

   b. To report to the Facility on time and to follow all established regulations during the regularly scheduled operating hours of the Facility.

   c. To conform to the standards and practices established by the University while training at the Facility.

   d. To keep in confidence all medical and health/mental health information pertaining to particular clients.

7. If required by the Facility the University will require each participating student to furnish proof of a current physical examination, the results of which shall, upon request, be made available to the Facility. The parties may agree to have such examination performed by the Facility.

E. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The parties will work together to maintain an environment of quality practicum learning experiences and quality patient care. At the instance of either party a meeting or conference will be promptly held between University and Facility representatives to resolve any problems or develop any improvements in the operation of the contemplated training program.

2. Unless sooner canceled, or provided below, the term of this affiliation for training shall be for 36 months, commencing on________and ending on____________. This working relationship and affiliation may be renewed by mutual written consent of the parties. It also may be canceled at any time by either party upon not less than thirty (30) days written notice in advance of the next training experience.
PRACTICUM FACILITY:  
(Please fill in completely)

By:

______________________________________
Facility Name

______________________________________
Address

______________________________________
Address

______________________________________
Facility Phone #

By:

______________________________________
Authorized Official (signature)

______________________________________
(Please print name)

______________________________________
Title
APPENDIX G

BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL ASSESSMENT
The Psychosocial Study

The Product of Assessment

In this chapter, we will discuss the psychosocial study. This assessment method consists of the following: (1) the data that have been gathered from the client and other relevant people and sources; (2) an assessment of the client's mental status and current level of functioning—including ego and environmental strengths; (3) the establishment of diagnostic criteria (DSM-IV); (4) a theoretical framework that helps practitioners understand the collected data; (5) treatment goals; and (6) a method to evaluate the effectiveness of practice. Each of these components will be further explained in the following model. A sample psychosocial study of a child in a residential treatment center will illustrate this assessment method.

Preparing the Psychosocial Study

The psychosocial study is a process of gathering facts about the client and client system. This process enables us to form a diagnosis and establish a treatment plan.

A Psychosocial Model Outline

Identifying Information. The leading paragraph in this section of the psychosocial study provides a general statement about who the client is. You may include information about the client's age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, marital status, employment, resources (family, friends, finances, household members), and immigration status. Describe the client's appearance, noting dress and grooming, the quality of speech (hesitant, spontaneous, disconnected, pressured), and intelligence (average, below average, above average). The client's attitude toward the interviewer is also important—does she appear anxious, relaxed, angry, unfocused, or comfortable?
Referral Source. Who is the referring source? What does the referring source say about the client's problem? Is the client seeking treatment voluntarily or involuntarily? Does the client understand the reason for the referral?

Presenting Problem. This critical paragraph requires a statement of the present problems that have led to the referral. It is the reason that the client has come to see you. You may want to include a statement incorporating the client's exact words in presenting her problem. This may be especially significant when the client's presenting problem differs from the referral source's interpretation of the client's presenting problem.

History of the Problem. This section should tell the reader how the problem developed. Did the situation have a rapid onset, or is it chronic in nature? Describe the precipitating events, the course of the symptoms, and any previous attempts to solve the problem. If the client has had previous treatment for the problem, what was the length and frequency of that treatment, and what was its outcome? What was the client's response to the treatment? How did she feel about the therapeutic relationship? What are the circumstances under which the problem is currently manifested (home, school, employment)?

Previous Counseling Experience. Discuss any previous counseling attempts and their outcomes. It is helpful for the interviewer to have a complete record of the client's experiences with counselors as well as the client's perception of whether the counseling was helpful.

Family Background. Both the facts about the socioeconomic, educational, and occupational background of the family and some conceptualization of how the family members interacted should be included here. How does the client view her family, and how is she viewed by them? The genogram (McGoldrick & Gerson, 1985; McGoldrick, Gerson, & Shellenberger, 1999), a diagram of all members of the nuclear and extended family, can be a useful assessment tool in gathering this data. Genograms can be used in a variety of ways—for example, to illustrate a family structure, record relevant family information, or delineate significant family relationships. Another useful assessment tool is the ecomap (Hartman, 1978), which offers a visual representation of the family's connections with their environment. Models for a genogram and an ecomap are presented in Chapter 11.

Personal History. This section may include a developmental history (with a child client) and information about prenatal care, birth, achievement of milestones (such as feeding, toileting, language, and motor development), and whether these milestones were achieved within normal time limits. Were there any complications? If assessing a child, include information about school and peer functioning, levels of achievement, and learning differences. (For a thorough developmental history outline in assessing a child, see Webb, 1996, p. 76.) The client's previous attempts to cope with problems should also be discussed. A vocational history should be noted, including adaptation to jobs, bosses, and co-workers, as well as
recreational activities and special interests. Is there current and/or past use of substances such as alcohol and drugs, including prescription medication? It is also important to have the client’s sexual history (where appropriate) as well as information about any past physical, sexual, or emotional trauma.

**Medical History.** A medical history helps to rule out the possibility of medical problems and/or organic factors that may be contributing to psychosocial difficulties and also focuses the client's attention on medical needs that may have been overlooked. It is essential that the client has had a recent medical examination.

**Educational/Learning History.** It is very important to get as detailed information as possible on a client’s educational and learning history (whatever the age) in order to consider whether there may be an undiagnosed learning disorder that needs to be addressed. These may include various learning disabilities such as dyslexia or central auditory processing problems, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), or problems such as Asperger’s. Although emotional problems may impact the ability to learn, it is important to remember that learning difficulties can also cause emotional problems. It is important to get any recent evaluations when working with children and to make appropriate referrals for neuropsychological and educational evaluations when working with children and adolescents, but also with adults, as appropriate.

**Social Class.** Consider the socioeconomic history and current situation. For example, whether one comes from a lower socioeconomic class and now lives a middle-class lifestyle may cause a clash in values between parents and their children. Couples who come from different class backgrounds may also experience stress. The impact of social class may also affect the therapeutic relationship if the client comes from a lower—or a higher—socioeconomic class than the therapist.

**Cultural History.** It is important to understand the presenting problem within the context of a relevant cultural framework. This would include issues of bicultural identity, generational differences in cultural identification, and degree of acculturation to U.S. society. The culturagram (Congress, 1994) is a useful tool that addresses the family's reasons for immigration; their length of time in the community; their immigration status (legal or undocumented); the ages of family members at the time of immigration; language(s) spoken; contact with cultural institutions; health beliefs; holidays and special events; family, education, and work values; and traumatic stressors and crisis events. A model culturagram appears in Chapter 5.

**Spirituality/Religion.** Included in this section should be some discussion about the client's current or past religious affiliations or spiritual beliefs. It is important to differentiate between religion and spirituality. Spirituality is a personal sense of meaning or belief about one's life and the world. Religion is the way in which those beliefs are formalized, generally within a community context such as participation in a religious organization (Joseph, 1998). How do these factors help practitioners understand the client's perception of the events in her life, and how will this affect the counseling process?
Mental Status and Current Functioning. The concept of ego functioning is critical to social work assessment. (For an excellent social work text on this theory, see Goldstein, 1995.) Ego psychology is ideally suited to social work practice because of its emphasis on the environment, life roles, and developmental tasks, as well as on a person's inner capacities (Schamess, 1996). In the section on mental status and current functioning, the worker should include a discussion of the characteristic ego functions, mechanisms of defense, and any particular strengths or limitations—social, psychological, physical, or environmental. Also evaluate the client's motivation, ability to be consistent, degree of self-awareness, capacity for insight into her situation, and ability to follow through with treatment recommendations. The functions of the ego and their major components, according to Bellack and colleagues (1973), are briefly listed in Table 4.1. Table 4.2 shows a list of defense mechanisms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ego Function</th>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reality testing</td>
<td>Distinction between inner and outer stimuli. Accuracy of perception of external events and inner reality testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Regulation and control of drives, affects, and impulses</td>
<td>Directness of impulse expression. Effectiveness of delay and control and the degree of frustration tolerance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Object relations</td>
<td>Degree and kind of relatedness to others. The extent to which present relationships are adaptively or maladaptively influenced by or patterned on older ones and serve present mature aims rather than past immature ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Thought processes</td>
<td>Memory, concentration, and attention. Ability to conceptualize. Extent to which thinking is unrealistic or illogical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ARISE</td>
<td>Adaptive regression in the service of the ego. Relaxation of perceptual and conceptual acuity (and other ego controls).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Defensive functioning*</td>
<td>Extent to which defenses adaptively affect ideation and behavior. Success and failure of defenses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Autonomous functioning**</td>
<td>Degree of freedom from impairment of primary autonomy apparatuses (e.g., sight, hearing, intention, language, memory, learning, motor function, intelligence). Degree of freedom from impairment of secondary autonomy (e.g., habits, complex learned skills, work routines, hobbies, interests).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4.1  Continued

11. Synthetic-integrative functioning
   Degree of reconciliation or integration of incongruities. Degree of active relating together of psychic and behavioral events, whether contradictory or not.

12. Mastery-competence***
   How competent or effective one feels in mastering the environment.

*Defenses operate unconsciously to protect a person from anxiety by keeping intolerable or unacceptable impulses or threats from his or her conscious awareness. Defenses have both positive and negative aspects and are a necessary part of personality development. They become problematic when they are overused and thus distort reality, restrict ego functions, or interfere with further development. Included in Table 4.2 is a list of the major defenses of the ego and their definitions. (For a comprehensive discussion of defense and excellent examples, see Goldstein, 1995.)

**The functions that have primary autonomy include intellectual ability, perception, motor activity, and inborn capacities that facilitate the acquisition of language and make it possible to plan and initiate goal-directed behavior. Under ordinary circumstances the autonomous functions are not affected by conflict. The ego is capable of maintaining and further developing these functions during the various phases of development, provided that the social environment is “average and acceptable” (Hartman, 1939). The “fit” between an infant’s inborn temperament and the caregiver’s ability to understand and address the infant’s unique ways of conveying need states is crucial in determining the infant’s subsequent developmental course. When the child’s genetic endowment is compromised, or when the social environment is less than average and acceptable, autonomous ego functions can be disrupted and the child experiences significant emotional distress and suffers from serious functional impairments (Schauss, 1996).

***Mastery-competence has to do with adaptation, the behavior that allows individuals to cope advantageously with the environments in which they live. Adaptation is desirable when it creates a more harmonious relationship between the individual and the external world. It is critical that psychosocial assessment includes information about the client’s adaptive capacities and coping skills, as this reveals what strengths the client can summon to facilitate problem solving. An appreciation of the client strengths and latent capacities makes it possible to approach treatment in an optimistic and respectful way—without losing sight of the underlying problems in ego functioning and adaptation. The concept of adaptation makes it unmistakably clear that individuals do not exist separately from their social and biological contexts. As a species, humans are not only capable of changing their own behaviors to suit a range of different environments but are also capable of changing the environments in which live, to better suit their wishes and needs.


The Mental Status Exam. The mental status exam is a way of organizing and recording information about the mental state of the client, according to guidelines established by medical schools in the United States (Taylor, 1981). A mental status exam helps the social worker assess the quality and range of perception, thought, feelings, and psychomotor activity of a client so as to better understand how the client’s behavior may be symptomatic of a mental disorder. It leads to establishing a diagnosis according to the criteria set forth in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), a classification system that divides mental disorders into categories with defining features (Jordan & Franklin, 1995). The following are the broad categories that are considered in the mental status exam:
1. **Appearance.** Is the client well groomed or disheveled? Is his manner of dress appropriate for the occasion of the interview? Is he flamboyant or bizarre?

2. **Attitude.** Is the client cooperative? Guarded? Suspicious? Aggressive or belligerent?

3. **Motor Activity.** Is the client calm or agitated? Does he have tremors, tics, or muscle spasms? Is he hyperactive?

4. **Affect.** This refers to the client’s tone. Is it appropriate to the conversation? Is he, for example, talking about a sad event and smiling? Is his affect flat or blunted, apathetic, or labile—rapidly switching up and down. Is he expansive or constricted?

5. **Mood.** How does the client seem? Is the client depressed or anxious? Is there variability in his mood?

6. **Speech.** This refers to the client’s tone of voice. Is it loud or soft, whiny or high pitched? Are there any unusual characteristics or affectations (such as an accent or a halting manner)? Is the speech rapid or pressured? Does he stutter?

7. **Thought Processes.** Do the client’s thoughts flow logically? Are the thoughts organized or disorganized? Is the client coherent? Are there perseverations (repetitions of thoughts as if the client were stuck)? Does the client experience thought blocking (thought stopping or interfering thoughts), or loose associations (not following logically from one thought to another)?

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**TABLE 4.2  Mechanisms of Defense**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defense</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introjection</td>
<td>Also known as incorporation, it literally means a taking in whole (with a secondary consequence of destroying the object).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identification</td>
<td>A general process in which one takes over elements of another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Denial</td>
<td>A negation or lack of acceptance of important aspects of reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Repression</td>
<td>More complicated than denial—it is when one excludes an unwanted memory, feeling, or thought from one’s consciousness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Projection</td>
<td>A mechanism whereby consciously disowned aspects of the self are rejected and put outward and attributed to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Displacement</td>
<td>A mechanism by which feelings or conflicts about one person or situation are shifted onto another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reaction formation</td>
<td>Similar to repression—it involves keeping certain impulses from awareness. The mechanism involves replacing the impulse in consciousness with its opposite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Rationalization</td>
<td>The use of convincing reasons to justify certain feelings or actions so as to avoid recognizing their underlying unacceptable motive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Intellectualization</td>
<td>Warding off unacceptable impulses and affects by thinking about them in a cerebral way, rather than feeling them directly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Thought Content. Are hallucinations or delusions present? Does the client speak of being controlled by external sources? Is the content of his thoughts grandiose or bizarre? Is suicidal ideation present? Is the content circumstantial (the client demonstrates the loss of capacity for goal-directed thinking), or tangential (the client loses the main idea of the conversation and is unable to return to it)?

9. Perception. Is the client’s view of reality correct, or are there distortions in his thinking? Is there evidence of depersonalization or derealization?

10. Orientation. Is the client oriented to time, place, and person? How is his memory for present as well as past events? (Does he forget what he ate for breakfast but recall childhood events?) How are his concentration level and attention span? Is anxiety, a mood disturbance, or a learning disability responsible for the difficulty in focusing?

11. Cognitive Function. What is the client’s general fund of knowledge? Is it intact? (This function can be tested by asking the client to count backwards serially by sevens.) It is important to consider the client’s intellectual level when assessing cognitive function, as his IQ may impact his ability to perform this as well as other cognitive functions, including the ability to be abstract or problem solve.

12. Abstraction. Is the client an abstract or concrete thinker? (To help you assess this function, ask him to interpret a proverb.)

13. Judgment. Are there any disturbances in judgment? Does the client understand the consequences of his behaviors, and to what degree?

14. Insight. Does the client have insight into his difficulties, or are there impairments (minimal, moderate, or severe) that lead him to deny them? Is the insight intellectual or does he have an awareness of motives and feelings on an emotional level?

Establishing the Diagnosis According to DSM-IV. Now that the clinician has a clear picture of the client from the mental status evaluation, she is ready to establish a multiaxial diagnosis using the categories and codes described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Formerly, DSM-IV was in the province reserved for psychiatrists. Now, most agency social workers and other mental health professionals need to use the criteria set forth in the DSM-IV to diagnose their clients’ symptoms. The DSM-IV is based on a medical model and is symptom driven. Some social workers object to its use because they believe it is not congruent with the strengths perspective of social work. However, there are times when it is necessary to have a clear picture of a client’s symptoms. This information may help reveal whether a client is suffering from a mood disorder and whether depression or anxiety is interfering with a client’s functioning. The clinician may then elect to refer the client to a psychiatrist for a medication evaluation or recommendation for hospitalization.

These data guide the choice of theory, which, in turn, guides the treatment plan. For example, depressed clients may benefit more from a cognitive approach than from a psychodynamic model. An anxious client might need stress-management techniques framed within the context of behavior theory. Information about a client’s mental state can also inform the worker if psychotic processes
are involved, if suicidal thoughts prevail, or if the client is a danger to others. And, as more social work comes under the umbrella of managed care, practitioners are required to diagnose from a medical model and then to alleviate symptoms in order for agencies to receive financial reimbursement. However, the major purpose of the DSM-IV is not for insurance reimbursement. It is to enable the practitioner to "come closer to fostering a connection between an accurate diagnosis and an effective treatment" (Abramovitz & Williams, 1992, p. 340).

**The Multiaxial Diagnosis.** The multiaxial diagnosis consists of five axes.

**Axis I.** Here, the clinician will place the principal diagnosis—the clinical disorder or other condition that may be the focus of attention—and its corresponding code. There can be more than one diagnosis noted on Axis I as well as a principal diagnosis and a second diagnosis that may eventually be ruled out (R/O).

**Axis II.** Personality disorders and mental retardation, and the corresponding codes are found on Axis II.

**Axis III.** Axis III explains any physical disorders or general medical conditions that are present in addition to a mental disorder. Included in this category are learning disorders such as expressive language disability (see the case example on Vincent in this chapter).

**Axis IV.** Here, the clinician lists psychosocial and environmental problems that contribute to the exasperation of the current disorder. The stressors can be positive (job promotion) or negative (job loss).

**Axis V.** On this final axis, the worker places a score according to a global assessment of functioning scale (GAF), which ranges from 0 to 100. This scale is a composite of social, occupational, and psychological functioning. The higher levels of functioning prior to illness have a better prognosis. Enter the number indicating the client's highest level of functioning for at least a few months during the past year. Also indicate the severity of the disorder—mild, moderate, severe, in partial remission (full criteria for disorder were previously met but currently only some of the symptoms remain), or in full remission (no longer any symptoms but it is clinically relevant to note the disorder). Sometimes clinicians are asked to separate scores for the client's past, present, and future functioning (level to be achieved in order for treatment to terminate).

**Summary.** The summary section is the most difficult part of the psychosocial study to write, as it requires a high degree of conceptualization. All of the information that has been gathered is now pulled together within the context of a theoretical framework that helps workers understand the data and establish treatment goals. Theories can be value and culture driven (Turner, 1996, p. 12) and are harmful when used to label pathology, since they compromise the practitioner's commitment to empathy. Although they often resonate with the thera-
pist’s sense and use of self (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983), we do not think theoretical models that guide practice should be selected on the basis of subjective appeal. The advanced practitioner draws on a wide range of theoretical constructs to understand the client’s story. He also uses empirical research findings to select the best model of treatment, and his own research design to test the effectiveness of the treatment as he undertakes the therapeutic work.

**Recommendations and Goals for Treatment.** In this section, the worker elaborates on the treatment goals that flow from the psychosocial summary and indicates the specific ways in which the theoretical model selected will be used to guide the treatment. It is also necessary to include the client’s response to treatment recommendations (motivated, reluctant, needs to think about it, etc.) and whether alternative models (perhaps models not provided by the worker’s agency) would also meet the client’s needs. The duration and frequency of the treatment should be specified, as well as the treatment modality or modalities (e.g., individual treatment once a week combined with family sessions to be held on a monthly basis).

**Plans to Evaluate.** Evaluation should be built into the treatment plan. Reimbursement guidelines often dictate that treatment goals and objectives be written in behavioral terms that can be measured quantitatively. It is also important to remember that some theoretical models and treatment goals may be less amenable to quantitative description. Qualitative evaluation methods can be substituted when appropriate and/or used in conjunction with the more traditional quantitative methods that may not be able to totally reflect a treatment goal(s) (see Chapter 14, Integrating Research and Practice).

The following case provides a model for the psychosocial study. It includes a mental status exam and a diagnosis according to *DSM-IV*.

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**A Sample Psychosocial Study: The Case of Vincent, Age 7, a Traumatized Child**

**Identifying Information**

Vincent W., age 7, is a small, active, alert, well-groomed, verbal, intelligent, and engaging African American Protestant child who has been in residential placement for one month. His mother voluntarily placed him in residential treatment following unsuccessful outpatient treatment in the community.

**Referral Source**

Vincent was referred by the Child Development Center at St. Mary’s Hospital—which had been acquainted with Vincent and his family for the previous 18 months. Vincent
was initially referred to the Center because of poor school adjustment and problems in academic achievement. The sources of information used in this report came from the records of St. Mary’s Hospital and from Vincent’s mother, and are believed to be fairly reliable.

**Presenting Problem**

Vincent was admitted to residential treatment from his mother’s home because of behavioral problems at home and in school. Vincent was manifesting severe anxiety, hyperactivity, aggressiveness, and a low tolerance for frustration. He would hit, punch, and kick other children in his classroom, rip up his work when he became frustrated, and have frequent temper tantrums. Vincent also demonstrated this behavior with his mother, but not with his mother’s boyfriend, who seemed to have better control over him. Vincent’s mother was using physical punishment to contain him, and his aggressive behavior was escalating. She feared that if she did not have him leave the home, she “would lose control and hurt him.” Community supports did not appear strong enough to help her parent Vincent appropriately given his high level of difficulty.

**History of the Problem**

Vincent’s emotional and behavioral difficulties had a gradual onset. At age 4, when Vincent entered daycare, he was seen as very demanding, whining and pouting when his needs were not immediately met. At age 5, in kindergarten, Vincent was unable to sit still and was disruptive in the large group. He often had to be taken out of the classroom and restrained to prevent him from hitting another child or destroying things. Vincent went to after-school daycare, and on weekends he was cared for by a sitter while his mother worked. There is no information regarding his adjustment in those settings.

Vincent had difficulty entering first grade and was unable to function well within the large classroom setting. Vincent’s mother was frequently called to take him home when he became defiant and destructive. The school, recognizing Vincent’s difficulties, referred the family to St. Mary’s Child Development Center for an evaluation. The Center gave Vincent a complete medical, neurological, psychiatric, and psychological evaluation. Their diagnostic impression was “normal intelligence with a childhood behavior disorder.” The mental status report stated,

Vincent appeared to be a well-dressed, 6-and-a-half-year-old black male who was immediately sociable. He was trying to be a clown, and seemed to have a short attention span. His mood seemed mildly sad and his affect appropriate. He showed considerable anxiety—which was manifested physically—when asked to perform. There seemed to be a moderate usage of denial and avoidance with other regressive adaptations at resolution. Vincent evidenced guilt over his “badness” and tried to seek disapproval and limit setting. His fantasies revolved around not talking about things so
as to avoid getting hurt. There were recurrent signs of an early depression. He perceives his family as fragile and is looking for a male role model with whom to identify. Vincent blocked most material that tended toward the negative feelings he has toward his mother.

The medical report from St. Mary's noted no neurological abnormalities, and all findings were within the normal range. Some graphomotor difficulties were noted, and, academically, Vincent was behind the normal level for his age group in reading, spelling, and math. An expressive language difficulty was also noted.

**Family Background**

**Mother.** Mrs. W. is a 22-year-old woman who is herself the product of a traumatic background. She is the older of two children, whose father died when she was quite young. She was raised by a strict and aloof mother who administered severe beatings and punishments. At age 15, she became pregnant with Vincent, and was pressured to marry Clark W., a violent man, who was three years older than she. They moved to a northern city so that he could find work. Mrs. W.'s preoccupation with Vincent's care after the birth allegedly infuriated her husband, and he became increasingly abusive toward her. Mrs. W. became pregnant with her second child when Vincent was 1½ years old, and Mr. W.'s subsequent abuse toward her accelerated. When Vincent was 3 years old, Mrs. W.'s daughter died at the age of 18 months. The exact circumstances surrounding the death are unknown, but Mrs. W. holds her husband responsible. According to her account, their daughter ingested some bleach, whereupon Mr. W. beat the child for misbehaving. Mrs. W. was severely beaten when she attempted to take the child to the hospital. Vincent was a witness to all this. The baby was eventually taken to the hospital but was not admitted. She died the next morning. The couple separated one year later, and Vincent has refused to see his father since that time.

**Father.** Clark W. is described as abusive and volatile. He currently resides with his girlfriend and their 2-year-old child. He is said to be involved in criminal or sublegal activities and does not pay child support. Vincent expresses no interest in seeing his father.

**Boyfriend.** John S. has resided in the home for several years. He plans to marry Mrs. W. He is soft spoken and articulate and appears to provide care and support to Vincent. Vincent is very attached to him and refers to him as his father. Although Mr. S. seems to care for Vincent, he was not opposed to residential placement, and, when Vincent was at home, Mr. S. was unable to help to contain him.

**Personal History**

Vincent was an unplanned and unwanted child, born into an arranged marriage. There were no medical complications during Mrs. W.’s pregnancy, but she remembers labor as having been long, arduous, and extremely painful. Vincent weighed 8 pounds at birth, and Mrs. W. remembers that her first feeling about him was that she wanted him to “grow up.” Developmental milestones were achieved within normal limits,

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with no unusual occurrences noted, except for delayed speech. Vincent has had numerous separations and losses during his first 7 years of life. At 6 months of age, Vincent was sent to live with his maternal grandmother in the South for approximately one year, and then returned to his mother for a brief period of time. After his sister’s death, he was again placed in his grandmother’s care. When he returned at 4 years of age, Mrs. W. was working long hours and asked a friend, described as an alcoholic who had difficulty managing her affect, to look after Vincent. At age 4½, Vincent entered daycare. His mother dates her difficulties with him to the death of his sister, but acknowledges that she was too distraught over her loss to do much about Vincent’s poor behavior.

Medical History
Vincent’s general health has been good and there have been no hospitalizations. His last complete physical examination was conducted at St. Mary’s Hospital, prior to placement.

Educational/Learning History
Vincent is in the second grade. His academic schoolwork is on grade level.

Social Class
This is a lower-middle-class family that has worked its way out of poverty.

Cultural History
Vincent is an African American child born to a teenage mother who was forced into an arranged marriage with the 18-year-old father of her child. The couple left their familiar southern town and extended families to seek work in a northern city. One can assume that as a young African American family with few familial or economic resources, Vincent and his parents faced hardships that may have strained their personal resources.

Religion/Spirituality
The family is Protestant, and Mrs. W. was an active member of the church in her southern community. She regrets having lost this affiliation when she moved to New York and aspires to become a more involved member of her congregation when time permits. Currently, she attends church only on holidays and special occasions. Although not a highly religious person, she does believe in a higher power and finds comfort in prayer.

Mental Status and Current Functioning
(To best illustrate how the mental status exam is used in practice, we have incorporated the mental status indicators in bold type within the text.)

At the residential treatment center, Vincent remains anxious (mood), active (motor activity), and somewhat depressed (mood). He seeks support from his so-
cial worker and reassurance from the other adults in his environment (attitude). He comes to sessions well groomed and takes pride in his appearance (appearance). His speech is clear but there is some difficulty with expressive language (speech). In sessions he is variable (affect), and a wide range of functioning and unevenness of development do exist. There are frequent shifts between age-appropriate behavior and more regressed and infantile behaviors. In play, Vincent is creative, imaginative, and purposeful (orientation), and underlying themes of inadequacy and badness and fears of abandonment are repeatedly played out. With family dolls, he repeatedly submerges the girl doll in water and then brings her up to the surface of the sink. This repetitive play occurs in each session. He can be demanding, provocative, and at times genuinely obnoxious. His distractibility (thought processes), emotional lability (affect), and hyperactivity (motor activity) can generate considerable frustration in those who deal with him, and it is not always easy to avoid engaging in a power struggle with him. His reality testing is basically intact (perception), as is his judgment (judgment). Thinking is concrete (abstraction) and appropriate for his age. He seems to have some awareness of his provocative behavior (insight), but an underlying sense of “badness,” a need for punishment, impulsivity, and lack of control (motor activity) intrude on his conscious efforts to be more conforming. His good intellect, creativity, and artistic sense (cognitive function) are strengths. He is an emotionally vulnerable child who is fearful of abandonment (thought content). Vincent’s regressive and maladaptive defenses do not seem adequate to ward off his instinctual impulses, and it seems that he is in a perpetual state of anxiety (mood). Vincent refuses to talk about his sister’s death and avoids the worker’s attempts to bring the subject up in therapy. He accomplishes this by changing the subject or running around the room (motor activity). When asked by the psychiatrist what he would like to be when he grows up, he remarked, “I’m not going to grow up—I’ll probably die soon anyway.” Although Vincent cannot cope with his many internal conflicts, he does have a number of strengths. He is a likable child with a good intellect (cognitive function). Vincent is warm and enthusiastic and has the ability to form relationships (attitude).

Establishing the Diagnosis According to DSM-IV

**Axis I**
309.81 Post-traumatic stress disorder
314.01 Attention deficit disorder/hyperactive-impulsive

**Axis II**
V71.09 No diagnosis

**Axis III**
Expressive language difficulty

**Axis IV**
Removal from home—Severe parent-child conflict
Domestic violence (suspected abuse by father)
Death of sister (circumstances unclear)

**Axis V**
(current) GAP 35

Discussion of DSM-IV Diagnosis. (Although this would not need to appear in a psychosocial, we include it here to help you understand the rationale for the worker’s multiaxial diagnosis.)

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Vincent is a traumatized child who meets the diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Diagnostic code: 309.81. The criteria for PTSD, according to the DSM-IV (1994), is as follows:

A. The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present: (1) The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others. (2) The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. Note: In children, this may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behavior.

B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in one (or more) of the following ways: (1) Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts, or perceptions. Note: In young children, repetitive play may occur in which themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed. (2) Recurrent distressing dreams of the event. Note: In children, there may be frightening dreams without recognizable content. (3) Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated). Note: In young children, trauma-specific reenactment may occur. (4) Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event. (5) Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (not present before the trauma) as indicated by three or more of the following: (1) efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma; (2) efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma; (3) inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma; (4) markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities; (5) feeling of detachment or estrangement from others; (6) restricted range of affect; (7) sense of a foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage, children, or a normal life span).

D. Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (not present before the trauma) as indicated by two or more of the following: (1) difficulty falling or staying asleep; (2) irritability or outbursts of anger; (3) difficulty concentrating; (4) hypervigilance; (5) exaggerated startle response.

E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in Criteria V, C, and D) is more than 1 month.

F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

Specify if acute (duration of symptoms is less than 3 months) or chronic (duration of symptoms is 3 months or more).

Specify (delayed onset) if at least 6 months have passed between the traumatic event and the onset of the symptoms.
Diagnostic Rationale. Vincent has witnessed physical abuse and the death of his sister within the context of domestic violence. He seems to be specifically reenacting his sister’s death in traumatic play (Gill, 1991) as he repetitively drowns the girl doll in the sink and tries to rescue her by bringing her to the surface of the water. This qualifies him for a PTSD diagnosis based on Criteria A and B. For Criteria C, Vincent shows persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma by (1) refusal to have conversations about it, (3) inability to recall aspects of it, and (7) sense of foreshortened future (he doesn’t think he will live to grow up). To further make a case for PTSD as a principal diagnosis based on the final criteria, for Category D it could be said that Vincent displays both irritability and outbursts of anger, as well as difficulty concentrating. The duration of Vincent’s symptoms has been several years, indicating that there is chronicity involved. This would rule out considering a diagnosis of adjustment disorder with mixed anxiety and depressed mood (309.28), despite his two outstanding symptoms of anxiety and depression.

The second Axis I diagnosis of attention deficit disorder/hyperactive-impulsive (314.01) accurately describes Vincent’s current behavior and is based on Vincent’s meeting the minimum criteria of at least six symptoms for the disorder in the area of hyperactivity and impulsivity (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). These symptoms are:

A. (1) Hyperactivity
   (a) often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
   (b) often leaves seat in classroom when remaining seated is expected behavior
   (c) often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
   (d) often is “on the go” and acts as if driven by a motor
   (2) Impulsivity
   (d) often has difficulty awaiting turn
   (e) often interrupts or intrudes on others

B. Some hyperactivity-impulsivity or inattentive symptoms that caused impairment were present before age 7

C. Some impairment present in two or more settings (home and school)

D. There must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning (American Psychiatric Association, 1994)

Vincent has lived in a very uncertain environment for many years, with multiple losses and multiple changes. Young children lack the ability to verbalize what they are feeling; Vincent may be expressing anxiety through motoric behavior, thus giving the appearance of ADHD. Vincent should have the opportunity to be observed over time in his new setting, to see if his impulsivity and hyperactivity abate once he feels more tranquil and less overwhelmed.

On Axis II, Vincent was not given a diagnosis. As Axis II is reserved for mental retardation (Vincent is not retarded) and personality disorders (not used with children under age 12), the worker correctly entered “no diagnosis” on Axis II. She used the V 71.09 code because the absence of a code might indicate that the worker neglected to make a diagnosis.

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On Axis III, there is noted an expressive language difficulty. This information was part of Vincent’s referral material from St. Mary’s Hospital.

On Axis IV, the worker has noted removal from home, severe parent–child conflict, domestic violence, and the death of his sister as psychological stressors for Vincent. His current GAF score is 35 on a scale ranging from 0 to 100, which gives him a low rating for overall functioning. Persons falling between 31–40 show either some impairment in reality testing or communication, or major impairment in several areas, such as work or school, family relations, judgment, thinking, or mood. For Vincent, it would seem that the severe impairment in school and family relations justifies this low GAF score. The social worker has not been asked to predict a GAF score needed for discontinuation of placement, but Vincent would probably need to be functioning in a range above 50, showing moderate to mild symptoms, before discharge to outpatient treatment could take place.

Summary

Vincent’s past and current functioning can be best understood within a multidimensional framework that combines treatment principles from object relations, and cognitive and behavioral theories (see relevant chapters in this text). From a psychodynamic perspective, Vincent’s history suggests the coexistence of both trauma and attachment disturbances.

Vincent had multiple caretakers from the age of 6 months when he was sent to live with his maternal grandmother in the South. He was returned to his mother at age 18 months, placed with questionable babysitters (one suspected of alcoholism), and finally placed in daycare. These events can be understood within the cultural context of the African American family where kinship care is customary when parents are working to support the family. They also may be seen as an accommodation to his mother’s needs: She was attempting to separate from an abusive husband (Vincent’s father) and find active employment, all the while grieving the death of her daughter. Vincent witnessed the physical abuse directed at his mother and his sister. We might speculate that he was also the victim of physical abuse, although we have no corroborating evidence.

Cognitive mechanisms such as Vincent’s self-blame are often correlates of depression and low self-esteem, illustrating how the cognitive and affective consequences of trauma reinforce one another (James, 1989). Vincent also evidences destructiveness, identification with the aggressor, and feelings of loss and betrayal characteristic of children who have experienced trauma at an early age. There are developmental deficits as well. These include difficulties with trust, an inability to curb his aggression, lack of more mature defenses, and signal anxiety. Vincent’s behavior therefore needs to be understood within the context of his attempts to deal with trauma that he is unable to cognitively or affectively process. This dramatically affects Vincent’s ability to cope and master new experiences and expectations. Vincent’s repetitive drowning and rescuing of the doll is of serious concern as it represents post-traumatic play (Gil, 1991). Vincent’s unsuccessful attempt at mastery of his sister’s death leaves him feeling vulnerable and helpless and clearly signals that attention
must be focused on this particular trauma. In addition, Vincent worries that his mother will not take him home and that she will disappear from his life altogether. (She threw out his bedroom furniture once he left home, claiming that she needed the room for her study.)

**Recommendations and Goals for Treatment**

The goal of residential treatment is to bring Vincent’s behavior under control so that he will be able to return home and attend school in his community. This will be accomplished through psychodynamic, cognitive, and behavioral therapy that will help Vincent begin to address and work through his past traumas, while helping him develop the social skills and behavioral controls that will aid his adjustment at home and in school. The treatment plan for Vincent and his family includes

1. Providing a safe, supportive context to grieve.
2. Using play therapy (as opposed to talk therapy) to help Vincent work out his feelings about the death of his sister. Vincent’s traumatic play must be carefully interpreted so that he can experience some resolution to this conflict. The worker should talk to Vincent about what the “dolls” are feeling and thinking when he attempts to drown them in the sink. Working in this off-target way helps children gain some safe distance from highly charged material.
3. Addressing Vincent’s internalized self-blame (his inner sense of badness) by clarifying the circumstances of his sister’s death and the reasons for his separation(s) from his mother (family), in order to change the cognitive distortions associated with these events.
4. Working with Vincent on behavioral strategies to cope with his anxiety and fear.
5. Educating staff and primary caregivers in behavior management techniques that recognize Vincent’s behaviors as manifestations of his past trauma. This would include structure, support, and firm, but empathic, limit setting.
6. Giving Vincent the opportunity to form relationships with positive male role models, particularly an African American male(s), with whom he can identify.
7. Providing a highly structured classroom setting where there are opportunities for Vincent to feel empowered. He also needs outlets for his creativity and physical energy and an accepting noncritical approach to learning.
8. Outreach and involvement with his mother and her boyfriend that is educational and supportive, so that his mother and her boyfriend can be a resource for Vincent when he leaves the residential treatment center.
9. Placement not to exceed one year, with plans to transfer him to home and a community school.

**Plans to Evaluate**

1. A behavioral token economy should be set up with the teacher and with Vincent’s cottage parents. The social worker will show them how to implement this. Vincent will earn points for good behavior that can be cashed in for privileges at the end of each week. Vincent and the staff will develop a list of these privileges.

(continued)
Sample Psychosocial Study  Continued

The staff will monitor his response by tracking three target behaviors—hitting other children, following commands, and temper tantrums. The monitoring of these three target behaviors will begin immediately, and the intervention will take place after one week.

2. The social worker will request feedback about Vincent’s behavior from Vincent’s mother following each home visit. This feedback will be documented in her record. The worker will specifically ask about Vincent’s adjustment in behavioral and attitudinal terms.

3. The social worker will collect feedback on the above indicators from the cottage parents and the school following each home visit.

4. The social worker will interrupt Vincent’s posttraumatic play through direct interventions that will allow him to consider other options in his play. For example, the social worker can comment on the child’s play, take a particular role in the play, or get involved in the play. This intervention should begin immediately, and its effectiveness should be evaluated after each play therapy session, in order to determine the extent to which Vincent has moved away from his posttraumatic play.

5. A follow-up meeting will be held in 3 months to discuss the results of the intervention plan.

Source: Case material supplied by Helen Solomon.

Summary

In this chapter, we have illustrated how the psychosocial study, a method of gathering the facts about the client and his situation, leads to the development of a diagnosis that then informs the treatment plan. Mary Richmond, quoting Dr. Richard Cabot, wrote, “In social study you open your eyes and look, in diagnosis you close them and think” (Richmond, 1917, p. 347, in Woods & Hollis, 1990). To best demonstrate how the worker both looks and thinks, we presented the case of Vincent. This case example incorporates both the facts of Vincent’s young life that led to his placement away from home and the worker’s dynamic interpretation of those facts. We added the knowledge of the components of the mental status exam to help Vincent’s worker frame her diagnosis according to the DSM-IV. Our final product also includes treatment recommendations, goal setting, and a method of evaluating whether those goals have been met. We acknowledge that preparing a psychosocial study of this magnitude takes considerable time. However, we firmly believe that, when the worker is given the opportunity to think critically about the case before him or her, the final product is well worth the effort.
Learning Assignments

1. Develop a psychosocial assessment of a client following the outline in this chapter. What parts of the assessment have you found easiest or most difficult to write? Consider what additional skills or readings you may need to write the entire psychosocial assessment.

2. Working in small groups, practice writing a mental status assessment on one or more client(s) who were presented by students in your group.

3. Working in small groups, consider what theory or theories might be applicable in understanding or working with one or more client(s) presented by students in your group. Discuss your treatment goals and how you would evaluate whether these goals have been reached.

References


