

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
HANDBOOK**

**2023-2024**





*Jeannette Rankin Hall, University of Montana*

The University of Montana

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2023-2024

# Student Handbook

Updated August 2023

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## Welcome by the Chair of the School of Social Work



Dear MSW Students,

Welcome to the MSW Program at the University of Montana! We are honored you have chosen us for your educational experience and look forward to accompanying you through this journey. I hope you will see what I see as you join our School and that is our dedication to supporting students through the challenges and joys of social work, and our commitment to preparing you to address some of the most pressing social justice issues of our time.

Over the next two-three years, our committed and experienced faculty will partner with you to develop the knowledge and skills you will translate to a practice dedicated to centering the needs and strengths of those we serve. Our School believes in a teaching/learning framework and as such we look forward to learning from the vast knowledge and experience you and your colleagues bring to this educational space. We hope to facilitate a community of practice where we can learn from one another and experience the power that can come from collective efforts to resist and transform the systems our clients are impacted by.

Finally, we hope that as you move through our program you will witness our School's steadfast commitment to anti-racism, decolonizing and anti-oppressive practice. We look forward to engaging in discussion on these topics and working with you to actualize these commitments into practice!

Again, welcome!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley Trautman".

Ashley Trautman, MSW, JD  
Associate Professor and Chair  
School of Social Work



## School of Social Work Mission Statement

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

## School of Social Work Anti-Racism Principles

The School of Social Work is committed to living our professional values as detailed by the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics. As social workers we therefore promote social justice through critical inquiry and targeted actions that disrupt systems of oppression. In keeping with these efforts, we have developed a set of anti-racism principles to guide the core functions of our School. We recognize this document to be organic and open to change based upon our evolving understanding of these issues as informed by the voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Color. Finally, we recognize the important and impactful ways that oppressions overlap and interact with each other. Therefore, our anti-racism practice will take an intersectional approach to systems change (i.e. we will consider how racism, sexism, heterosexism, cisgenderism, ableism, ageism, classism, colonization and systems of patriarchy interact and use that understanding to create practices, policies and procedures that eliminate those conditions).

The School of Social Work will use our position, resources and relationships towards efforts that seek to dismantle systemic racism. To do so, we will:

### **Develop, improve and evaluate comprehensive plans to increase the diversity of our School.**

Our School will:

- Evaluate recruitment and retention practices to determine the extent to which these efforts result in representation of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)\* faculty and staff that mirrors the demographics of the communities we serve. We will use evaluation findings to create actionable plans that increase diversity.
- Evaluate marketing, recruitment and retention practices to determine the extent to which these efforts result in representation of BIPOC students across all programs that mirrors the demographics of our state and nation. We will use evaluation findings to create actionable plans that increase diversity.

### **Infuse anti-racism/anti-oppressive pedagogy into our curriculum and curriculum delivery.**

Our School will:

- Evaluate the extent to which MSW and BSW curriculum includes content on historic and contemporary racism, decolonizing and anti-racist practices. Faculty will work to adopt and expand anti-racism pedagogy across all programs.
- Create classroom environments where white supremacy, white privilege, and other forms of hierarchy can be identified and challenged while maintaining a classroom environment where BIPOC students feel safe and academically challenged.

- Evaluate the extent to which BIPOC students feel they belong and have the opportunity to succeed in our program. We will use information gained through this process to create actionable plans that promote equitable and inclusive spaces.

**Actively work to build our anti-racism literacy.** Our School will:

- Build the breadth and depth of knowledge on systemic racism among faculty and staff by participating in yearly anti-racist training and ongoing workshops with particular attention paid to understanding the history of racism in the United States, colonization, white supremacy, contemporary dynamics of race in our country, intersectionality and the role the social work profession has played in systems of oppression. Training content will build over time to ensure continual growth of knowledge.
- Create regular opportunities for faculty to consult on how to respond and disrupt micro-aggressions and moves to innocence that occur in the classroom where the responsibility of that response is on the instructor and not BIPOC students.

**Ensure all formal and informal School policies and procedures are anchored in anti-racist practice.** Our School will:

- Review School policies (internal operations, student handbooks and informal practices) to determine opportunity to infuse language that results in anti-racist practices.
- Evaluate School finances to determine opportunities to use/repurpose funds for anti-racism initiatives (e.g. marketing to increase BIPOC faculty and student representation, retention efforts focused on supporting BIPOC students, anti-racism materials for curriculum development).
- Create measures and systems of accountability to ensure our anti-racism principles are meaningfully adopted into practice.
- Center the voices of students who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color to inform evaluation and accountability processes.
- Institutionalize restorative justice processes as an option for acknowledging harm caused in the classroom as a result of microaggressions, conflict, and other forms of misconduct. Restorative justice provides an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to come together to explore harm and needs, obligations, and necessary engagement. To the extent possible we will embody restorative justice in all of our practices.

**Build relationships with the campus and greater Missoula community to support anti-racist initiatives.** Our School will:

- Ensure all practicum placements are committed to anti-racism, anti-oppression and LGBTQ affirming practices.
- Develop meaningful connections with BIPOC community organizations both on and off campus in order to support their work in the community. We recognize and honor that this support would be defined by the organization.

- Publicly denounce instances of racism, hate, discrimination and bias that may occur in the community and across the nation.

\* Throughout this document we use the term Black, Indigenous, People of Color and the acronym BIPOC. We want to recognize that in using this term, we are combining a number of populations that are distinct, have rich cultures and unique histories and therefore cannot fully honor the vast complexities of the experience of racism for individual groups. When possible, it's always best to be specific in our use of language that is informed by the person or groups we are referring to. [This resource contributed to our understanding on this topic.](#)

### Notice of Student Handbook Changes:

The University of Montana School of Social Work reserves the right to implement changes to policies and procedures outlined in this Student Handbook at any time. Students may be notified of these changes by email or other means when necessary.

## Personnel

### Dean's Suite Skaggs Building (SB) 340

Reed Humphrey, Dean, College of Health	SB 344
Jennifer Geist-Quigley, Director of Operations	SB 340
Mary Farrar, Budget Analyst II	SB 350
Donna Beall, Director of Student Services	SB 335
Erika Claxton, Administrative Associate for Student Affairs	SB 341B
Jonathan Neff, Director of IT	SB 213

### Chair & Directors Jeannette Rankin Hall

Ashley Trautman, MSW, JD	Department Chair	JRH 004
Deanna Cooper, MSW, LCSW	BSW Director	JRH 010
Katharina Werner, MSW, LCSW	Director of Field Education	JRH 023
Amanda Cahill, MSW, LCSW	MSW Director	JRH 109
Logan Cook, MSW, LCSW, LAC	MSW In-Person Program Lead	JRH 115

### Faculty

Jen Barile, MSW	JRH
Mary-Ann Bowman, LCSW, Ph.D.	JRH
Co Carew, MSW, Ph.D.	JRH
Sarah Fielding, MSW, LCSW	JRH
Laura Guay, MSW	JRH
Katie Karas, MSW, LCSW	JRH
Jessica Liddell, MSW, MPH, Ph.D.	JRH
Jen Molloy, MSW, PhD	JRH 116
Phyllis Ngai, Ph.D.	Eck Hall
Sarah Reese, LCSW, Ph.D.	JRH

## Adjunct Faculty

NOTE: Adjunct Faculty will vary from semester to semester. Adjunct faculty may not have an office on campus.

Kaylee Blackwell	Janet Finn	Torrye Hart
Adrienne Bombelles	Kimberley Garner	Andi Hoelzel
Melissa Clater	Cynthia Garthwait	Sam Ore
Barbara Cowan	Kerrie Ghenie	Rye Palen
Krystal Diel	Sarah Gillett	Kim Spurzem
Brenda Erdelyi	Alysha Goheen	Elise Watts

## Staff

Heidi Holzer	Primary Campus Advisor
Kinsey Webb	Administrative Associate
Tomas Hernandez	2+2 Program Coordinator / Field Education Student Support
Neil Carson	Operations & Finance Manager

# Master of Social Work Program

## Master of Social Work Lead Welcome



Dear MSW Students:

Welcome to the MSW program at The University of Montana! You have chosen a profession that is both personally and professionally rewarding and challenging. Social work offers countless possibilities to create meaningful change. Over the next two to three years, you will have opportunities to develop your knowledge and skills and translate your visions for strong communities, healthy individuals and families, and a just world. You and your colleagues bring diverse talents and backgrounds as you embark on this journey together. Members of your class have degrees in a wide range of disciplines. Your collective work and volunteer experience include work with children and youth, family support, health care, mental health case management, disability advocacy, sustainable communities, and organizational development.

You will join a committed group of faculty who possess a wealth of social work practice experience and who have made significant contributions to the social work profession. They are nationally recognized and dedicated to excellence, creativity, and innovation in social work education and practice. The faculty is proud of the MSW Program's advanced integrated practice framework, where the teaching/learning process is symbiotic.

What follows is the School of Social Work's *MSW Student Handbook*. It is designed to serve as a resource you can use during your course of study to answer questions that relate to the program's overall philosophy, required courses, and academic and non-academic program policies. The student handbook also includes the *MSW Practicum Manual* that addresses policies and procedures specific to your field placement. Please use this handbook as a guide and seek ongoing input from your advisor to clarify any questions and concerns you might have. The faculty and staff are committed to your education and to the social work profession. We will do everything we can to assist in your professional development.

Logan Cook, LCSW, LAC  
Clinical Assistant Professor / In-Person MSW Lead

## Program Background

The University of Montana has a long history of providing quality social work education for the state and region. The Department of Social Work (now School of Social Work) was formally established in 1971, and the BSW program was accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in 1974. The program has gained recognition for its pioneering work in competency-based education. The MSW program was approved in 2001, and the first class entered in fall 2002. The Program moved from CSWE accreditation candidacy to full accreditation in 2005. Accreditation was reaffirmed in 2009 and again in 2017.

In line with the institutional history, the faculty and administration are committed to providing a top quality MSW program that responds to needs in the state and region and provides leadership for the future of social work. After conducting a statewide needs assessment, the faculty conceptualized a framework for social work education that would respond to existing needs, incorporate best practices, and translate social work's social justice commitment into practice. We sought to develop a program that would not only meet accreditation requirements but also contribute to the making of a new kind of practitioner – one well prepared to face the social welfare challenges in the Rocky Mountain West and the intersection of local and global issues therein. The MSW program is designed to shape both professionals and a mode of social work practice that meet the challenges facing poor, marginalized groups and an overburdened state social service delivery system. Thus, the MSW program is committed to producing advanced-level professional social workers committed to *advanced integrated practice*. This, we contend, is the model best suited for meeting 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges to the profession, and addressing the complex social welfare concerns of residents of Montana and the Rocky Mountain West. Through our MSW program, we want to shape practitioners who, in addition to being committed to the values of the profession, grounded in theoretical knowledge, and in possession of well-honed practice skills, are also resourceful practitioners, creating new possibilities for social work thought and action.

## Integrated Practice

The social worker committed to *advanced integrated practice*:

- Engages in ongoing critical self-reflection and examination of the values and assumptions that shape social work theory, practices, policies, and programs.
- Brings historical, cultural, and political perspectives and a critical understanding of difference and oppression to bear in understanding the person-in-environment, social problems, interventions, and possibilities for social justice-oriented action.
- Integrates the skills of direct practice and community work and creatively bridges multiple levels of intervention.
- Continually brings knowledge and skills of research, policy analysis, and advocacy to bear in practice, regardless of setting, problem area, or specific job description.
- Assumes a leadership role in the profession and community to promote broad-based participation in efforts to empower individuals and groups, strengthen programs, and advocate policies and practice that promote social justice locally and globally.

## Program Overview

The University of Montana offers a two-year program of graduate study leading to a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. During the next two years you will complete 60 course credits (51 required and 9 elective credits). The curriculum is designed to meet CSWE's accreditation standards and the profession's professional competencies and practice behaviors (See MSW Student Handbook, Appendices A, B1, and B2 for statement of MSW program mission, goals, competencies, practice behaviors, and advanced practice behaviors). Your first semester is comprised of required courses. Your second, third, and fourth semesters are comprised primarily of required courses and, to a lesser degree, elective courses which you may select based on an area of interest to you. Keep in mind, however, that you can also take elective courses during the summer and winter sessions. Full-time students complete the program in two years. A three-year part-time option is also available. You will be assigned a faculty advisor to assist with class selection, portfolio planning, and practicum-related issues. Your faculty advisor also serves as chair of your portfolio committee. As you proceed through the program, you may find that your professional interests are more closely aligned with other members of the faculty. You are welcome to change advisors if you would prefer another faculty member, and if that faculty member is available. You may make a request for a change of advisor through the MSW Program Director.

## Generalist Year Planning for Full-time Students

Accredited graduate social work programs provide a first-year curriculum that is grounded in the liberal arts and a generalist social work perspective (see Appendix C for an overview of a generalist perspective). The generalist year courses in human behavior, social welfare policy history, practice, and research (listed below) promote development of core social work competencies and prepare you to identify with the social work profession; apply ethical principles and critical thinking in practice; incorporate diversity in practice; advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; build on strengths and resiliency; engage in research-informed practice; respond to contexts that shape practice and use a range of prevention and intervention methods in your practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. You will complete approximately 450 hours of field education or practicum experience over the course of the foundation year and participate in a weekly integrative seminar.

At the end of the generalist year you will tailor your professional education through completion of an individualized learning plan (ILP) developed in consultation with your faculty advisor. The ILP addresses required and elective courses, selection of practicum site and activities, and a portfolio plan (See Appendix D1 Portfolio Project overview and, D2 ILP Worksheet).

## Generalist Year: Schedule of Required Courses

### GENERALIST YEAR: FALL SEMESTER COURSES

**SW 500 Orientation 1 cr.**

Blended online and campus-based activities introducing MSW students to program philosophy, the social work profession's history, theories, and value base, and campus and community resources.

**SW 505 Foundations of Social Work Practice 2 cr.**

Introduction to profession's history, theories, values, policies, and practices. Students are introduced to the integrated model of social work practice. Students will register for one of two offered course times. Students commuting from outside of Missoula will get priority for the 11:00-12:50 class time

**SW 510 Human Behavior and Social Environment I 3 cr.**

Introduction to and critical consideration of social work perspectives on human behavior as influenced by the social environment. Particular attention is paid to biological implications, psychological theory, diverse human experiences, power relations, and processes of oppression.

**SW 515 Practice with Individuals and Families in a Community Context 3 cr.**

Practice-oriented course building on students' developing knowledge of social work theory; the processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and the application to practice with individuals and families.

**SW 530 History of Social Policy, Justice and Change 3 cr.**

Introduction to social welfare policy and services; examination of relationship between the history of social welfare policy and emergence of the social work profession; exploration of history of struggles for human rights and social and economic justice in US context. Introduction to frameworks for policy analysis.

**SW 532 Indian Child Welfare Act 1 cr.**

Dedicated to building understanding of the Indian Child Welfare Act and its application to social work practice. *For the first 7 weeks of the Autumn semester only.*

**SW 576 Generalist Integrative Seminar I 1 cr.**

Seminar accompanying first semester foundation practicum in which students apply critical thinking skills, integrate theory and practice, develop identities as professional social workers, engage in self-reflection, and make use of supervision and peer consultation.

**SW 586 Generalist Practicum I 2 cr.**

First semester foundation field practicum experience in a supervised setting designed to provide opportunities to integrate classroom learning and field experiences. Students

actively engage in contexts of practice and practice skills of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.

**FOUNDATION YEAR: FALL SEMESTER SCHEDULE (Full-Time, Year One)**

		Thursday	Friday
		SW 500: <u>Orientation</u> *held prior to fall semester start	SW 586: <u>Generalist Practicum I</u> *student arranges time
8:00			SW 530: <u>History of Social Policy, Justice, and Change</u>
9:00	SW 505: <u>Foundations of Social Work Practice</u> *pick one of the two options		
10:00			
11:00	SW 505: <u>Foundations of Social Work Practice</u> *pick one of the two options		SW 576: <u>Generalist Integrative Seminar</u>
12:00			
1:00			SW 532: <u>Indian Child Welfare Act</u> * First 7 weeks of Autumn Semester only
2:00	SW 510: <u>Human Behavior and the Social Environment I</u>		SW 515: <u>Practice with Individuals and Families in a Community Context</u> * This course will run the whole 4 hours (1:00 – 4:50) once ICWA concludes
3:00			
4:00			
5:00			
6:00			
7:00			
8:00			

## **GENERALIST YEAR: SPRING SEMESTER COURSES**

### **SW 511 Human Behavior and Social Environment II 3 cr.**

Advanced HBSE course focused on difference and diversity, histories and intersectionality of forms and mechanisms of discrimination, oppression, and frameworks for thought and practice that encourage critical self-reflection, recognize diversity, and promote human rights and social and economic justice.

### **SW 520 Social Work Research Methods 3 cr.**

Introduction to principles, methodologies, technologies, ethics, and statistical approaches of human service research. Emphasis on beginning capabilities in evaluation of social work practice and skill development regarding use of research to inform practice.

### **SW 525 Practice with Groups and Communities 4 cr.**

Practice-oriented course addressing theories, frameworks, principles, and skills of group and community work. Dynamics of group work and examination of modalities such as mutual aid, psycho-educational, and social action groups are addressed.

### **SW 577 Generalist Integrative Seminar II 1 cr.**

Seminar accompanying second semester foundation practicum in which students apply critical thinking skills, integrate theory and practice, develop identities as professional social workers, engage in self-reflection, and make use of supervision and peer consultation.

### **SW 587 Generalist Practicum II 2 cr.**

Second semester foundation field practicum experience in a supervised setting designed to provide opportunities to integrate classroom learning and field experiences. Students actively engage in contexts of practice and practice skills of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.

**FOUNDATION YEAR: SPRING SEMESTER SCHEDULE (Full-time, Year One)**

	Thursday	Friday
	SW 587: <u>Generalist Practicum</u> *student arranges time	
8:00		SW 520: <u>Social Work Research Methods</u>
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		SW 577: <u>Generalist Integrative Seminar II</u> *pick one of the two options
12:00	SW 511: <u>Human Behavior and the Social Environment II</u>	
1:00		SW 525: <u>Practice with Groups and Communities</u>
2:00		
3:00		
4:00		
5:00	Elective Course	
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)	
7:00		
8:00		

**Specialization Year Planning for Full-time Students**

The University of Montana MSW program offers a specialization year curriculum in *advanced integrated practice*. The specialization year develops an in-depth focus on integrated practice, expands breadth through required courses in the areas of research, policy, practice, and elective courses, and increases depth of theoretical knowledge and skills as you develop and demonstrate competencies of the practice behaviors required for advanced integrated practice (Appendix B2).

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

Please note, because the Specialization year curriculum builds on generalist year content, it is expected that students complete all Generalist Year courses prior to enrolling in Specialization Year courses.

### Potential Electives

Students choose elective courses that further their development of knowledge and skills for their area of practice interest. Possible electives include:

- SW 420 Child Abuse and Child Welfare (spring)
- SW 423 Addiction Studies (spring)
- SW 426 Substance Use Disorders and Social Work Skill Sets (Fall, Summer)
- SW 450 Children and Youth at Risk (fall)
- SW 455 Social Gerontology (fall)
- SW 475 Grief and Loss (spring, summer)
- SW 491 Motivational Interviewing (spring, summer)
- SW 551 Couples & Family Therapy (spring)
- SW 552 Differential Diagnosis in Clinical SW Practice (spring)
- SW 553 Social Work Addictions (fall)

Extra-departmental courses, as well as graduate-level courses in other relevant disciplines such as environmental studies, political science, and sociology may also be taken as electives. You will be informed of new elective courses offered by the School of Social Work as they are added.

Possible electives and certificate programs can be found on the UM Graduate School [website](#). Of particular interest may be:

[Public Health Certificate](#)

[Global Health](#)

[Women, Gender and Sexuality Certificate](#)

[Graduate Certificates through the Baucus Institute Department of Public Administration and Policy](#)

## Specialization Year Schedule of Required Courses

\*Please note, students cannot move into Specialization Year Courses until all Generalist Courses are complete.

### SPECIALIZATION YEAR: FALL SEMESTER COURSES

**SW 521 Advanced Research and Program Evaluation**                      **3 cr.**

Students apply transtheoretical models of change, action research, and participatory approaches to program evaluation in organizational or community contexts. Students develop advanced knowledge of research ethics and skills in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.

**SW 535 Advanced Integrated Practice**                                      **4 cr.**

Students hone advanced skills of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels; present case studies analyzing theoretically informed, evidenced-based interventions, ethical dilemmas, and social justice possibilities; engage as teachers and learners in exploring innovations in practice; and demonstrate research and communication skills through dissemination of practice-related scholarship.

**SW 578 Advanced Integrative Seminar I**                                      **1 cr.**

Critical analysis of how predominant social work theories and professional values and skills are being incorporated into the practicum.

**SW 588 Specialization Practicum I**    **3 cr.**

Advanced supervised field work in public and private agencies and institutions.

**SPECIALIZATION YEAR: FALL SEMESTER SCHEDULE (Full-time, Year Two)**

		Thursday	Friday
		SW 588: <u>Specialization Practicum I</u> *student arranges time	
8:00			SW 521: <u>Advanced Research and Program Evaluation</u>
9:00			
10:00			
11:00			SW 578: <u>Advanced Integrative Seminar I</u>
12:00			
1:00			SW 535: <u>Advanced Integrated Practice</u>
2:00			
3:00			
4:00			
5:00	Elective Course		
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and		
7:00	throughout the week)		
8:00			

**SPECIALIZATION YEAR: SPRING SEMESTER COURSES**

**SW 531 Methods of Social Policy Analysis                      3 cr.**

Students engage in policy practice to advance human rights and social and economic justice and apply skills of collaboration, leadership, and advocacy for effective policy action.

**SW 545 Practice of Organizational Leadership                      3 cr.**

Advanced training in professional leadership and how to effectively conceive, plan, design, implement, manage, assess, and change contemporary organizations.

**SW 579 Advanced Integrative Seminar II                      1 cr.**

Critical analysis of how predominant social work theories and professional values and skills are being incorporated into the practicum.

**SW 589 Specialization Practicum II                      3 cr.**

Advanced supervised field work in public and private agencies and institutions.

**SW 593 Professional Portfolio                      1 cr.**

The portfolio is a compilation of products (papers, videos, power point presentations, workshop materials, etc.) that demonstrate students' mastery of core competencies. Students work in consultation with faculty advisor to select and refine portfolio components, draft narrative, and prepare presentation. Portfolio is presented in spring semester.

**SPECIALIZATION YEAR: SPRING SEMESTER SCHEDULE (Full-time, Year Two)**

		Thursday	Friday
		SW 589: <u>Specialization Practicum II</u> *student arranges time	SW 593: <u>Professional Portfolio</u> *student arranges time
8:00			SW 545: <u>Practice of Organizational Leadership</u>
9:00			
10:00			
11:00			SW 579: <u>Advanced Integrative Seminar II</u>
12:00			
1:00			SW 531: <u>Methods of Social Policy Analysis</u>
2:00			
3:00			
4:00			
5:00	Elective Course		
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)		
7:00			
8:00			

**Part-time Options**

A part-time option has been developed to meet the needs of those students who are choosing not to attend full-time. Part-time students are encouraged to complete the program in three years and are required to complete it within four calendar years. They attend classes on Thursdays during their first year and on Fridays during their second and third years.

Part-time students do not begin the practicum until the second year, following their successful completion of Orientation (SW 500), Foundation of Social Work Practice (SW 505), HBSE I (SW 510), HBSE II (SW 511), and an elective course. The completion of these courses ensures that each student possesses the requisite knowledge of the profession's history, knowledge and value base, ethical framework, basic understanding of integrated practice, and a sound understanding of human behavior prior to beginning practicum.

During their second and third years students are concurrently enrolled in each of the program's practice courses, practicum and integrative seminar to ensure that practice-course concepts and skills are simultaneously applied and integrated while affording opportunities for critical analysis and reflection. Students also complete the required policy (SW 530, 531) and research courses (SW 520, 521) during the second and third years. Students must take these courses in their proper sequence, completing SW 530 prior to enrollment in 531 and completing 520 prior to enrollment in 521. It is important

that students completing the part-time program remain in close contact with their advisor to assist with course planning.

Students who wish to change their full- or part-time status after entering the program need to discuss plans with their faculty advisor and secure approval in writing from the MSW Program Director. Given that core courses are offered only once a year and are to be taken in sequence, any change in full/part-time status must be planned to ensure students take foundation and concentration courses in their proper sequence. Generalist courses must be completed before enrollment in specialization year courses.

### PART-TIME – YEAR ONE SCHEDULE

#### Fall

Thursday	
	SW 500 Orientation <i>*Held in blended online and campus-based format prior to fall semester start</i>
8:00	
9:00	SW 505 Foundations of Social Work Practice
10:00	<i>*pick one of the two options</i>
11:00	SW 505 Foundations of Social Work Practice
12:00	<i>*pick one of the two options</i>
1:00	
2:00	SW 510 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I
3:00	
4:00	
5:00	
6:00	

#### Spring

Thursday	
12:00	SW 511 Human Behavior and Social Environment II
1:00	
2:00	
3:00	
4:00	
5:00	Elective Course
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)
7:00	
8:00	

**PART-TIME – YEAR TWO SCHEDULE**

**Fall**

	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
	SW 586: <u>Generalist Practicum I</u> *student arranges time	
8:00		SW 530: <u>History of Social Policy, Justice and Change</u>
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		SW 576: <u>Generalist Integrative Seminar</u> *pick one of the two options
12:00		
1:00		SW 532: <u>Indian Child Welfare Act</u> *First 7 weeks of Autumn Semester only
2:00		
3:00		SW 515: <u>Practice with Individuals and Families in a Community Context</u>
4:00		* This course will run the whole 4 hours (1:00 – 4:50) once ICWA concludes
5:00	Elective Course	
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)	
7:00		
8:00		

**Spring**

	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
	SW 587: <u>Generalist Practicum I</u> *student arranges time	
8:00		SW 520: <u>Social Work Research Methods</u>
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		SW 577: <u>Generalist Integrative Seminar</u> *pick one of the two options
12:00		
1:00		SW 525: <u>Practice with Groups and Communities</u>
2:00		
3:00		
4:00		
5:00	Elective Course	
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)	
7:00		
8:00		

**PART-TIME – YEAR THREE SCHEDULE**

**Fall**

	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
	SW 588 : <u>Specialization Practicum I</u> *student arranges time	
8:00		SW 521: <u>Advanced Research and Program Evaluation</u>
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		SW 578: <u>Advanced Integrative Seminar I</u>
12:00		
1:00		SW 535: <u>Advanced Integrated Practice</u>
2:00		
3:00		
4:00		
5:00	Elective Course	
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)	
7:00		
8:00		

**Spring**

	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
	SW 589: <u>Specialization Practicum II</u> *student arranges time	SW 593: <u>Professional Portfolio</u> *student arranges time
8:00		SW 531: <u>Methods of Social Policy Analysis</u>
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		SW 579: <u>Advanced Integrative Seminar II</u>
12:00		
1:00		SW 545: <u>Practice of Organizational Leadership</u>
2:00		
3:00		
4:00		
5:00	Elective Course	
6:00	(Elective courses offered at this time and throughout the week)	
7:00		
8:00		

## Dual Degree Options

### MSW/JD

The School of Social Work and Alexander Blewett III School of Law have collaborated to offer an MSW/JD dual degree program. Interested students will apply to each program separately using established procedures for each program. Students completing the dual degree will complete courses at both the School of Law and School of Social Work. For more information regarding the application process and course sequence, please contact Ashley Trautman, MSW, JD: [ashley.trautman@mso.umt.edu](mailto:ashley.trautman@mso.umt.edu) or 406-243-6935.

### MSW/MPA

Under the MSW/MPA dual degree program, a student may complete two separate degrees, the Master of Public Administration and the Master of Social Work, in a shorter period of time than would be required if the degrees were taken consecutively. For admission requirements, see the [Apply page](#).

## Master of Social Work Specific Policies

### Professional Conduct Policies

#### Cognitive Functioning

Students must be able to participate fully in classes and practicum, process new information, draw logical inferences, and demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They must be able to use and maintain a range of professional records, documents, and record-keeping systems. Students must be free of significant deficits in memory, attention, impulse control, or judgment that interfere with obligations of professional practice.

#### Communication Skills

Students must demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, colleagues, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals. Students must demonstrate the ability to express their ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to listen to others. Students are expected to develop and demonstrate interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships. Students are expected to have sufficient skills in spoken and written English to understand and utilize the content present in the program.

#### Self-Awareness

Students are expected to develop a critical awareness of their own values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences and the ways they impact thinking, behavior, and relationships. Students must demonstrate the capacity to separate their own values from those of clients, an appreciation for the personal values systems of others, and respect for differences among people. Students must be willing to examine their own behavior and make changes accordingly if it interferes with their capacity to work effectively with peers, clients, and other professionals.

#### Appropriate Personal and Professional Conduct

Students are expected to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, and emotional stability required for professional practice. They are expected to form professional relationships and set appropriate, culturally sensitive, professional boundaries with clients, colleagues, faculty, and others students. Students are expected to demonstrate the emotional and mental capacities to cope with the stress inherent in social work. Students must not allow personal problems, psychological distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional responsibilities and relationships. Students are expected to seek and use appropriate help for personal, emotional, or medical problems that interfere with professional or academic performance, compromise judgment, or place at

risk the best interests of those to whom one has professional responsibility. Disruptive behavior toward colleagues, clients, faculty, staff, or fellow students will not be tolerated. For example: "Students are expected to follow classroom guidelines regarding confidentiality related to in-class conversations."

#### Professional Commitment

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession as outlined in the Code of Ethics. They must develop and demonstrate the ability to apply ethical principles and processes for ethical decision-making in practice. Students are expected to engage in practice that promotes social justice and challenges discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, class, marital status, political belief, religion, or ability. Students are expected to protect the rights and honor the integrity and worth of all persons.

#### Empathy

Students must seek to comprehend another individual's way of life and values. Students must be able to communicate this empathy and support to the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.

#### Ability to Receive and Utilize Feedback

Students must demonstrate the ability to receive feedback from faculty and agency supervisors and utilize feedback to enhance professional development. At times this means changing behavior or patterns that can impede professional conduct. Students are expected to develop and demonstrate skills in providing feedback to others.

#### Knowledge Base for Social Work Practice

The professional activities of social work must be grounded in relevant theoretical knowledge and research. This includes knowledge and skills of engagement, assessment and co-learning, planning and intervention, critical reflection, evaluation, and transition. Students are expected to develop and demonstrate knowledge and skills appropriate to BSW or MSW practice.

#### Presence

Students must demonstrate their presence in the program through attendance and participation in their course work.

### **Policies Regarding Academic Standards**

1. Students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 to remain in the MSW program and in the Graduate School. Students who do not attain a 3.0 average will be placed on academic probation and must meet with their advisor to discuss corrective action, which must be approved in writing by the MSW Director and be subject to the final approval by the Graduate School's Dean.
2. If a student's cumulative grade point average drops below a 3.0 the student will have one semester to increase it to the required level. If the student fails to increase

his or her grade point average to 3.0 the student will be terminated from the program.

3. A student who receives a grade of "C-" or less in any course is required to repeat that course with a grade of "C" or better.
4. A student who receives a grade of "F/ NCR" grade is automatically suspended from the program pending an academic review meeting with the MSW Program Director. The review may result in termination from the program for failure to meet minimum academic standards or in a corrective action plan in which student is required to repeat the course and address academic concerns. The student may not enroll in more advanced coursework until the course has been repeated with a grade of "C" or better. Please note, students who do not respond to requests for meetings as detailed by this section will be considered as accepting of the outlined process and outcome as recommended by faculty.
5. Students who fail to maintain an equivalent grade of "C" or better in the practicum may be terminated from the program.
6. Students who are dismissed for academic reasons have the right to a hearing for the purpose of presenting information in support of possible reinstatement.

### **Termination from the Master of Social Work Degree Program**

**Termination for Academic Reasons:** A student may be terminated from the program for the following reasons:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic standards as established by The University of Montana and the School of Social Work. (This is automatic and may take place without a review or further procedure.)
- Academic misconduct such as cheating, lying, or plagiarism (See UM Student Conduct Code).
- Falsifying of academic records or other forms of scholastic dishonesty.

**Termination for Non-academic Reasons:** A student may be terminated from the program for non-academic reasons. A student may be terminated from the social work program if she or he engages in unethical behavior or is demonstrably deficient in the preceding list of abilities and attributes. Students enrolled in the program must demonstrate through their classroom and practicum performance an understanding of and a commitment to social work values, principles, and ethics and competency in fundamental skills. Students are required to act in accordance with the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics. Students violating the Code of Ethics will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include low performance evaluation, removal from the practicum, or dismissal from the program. In some cases, violation of the Code of Ethics may place the student as liable in civil or criminal action. Students may also be terminated from the program if a personal, emotional, mental, or behavioral problem that is exhibited in any area of the student's life appears to place social work clients, colleagues, or other students at risk of physical or psychological harm. Judgments regarding such issues will be made by the faculty of the School with recommendations for

corrective action made to the Dean of the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences and the Associate Provost of the Graduate School.

Any of the following behaviors may result in disciplinary review and possible recommendation for termination from the MSW program:

- Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the UMSSW Essential Skills and Functions (signed by student via Sonia practicum software before entering generalist year practicum)
- Violations of the UM Student Conduct Code.
- Documented evidence of conviction of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, that occurs during the course of study, or that occurred prior to admission to the program and became known after admission.
- Drug/alcohol or other forms of addictive behavior that result in significant impairment.
- Failure to address personal, emotional, medical, or legal problems that interfere with professional judgment, performance, and responsibilities.
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior.
- Demonstrable deficiency in the required personal and professional abilities and attributes.
- Disruptive behavior toward students, colleagues, faculty, staff, clients, or community members (on campus in field placement, or in the community).

The student will be subject to review by the faculty or representative group thereof for recommendations regarding possible corrective action.

### **Policies for Review of Student Performance**

If a student's behavior is deemed to be in violation of the expected standards of academic and/or non-academic conduct, the following process will occur:

1. The student will be notified of the specific concerns.
2. A representative body of the social work faculty (generally including the Chair, BSW or MSW Program Director, student's advisor, and other members of the faculty as appropriate), will meet to discuss the concerns and possible courses of action. The student will have the right to address the faculty, with a personal representative of the student's choice present. The possible faculty recommendations include the following:
  - a. No action.
  - b. A plan and timeline for corrective action by the student.
  - c. Recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School for dismissal from the social work program.
3. The student will be informed in writing of the faculty recommendations.
4. The student has the right to appeal the decisions of the faculty. To do so, the student should present a formal letter to the Dean of the Graduate School concerning relevant details that were misrepresented, or contingent circumstances within 10 days. The Dean will then render a decision on this matter.

## **Additional Program Policies**

The program has also developed the following policies and procedures that students are expected to follow in completing their program course work and practicum placement. These policies and procedures include:

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance in all courses is required. The specific attendance policy for each course will be established by the course instructor. Students can find The University of Montana Attendance/Absence Policy on the Registrar's [website](#).

### **Change of Status Request**

Students who find an exceptional problem in completing their initially planned course of study (i.e., full-time or part-time) must request a change in status in writing, through their Academic Advisor and to the MSW Director by April 1 (for Fall semester) and November 1 (for Spring semester). This request must occur after consultation with the assigned Academic Advisor, who will assist in developing a revised course of study and forward the student request to the Director to meet the deadline date.

Every attempt will be made to honor student requests; however, the needs and objectives of the program will be considered in making these decisions. Students are required to complete foundation and concentration courses in their designated sequence.

### **Incomplete Grades**

The grade of Incomplete (I) is a temporary grade assigned to students who have not completed course work due to extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control. Students requesting an incomplete must request the grade with the instructor and determine the materials to be submitted with a completion deadline listed. Please note, students must complete any incomplete courses prior to the start of the next term. At the time the student turns in incomplete course work, the course instructor will complete a Change of Grade form. It is the responsibility of the course instructor to turn in the Change of Grade form to the School of Social Work for processing. Students are responsible for discussing any changes with the Financial Aid office to ensure they understand how incompletes or course withdrawals will affect financial aid packages.

### **Life Experience**

The School of Social Work will not grant course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

### **Use of APA Style of Citation**

All social work papers and reports are to use the American Psychological Association (APA) editorial styles for citing sources used (i.e., quotations and ideas drawn from books and articles). Individual teachers may vary in their requirements concerning overall format, title

pages, etc. The University Bookstore sells the APA Manual of Style.

Online Resources:

- [Purdue Owl](#)
- [Academic Writer Tutorial](#)

### School Governance Committees

Students are encouraged to actively participate in the formulation and modification of policies affecting academic and student affairs seeking nomination to available committees (e.g., Dean's Committee, Student Affairs Committee).

### Course Exemptions, Waivers or Substitutions

In those cases where it appears that students possess the requisite knowledge and skills that are included in first year (generalist) coursework they are eligible to petition for a course exemption, waiver, or substitution. The requirements for course exemptions, waivers, or substitutions are described below:

- **Exemptions** – Exemptions are granted to those students who have successfully completed graduate-level coursework taken as a graduate or non-degree seeking graduate student (with grade B or better) that clearly duplicates foundation course content. Students receiving an exemption are not required to register for additional credits to replace those for the course(s) from which they are exempt. The credits awarded for the previous coursework will be counted. As a result, the student will have a reduction in the number of credits required for the degree. Eligible students include those identified by the MSW Director during review of application materials as having completed the requisite course content and students who believe they have completed similar course content and request to be considered for an exemption. For example, a student who completed a graduate-level research methods course may be eligible for exemption from SW 520. The student would be required to complete 57 rather than 60 credits for the MSW degree. Students requesting a consideration for an exemption must submit:
  - 1) a copy of the previously completed course syllabus;
  - 2) copies of completed course assignments, upon request from the MSW Program Director; and
  - 3) an official copy of transcripts indicating a grade of B or better in the course.

If these documents indicate that similar course content has been successfully completed through prior coursework the MSW Director can grant an exemption.

- **Waivers** – When students can complete course work in the subject area of a required foundation course and can demonstrate mastery of the course content, they can request a waiver for the corresponding course(s). For example, a student who has completed an advanced undergraduate social research methods class may be eligible

for a waiver for SW 520. Requests for a course waiver must be submitted to the course instructor at least two weeks prior to the start of the term in which the course is being offered. The request must include:

1. a copy of the previously completed course syllabus;
2. copies of completed course assignments; and
3. an official copy of transcripts indicating a grade of B or better.

Following review of the documents and interview with the student, the instructor will make a recommendation to the MSW Program Director as to whether or not the student making the request is eligible to waive the course. The instructor may require the student to take an equivalency examination to demonstrate mastery of core course concepts. If the instructor determines that similar coursework has been successfully completed (grade B or better) and that the student has mastered the core concepts, a course waiver is issued. If the student successfully passes the examination, a course waiver is issued. The waiver exempts the student from enrolling in the foundation course but it does not grant course credits. As a result, the student must enroll in an alternative course to complete the 60 credits required for the MSW program.

- **Substitutions** – A substitution refers to using one course in lieu of another for a required generalist or specialization year course. Requests for substitutions must be made to the MSW Director one month prior to the course's start date. Students making a substitution request must have a legitimate reason for making the substitution and must submit a copy of the syllabus of the course being proposed for substitution.

### Elective Courses

Students take a minimum of nine elective course credits during their course of study. Students are encouraged to choose elective courses that compliment an area of emphasis as outlined in this handbook (*interpersonal practice, community and organizational practice, or social and political change*, pp. 39-40) or ones that fit best with their personal learning goals. Students can enroll in elective courses starting spring semester of the first year. Students can take a *maximum* of six credits at the 400 level if the course is an approved graduate course option (designated UG) and completed for graduate credit. Courses below the 400 level cannot be taken for graduate level credit. A minimum of three credits must be completed within the School of Social Work, and a minimum of three credits must be completed at the 500 level or above, unless an exception is granted by the MSW Program Director or the student is completing the LAC track which would allow for all electives to be at the 400 level. Students interested in Independent Study or Omnibus credits must complete them at the 500 level or above.

Although elective courses are typically completed in the School of Social Work students are also encouraged to consider elective courses outside of the School. When students choose electives outside of the School the following stipulations apply:

1. One graduate level course may be taken at another institution
2. A maximum of six credit hours can be taken outside the School and be applied toward requirements for the MSW degree from The University of Montana

The following steps must be completed in consultation with the student's academic adviser before taking a course outside of the School:

1. Develop a rationale and plan to take a course elsewhere. Identify the course by title, as well as the department and institution where the course is located.
2. Validate that the proposed course is offered for graduate credit.
3. Obtain a signature from an academic advisor indicating that the course is appropriate and offered for graduate credit at the 400 level or above.
4. Forward a copy of the proposal to the MSW administrative assistant for student's file.

Students also have the option to pursue elective credits through independent studies. Students who wish to pursue this option should follow the procedure outlined above for taking courses outside the department and meet with their academic advisor to discuss potential learning opportunities with faculty.

### **In-progress Grades**

The grade of "N" denotes a course is in progress and is a temporary grade assigned to students for both their first semester of generalist practicum and first semester of specialization practicum. The temporary grade is replaced with a permanent grade based on the score earned on the final practicum evaluation received at the end of each practicum year. Please also see page 14 of this Handbook for incomplete grade information.

### **Leave of Absence**

A leave of absence is a period during which students maintain their status, but are not entitled to The University of Montana's services provided by the payment of tuition or fees.

A request for a leave of absence can be made at any time during the academic year for the following semester. A leave of absence may begin during a semester, provided the completed application for leave is processed before the end of the fourth-class session; in this case the entire semester is counted toward the leave. Students desiring leaves of absence must discuss the request with their advisor and the MSW Director. The request for leave will be reviewed at the next available faculty meeting. A Leave of Absence request form (See Appendix H) must be completed and approved by the Chair of the School of Social Work and the Dean of the Graduate School. A date of return will be agreed upon in advance. A student who fails to return on the agreed date will be considered to have withdrawn from The University of Montana. Students on leave are fully responsible for returning on the agreed date.

Students returning from a leave of absence must complete all outstanding required course

work at least two weeks before the first day of classes in the semester in which they are returning.

A leave of absence does not waive the five year maximum timeline for completion of the degree. Students must complete the MSW program in five calendar years (ten active semesters) from the time of acceptance.

According to UM Graduate School Policy:

“Graduate students who are not continuously registered will be dropped from their programs. If students are required to step out of their programs because of an emergency, they may petition for a leave of absence from their program by filling out a Graduate School Request for Leave of Absence Form. The student's program chair or dean signs the form and the student submits it to the Graduate School. The Graduate Dean will sign the form indicating approval or disapproval of the leave for the period of time requested. The length of a leave of absence cannot exceed a year, but the student can petition for additional time after one year.

Leaves of absence will not be approved for the purpose of working on jobs, research, thesis, dissertations or to establish residency.

Students who have not maintained continuous registration or who are returning to the university after an approved leave of absence must follow the procedure for readmission.”

In addition, students must be registered for a minimum of 3 credits per semester to maintain continuous registration. Students must be enrolled for a minimum of 3 credits in the semester that they officially graduate. If students have incomplete grades that delay graduation, they must enroll for an additional 3 credits during the semester in which they complete graduation requirements.

### **Time Limits**

All requirements for the degree must be completed within five years from the student's entry into the program. No graduate course offered for the degree may be more than six years old at the time degree requirements are completed with the exception of any courses accepted in transfer.

### **Transfer Credit (Currently being re-approved by Faculty Senate)**

A maximum of thirty (30) semester credits may be taken for graduate credit through another accredited MSW Program with the following provisions:

1. The actual number of credits accepted, up to the maximum of 30, is to be determined by the MSW Director and subject to final approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. A maximum of nine (9) general graduate credits can be transferred in.
3. The credits for required social work classes must be from a CSWE- accredited School of Social Work.

3. A GPA of 3.0 or better must be earned in courses to be considered for transfer.
4. Credits are transferable, grades are not.
5. All courses submitted for transfer credit at the time of application must be completed prior to the student's enrollment into the program, and decisions on acceptance of transfer credit must be made at the time the plan of study is approved.
6. Official transcripts of the courses taken at other institutions must be filed with the School of Social Work and the Graduate School.
7. The applicant must make available upon request course descriptions, material summarizing content, and samples of the applicant's coursework.

### Withdrawal from Courses

To withdraw from a course, the student must complete the appropriate form available from the Registrar's Office. A grade of "W" will be assigned for students who withdraw prior to the fourth class meeting. Withdrawal after the deadline will result in a grade of "F," except when extenuating circumstances are involved. Students who wish to withdraw without academic penalty after the deadline must present their case in writing before the end of the course to the Associate Dean of the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences.

### Withdrawal from Master of Social Work Degree Program

Withdrawal from the program can take many forms. A student may officially withdraw, be dismissed, take a leave of absence, or be administratively withdrawn. Withdrawal from the program implies withdrawal from all courses, and the Graduate School's regulations concerning grades are applicable.

Mere non-attendance does not constitute official withdrawal from the program. It is necessary to inform the School of Social Work of your intention to withdraw, and this request will be forwarded to the Graduate School. Unauthorized withdrawal from the program or nonattendance (failure to register and attend fall & spring semesters) will result in administrative withdrawal.

### Tuition, Fees and Registration

The UM Office of Business Services provides up-to-date information on graduate student tuition and fees. Check their [website](#) for more information.

### Financial Aid

**TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS:** A limited number of teaching and research assistantships are available from the Graduate School and external funding sources. In addition, The School of Social Work offers RA/TA positions for 6-12 hours per week. Awards are made on a semester-by-semester basis.

**SHORT-TERM LOANS:** Loans with a maximum of \$1,000 are available through the College of Health Professions. Funding is derived from Burroughs-Wellcome Pharmaceutical Company donations. Contact College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, at 243-4656 for assistance.

**FINANCIAL AID PACKAGES:** Graduate financial aid packages typically include a combination of need-based subsidized and unsubsidized student loans. A student using the FAFSA automatically applies for all federal and institutional loans with one application. Students who desire work study, and who are not on assistantships, are also considered with the FAFSA application.

Please see the Graduate School [website](#) for further information on financial assistance.

### **Advising**

The MSW program assigns students faculty advisors who can assist students with academic planning and career development. In addition, faculty advisors serve as chair of student's portfolio committee. Although faculty advisors are here to help, it is important for students to realize that the ultimate responsibility for meeting academic and graduation requirements is their own.

### **Registration**

Please contact your faculty advisor at the School of Social Work for advising information prior to registration each semester. For course planners and supplemental information see our "Courses by Semester" webpage at: [Website](#)

The Graduate School's continuous registration policy requires students to register for every term unless they have an approved leave of absence. Students must register for a minimum of 3 credits to remain in good standing with the Graduate School. For further information on the continuous registration policy. See the Graduate School policy website at: [Website](#)

Leaves of Absence are normally for a maximum of one semester and must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Terminal registration for a minimum of 3 credits is required for all graduate students in their final term.

Registration is done through the Cyber BEAR system. Please visit the Cyberbear website at <http://cyberbear.umt.edu/> for information on the registration process, courses schedules, payment of tuition and fees, and important dates and deadlines for the academic year.

### **Student Participation in MSW Program Governance**

The School of Social Work encourages the active participation of MSW students in the formulation and modification of policies and in activities affecting academic and student affairs through participation in advisory and decision-making bodies such as the MSW Program Committee, Student Evaluation Committee, Faculty Evaluation Committee,

Search Committee, MSW Orientation Committee, and MSW Graduation Committee. Requests for nomination for membership and participation in these committees, along with descriptions of the committee and member responsibilities, are sent by email to all MSW students at the start of fall semester.

**The MSW Program Committee** addresses policy and program issues on an ongoing basis. The Committee is convened by the MSW In-person Program Lead on a monthly basis to address

curricular matters, program development and renewal, and specific student initiatives. The Committee is made up of the MSW In-person Program Lead, two faculty members, and a student member who also serves as staff to the committee. The MSW In-person Program Lead sends out a call for participation to the students in the fall, and appointments to this and other committees are made in consultation with the faculty. Student members of the committee bring student concerns to the group and participate as full members of the committee. The committee reports regularly to the full faculty regarding policies and procedures that might be modified to improve the program.

**Faculty and Student Evaluation Committees:** The performance of School of Social Work faculty members is evaluated on an annual basis. Evaluations are conducted by an elected Faculty Evaluation Committee, which also includes one MSW student member. The student member participates in all meetings and deliberations of the committee but does not have voting rights on the committee, per the UM Collective Bargaining Agreement. A Student Evaluation Committee (composed of both BSW and MSW students) reviews course evaluation data for each faculty member and submits its findings to the Faculty Evaluation Committee. Students review, summarize, and write comments on each faculty member's individual performance record, including faculty member requests for normal salary increases, merit increases, promotions, or tenure.

**UM Graduate Student Council:** One MSW student is also chosen by his or her peers to represent the MSW students on the campus-wide Graduate Students' Council. The Council represents the interests of all graduate students university-wide.

**The Social Justice Action Network (SJAN)** was founded in 2005 as an activist organization with student, faculty, and community membership to address local, statewide, national and international issues of social work and social justice. SJAN has developed a mission statement and approved a constitution and by-laws to become an officially recognized organization through the Associated Students of The University of Montana. SJAN is not currently active, however, students are welcome to reactivate it.

**Additional Opportunities for Participation:** Whenever the School undertakes a search for new faculty members, one MSW student serves as a member of the Search Committee. Committees comprised of students and faculty are formed each year to plan the fall orientation for incoming first-year MSW students and for graduation activities. Students have taken leadership in the community-building process of new-student orientation. Students are encouraged to develop and sustain collective, organized efforts that support their interests. The School of Social Work faculty are willing to serve as organizational allies in these endeavors.

# Students Rights and Responsibilities

## Community Standards

The [Student Conduct Code](#) at the University of Montana embodies and promotes honesty, integrity, accountability, rights, and responsibilities associated with constructive citizenship in our academic community. This Code describes expected standards of behavior for all students, including academic conduct and general conduct, and it outlines students' rights, responsibilities, and the campus processes for adjudicating alleged violations.

## Campus Security Report and Alcohol and Drug Guidelines

The health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors are of paramount concern to the University of Montana-Missoula. Each year the University publishes an annual report outlining on-campus security and safety information and crime statistics. The report provides important information for security awareness and crime prevention programs, emergency procedures and reporting crimes, plus law enforcement and safety services on campus.

Additionally, the booklet contains the University's policy on sexual assault and information about support services for victims of sexual assault. The booklet also includes information about the University's drug and alcohol policy, programs and support services for substance abuse, and risk management guidelines for University-related events.

The booklet is available by writing or calling the Office of Campus Security (406) 342-6131 or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs (406) 243-5225, the University of Montana-Missoula, Missoula, MT 59812.

## Student Complaint Procedures

Under the terms of the faculty-administration contract at the University of Montana-Missoula, there is a formal procedure for students who have a complaint against a faculty member or an administrator. The handbook for resolving complaints against faculty and administration is available from the ASUM office and outlines the steps to be taken to pursue grievances. The ASUM Student Resolution Officer is available to answer questions about procedures and to serve student concerns. Time restrictions are important in the process so students should review procedures immediately if they feel they may have a complaint.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Consistent with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and University policy, every person who is or has been a student at this University, and the parents of students under 18 who are not taking postsecondary courses, have the following rights:

1. Upon completion of the appropriate request form and submission thereof to the person responsible for the custody and maintenance of the records, a student has the

right to inspect and review within 45 days from the date of initial request that portion of any official record which directly relates to the requesting student and to have a copy thereof upon payment of the cost of the copy. An "official record" is any record intended to be used for "school use" or to be available to parties outside the school or school system, specifically including but not necessarily limited to identifying data, academic work completed, level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores), attendance data, scores on standardized intelligence, aptitude, and psychological tests, interest inventory results, health data, family background information, teacher or counselor ratings and observations, and verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.

The right of inspection and review shall not extend to psychiatric, medical, or counseling records which are intended for personal diagnostic or treatment purposes only. Neither does the right extend retroactively to items of record previously obtained with assurances that confidentiality would be maintained.

With regard to such confidential items, the student has the option of both waiving the right of inspection and review and having those items retained as a part of the record, or of requesting that such confidential items be removed from the student's record and returned to the source or destroyed.

2. The right to a hearing before the Student Court to delete any portion of any record which is inaccurate, misleading or inappropriate. Discrepancies should first be brought to the attention of those responsible for maintaining the records so they may have an opportunity to cure any defects. To the extent defects are not cured, upon request a hearing may be initiated by a written request from the student delivered to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. The matter before the Student Court will be the question of the accuracy or appropriateness of the record itself and will not be extended to questions of the judgment of those who contributed to the record. The court will consider (1) whether the record accurately reflects matters intended to be contained here. (2) whether the record is misleading because in its present form it would lead a reasonable person to an incorrect conclusion, or (3) whether matters within the record are inappropriate because the record does not usually or should not reasonably contain such matters as those in question. Upon appropriate determination of the court, any such matters may be ordered deleted from the record.
3. The right to have education records or personally identifiable information from education records kept confidential and not released to third parties without the written consent of the student, except for release to the following:
  - a. University personnel for legitimate purposes and to the extent required in the ordinary course of the performance of their duties.
  - b. Authorized representatives of (a) the Comptroller General of the United States, (b) the Secretary, (c) an administrative head of an education agency, or (d) state educational authorities having access to student or other records which may be necessary in connection with the audit and evaluation of federally

- supported education programs, or in connection with the enforcement of the federal legal requirements which relate to such programs. Provided, that, except when collection of personally identifiable data is specifically authorized by federal law any data collected by such officials with respect to individual students shall not include information (including Social Security numbers) which would permit the personal identification of such students and their parents after the data so obtained has been collected.
- c. In compliance with judicial order or any lawfully issued subpoena upon condition that the student is notified of compliance.
  - d. In connection with a student's application for or receipt of financial aid.
4. The right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all categories of personally identifiable information as "directory information" which is not subject to the above restrictions. the University of Montana-Missoula has defined the following as directory information: student's name, addresses including e-mail, telephone number, date of birth, dates of attendance, date of graduation and degree received, school or college, majors, class, student identification photo, and academic awards or honors. Any student wishing to exercise this right must inform the University Registrar in writing within two weeks after the start of classes of any personally identifiable information which is not to be designated as directory information with respect to that student in that academic year.
  5. The right to have available for inspection by the student a written form signed by any representative of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary, or any administrative head of an education agency who requested and was granted access to the records which states the legitimate educational or other interest that each such person had in requesting access to that particular record.
  6. The right to have personal student records transferred to third parties only on condition that such parties will not permit any other party to have access to such information without the written consent of the student. All student records transferred to third parties shall have printed or stamped thereon: "No other person may have access to this information without written consent of the student."

### **Equal Opportunity**

The University of Montana-Missoula is committed to a program of equal opportunity for education, employment and participation in University activities without regard to race, color, sex, age, religious creed, political ideas, marital or family status, physical or mental disability, national origin or ancestry, or sexual orientation.

### **Statement of Law**

Equal opportunity laws and orders applicable to the University of Montana-Missoula include, but are not limited to, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, Executive Order 11246, Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, Montana Fair Practices Act of 1974, The Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Montana Nondiscrimination by State and

Local Government Act of 1975.

It is illegal in the State of Montana to discriminate against anyone because of race, religion, color, political ideas, age, marital status, sex, mental or physical disability, national origin or ancestry in employment, training, public accommodations, financing, education and government services. With the exception of marital status, this also applies to housing.

### **Discrimination Grievance Procedure**

\*Note: Complaints must be filed within 60 days of the alleged discrimination if filing with the University Discrimination Grievance Officer and within 180 days if filing with the Montana Human Rights Bureau.

The University of Montana-Missoula has established a discrimination grievance procedure for employees, students, and applicants for employment or admission who claim to have been unlawfully discriminated against because of any University regulation, policy, practice or the official action of any University employee.

The University is prohibited from retaliating against an individual who has made charges, testified, assisted or participated in any way in any proceeding, investigation or hearing in regard to the violations or alleged violations of laws or orders requiring equal educational and/or employment opportunity.

For more information, or if you believe you have been discriminated against please visit the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action website. Students may also contact the Montana Human Rights Bureau by visiting their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/MTHumanRights/>.

## Program Assessment and Accreditation

The School of Social Work takes its mission of preparing students for BSW and MSW practice very seriously. We are committed to values-based process of continual self-assessment, soliciting the participation of a variety of constituencies and using assessment findings to continually improve the program.

We employ a range of procedures to ensure a process that is effective, inclusive, comprehensive, varied, and instructive. The School's assessment plans are based on the following principles:

- Programs continually evaluate themselves relative to their mission and goals.
- Programs continually evaluate themselves relative to the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors necessary for the profession, and required by schools accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.
- Program assessment is grounded in and guided by the core values of social work.
- The results of the ongoing evaluative process are instructive in terms of program needs, strengths, and improvement.
- Program assessment identifies both what is effective and what could be improved.
- Programs continually identify constituency and workforce roles and issues that graduates are expected to fulfill and address.
- Programs stay abreast of continually shifting and evolving social needs, trends, and issues.
- Students are included as partners in the process of program assessment and continuous improvement.
- Professional social work practice and schools of social work are accountable to clients, agencies, communities and society, and program assessment works toward ensuring that accountability.
- Program assessment is a model for students about the importance of critical reflection, evaluation, and continuous improvement in all arenas of professional practice.
- Program assessment is important within an institutional context and is coordinated with institutional accreditation processes and institutional assessment plans and measure.
- Program assessment reflects commitment to professional leadership.

The School of Social Work is committed to evaluating itself through high quality research methodologies that are:

- Varied in terms of the participants and subjects, process, frequency, and purpose.
- Balanced in terms of qualitative and quantitative measures.
- Intentionally designed to utilize mixed methodologies.
- Purposeful in terms of timing and repetition.

- Committed to the participation and involvement of students in terms of input and feedback.
- Committed to the participation and involvement of a variety of constituencies in providing input and feedback.
- Overlapping and integrated in such a way that outcomes are measured in multiple ways over time.
- Consistent with social work best research practices.

## Resources, Services and Organizations

There are a number of resources available to students. The table below provides links for some of these resources. For a full listing of resources available to students, refer to the MY UMT for Students [Website](#).

[ASUM Services](#)

[Experiential Learning and Career Services](#)

[Curry Health Center](#)

[Office for Disability Equity](#)

[Global Engagement Office](#)

[Mansfield Library](#)

[NASW- Student Membership](#)

[Office of Student Success](#)

[Payne Family Native American Center](#)

[Student Advocacy Resource Center \(SARC\)](#)

[Student Technology at UM](#)

[Writing and Public Speaking Center](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

[Office of the Registrar](#)

## Field Education

### Director of Field Education Welcome



Welcome Social Work Students,

On behalf of the University of Montana School of Social Work, we welcome you to your field education experience. The practicum is often referred to as the signature pedagogy of social work education and as such, it will offer you the following opportunities:

- Integrate classroom experience with actual social work practice
- Develop core competencies and practice behaviors in a field setting
- Develop professional self-awareness and accountability
- Practice social work skills and theories
- Exercise ethical decision making in the context of social work values and the [NASW Code of Ethics](#)

MSW students will be in an agency setting for approximately 15 hours per week for two consecutive semesters and will complete 900 hours of practicum total over two academic years. You will have an Agency Field Instructor (AFI) at your practicum site who will serve as your teacher, mentor, and supervisor.

This manual is designed to provide you with the essential information and forms for making your practicum a successful experience. Please read it thoroughly. Additionally, I would like to highlight [THIS online resource](#) you might find helpful as you deal with potential field placement anxiety and practicum related stressors.

If you have any questions or concerns as you enter and embrace this process, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am here to assist you in finding a productive practicum that will offer you a rich learning experience and prepare you for advanced integrated social work practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "KW", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Katharina Werner, LCSW, MSW  
Director of Field Education/ Clinical Associate Professor  
UM School of Social Work

## **Mission, Goals, Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors**

### **CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement Regarding Field Practicum**

#### Educational Policy 2.2—Signature Pedagogy: Field Education

Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline—to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program.

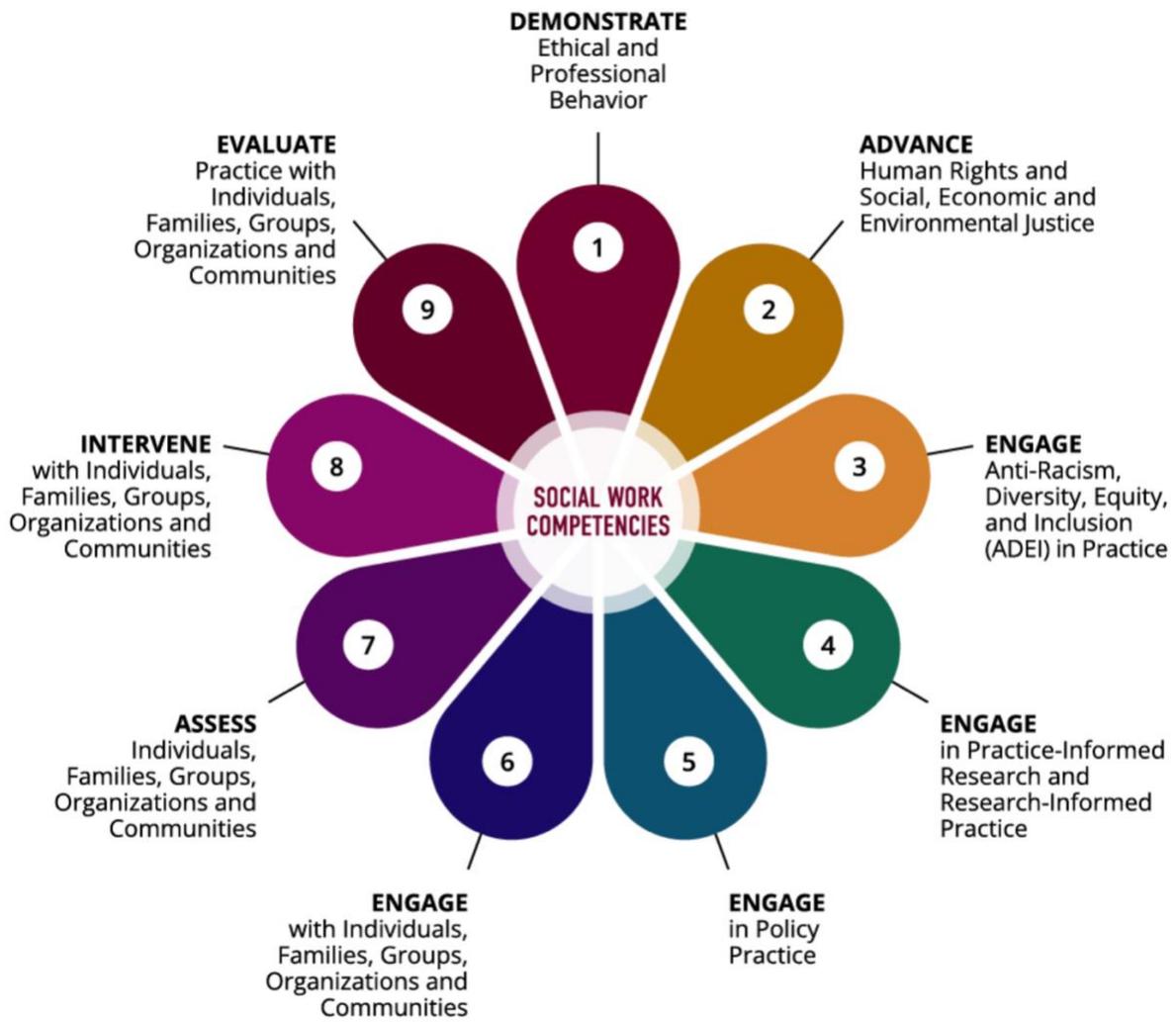
#### Council on Social Work Education – 2022 Educational Policy & Accreditation Standards

##### The Nine Social Work Competencies

The following competencies, dimensions, and behaviors inform the learning in practicum for students in their generalist year (year 1). Students in their specialization year (year 2) will focus on a set of ten competencies and advanced behaviors developed by the UMSSW with a focus on practice in rural and indigenous communities through an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens.

“The nine social work competencies are listed in this section. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that make up the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, and the descriptions that precede them represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

Master’s programs extend and enhance the nine social work competencies, and any additional competencies added by the program, for each area of specialized practice. By extending and enhancing the competencies, programs provide master’s-level students with the four dimensions (i.e., knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes) relevant to each area of specialized practice. A specialized competency description is developed to incorporate the four dimensions and specialized behaviors for each competency and any additional competencies added by the program. “ (CSWE, 2022 EPAS)



**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-

care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Behaviors - Social Workers:

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

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

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

Behaviors - Social Workers:

- a. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- b. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to

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

Behaviors - Social Workers:

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

**Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

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

interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Behaviors - Social workers:

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

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

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

Behaviors – Social Workers:

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

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

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

Behaviors - Social Workers:

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

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

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

Behaviors - Social Workers:

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

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

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

Behaviors - Social Workers:

- a. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency

- goals; and
- b. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

#### Behaviors - Social Workers:

- a. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
- b. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### **Student Placement Software - SONIA**

The University of Montana School of Social Work utilizes a practicum software program called Sonia. This program will be used by all practicum parties, including students, their agency field instructors, and field faculty. Students will use Sonia to identify practicum placement options, complete required practicum forms and documents hours. Students will receive a Welcome email prior to the beginning of the semester they will begin practicum with information on how to log in. Students will also receive email communication throughout the semester/year with instructions for forms/tasks that need to be completed through Sonia. If students have technical issues with Sonia, they should contact the Field Education Program member providing Sonia tech support.

### **Master of Social Work Practicum Policies and Procedures**

Since professional social workers wear many hats, students have the opportunity to do a variety of placements with a wide range of learning opportunities. Social work practicum placements occur in settings that allow for direct service with individuals, families, and groups; for example:

- child welfare programs,
- behavioral health agencies,
- domestic/sexual violence programs,
- homelessness programs,
- substance abuse programs,
- correctional settings etc.

As well as in community organizing and policy focused contexts; for example: city or county government and social service programs, legislative offices, voter mobilization programs, civic engagement agencies, etc.

Some placements are more clinically focused while others are more macro-level/ advocacy focused. As long as students are able to engage in the CSWE Competencies they are likely able to get a rich learning experience.

It is important to note, that the UMSSW Field Education Program currently does NOT support practicum placements in a private practice setting. Private practice placements are generally too narrowly focused and do not allow for student exposure to all practice levels (micro, mezzo, and macro). Students who seek hands on clinical experience should focus their outreach efforts on agencies and programs offering integrated behavioral health services, such as mental health organizations, clinics and hospitals, domestic and sexual violence programs offering crisis intervention and support services, schools, etc.

### **The Generalist Year Practicum**

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

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

### **The Specialization Year Practicum**

The specialization year practicum (second year practicum; 450 hours minimum to 500 hours maximum, concurrent with classroom courses) is designed to achieve curricular objectives for the specialization year and to help the student gain advanced knowledge and skills related to integrated practice. **The generalist placement and specialization placement should occur at different agencies to ensure diverse learning experiences. Students wanting to stay at the same agency for both practicum placements are required to complete a Continuation of Practicum application in Sonia and need approval from the Director of Field Education.**

### **Application and Admission**

Before entering the generalist practicum, students must submit an MSW Practicum

Application via Sonia, the practicum software program. The completed application provides information about students' backgrounds and areas of interest, along with an assessment of their social work knowledge and skills.

After submitting the application, students should make an appointment to interview with the Director of Field Education, who will meet with students to discuss available practicum agencies and opportunities. The student will then arrange interviews with agencies and, after securing a site, complete the required paperwork. Once a practicum site is selected and approved, students must create their placement via their Sonia account. Students cannot accumulate practicum hours until the following forms are submitted to the practicum office:

- **Memorandum of Understanding - MOU (this form has to be completed by both the student and their Agency Field Instructor)**
- **Essential Skills & Functions Form**
- **Acknowledgment of Risk Form (see appendix for forms)**

In addition to submitting these forms, all first year students are required to [complete this World Health Organization \(W.H.O.\) course on Six Ways to Protect Yourself from COVID-19](#) before returning to in-person, on-site practicum activities this upcoming academic year. Second year students can waive retaking that training.

- **This two-hour course will give students the basic knowledge and skills to protect themselves and others.**
- **All students, engaging in in-person or remote practicum activities, must complete the free course and upload a Certificate of Participation to the Risk Acknowledgment Form.**

#### Generalist Year

Students admitted to field practicum must meet the following criteria:

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

#### Specialization Year

Students admitted to the specialization practicum must meet the following criteria:

- Successful completion of the foundation practicum.
- Be in good academic standing, with a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- Successful completion of foundation courses and foundation integrative seminars.
- Students with an I or N grade in generalist year practicum or seminar are not able to move into concentration year practicum or seminar.
- Students with any incomplete grades must have a plan in place, approved by their faculty advisor, for completion of the work before start of specialization year practicum and seminar.
- Completion of all required paperwork via Sonia.

Students develop a plan with members of the Field Education Program indicating their choice of specialization practicum site and the advanced practice learning opportunities. Students moving to a new site for their Specialization Year interview with prospective agencies. Students who plan to continue in their current practicum site have to complete a Continuation of Placement application in Sonia. Students wanting to stay in the same placement should also work in consultation with their field liaison and AFI to ensure the specialization year provides new learning opportunities in line with specialization year objectives and tasks that are new and distinct from the student's first year responsibilities at the site while also ensuring that all competencies and behaviors are met. Specialization year placements that focus on the same/similar learning goals as Generalist Year practicum and do not align with competencies will not be approved. The Field Education Program must approve new specialization practicum placements.

### **MSW Practicum Placement Exceptions**

**All exceptions require pre-approval from the Director of Field Education as well as advanced planning regarding placement.**

#### Out-of-Town Practicum Placements

It is possible to select a practicum site outside of Missoula, although such placements require additional time to plan. Students interested in an out-of-town practicum placement must meet with the Director of Field Education early to ensure adequate time for arranging such a placement.

#### International Practicum Placements

Students may also request international practicum placements. Students must plan several semesters ahead as these placements require considerable time to identify and coordinate. Students may need to demonstrate fluency in a foreign language. Interested students must submit a block placement application and meet with the Director of Field Education a minimum of two semesters prior to beginning practicum.

#### IE3 Global Internship Program

The University of Montana is affiliated with the IE3 Global Internship Program, run through Oregon State University, which coordinates professional internships abroad. Kevin Hood is the UM representative to IE3. IE3 offers a well-structured system of site selection and

student screening to ensure productive, successful international learning experiences. IE3's focus on professional development fits well with the purpose of the practicum experience. Students interested in completing an international block placement must have approval from both the School of Social Work and the IE3 Program. UM tuition is waived for students accepted into the IE3 program. In lieu of tuition, students pay a program fee to the IE3 program. Students work in conjunction with the School of Social Work Director of Field Education to arrange social work supervision for the internship. Advanced planning is essential.

It may be possible to earn independent study credits in conjunction with the block placement. Students interested in completing an independent study project as part of the block placement should consult with their faculty advisor and the BSW Program Director regarding expectations for the independent study. For more information on IE3 and examples of international professional internships related to social work, students can visit the IE3 website.

## Practicum Selection and Placement

### Interview and Selection of Practicum Site

Upon acceptance to the practicum program, students will receive communication from the Field Education Program about an orientation to the field education process and requirements and how to start the agency outreach process.

Students will receive extensive support at the beginning and throughout the practicum placement process. Students are considered adult learners and are active drivers of the practicum placement and outreach process. Students are expected to engage in professional communication and outreach with the all parties involved in the field placement process and it is the student's responsibility to contact potential agencies, apply and interview for practicum positions. **Any new sites/ agencies that have never hosted a UMSSW practicum student need to be reviewed by a member of the Field Education Program to ensure alignment with practicum requirements.**

Once a practicum site is selected and approved, students must complete required practicum paperwork via their personal Sonia account. This includes submitting the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Essential Skills and Functions, and Acknowledgement of Risk Forms. **Students cannot officially start counting practicum hours until the above forms are submitted.**

### Virtual Practicum Fair

It is strongly recommended that students attend the annual Practicum Fair offered by the Field Education Program fully virtual in the spring semester. Partner agencies are invited to attend and provide information to students about learning and employment opportunities in their settings.

### Practicum Position and Employment Based Practicum (EBP)

This is an option for students already employed in social or human services organizations that are supportive of their employee's educational pursuit.

Under this option, students use their **current employment position** as their practicum. Activities from the student's employment position must provide opportunities to integrate theory into practice and speak directly to the core competencies and practice behaviors. In other words, job responsibilities and tasks must relate to the core social work competencies. These criteria can also be met by having students take on additional, new and different opportunities and responsibilities, outside of the employment position. For example, students take on a completely new and different role within the organization which is distinct from their employment position to ensure social work competencies and practice behaviors are being met.

If an employer supports the student to engage in a completely new role/program within the agency, we strongly encourage them to release the employee from some of their job responsibilities to complete their educational practicum hours (e.g. 25 hours are completed in the employee's regular role and 15 hours are completed in the new and separate practicum role). Students who are approved for this type of an EBP may be paid by their employer for their practicum hours (negotiated between student and employer). If an employer is able to support a student to use their current employed position as their practicum, the student will be paid for their practicum hours.

#### **Requirements for an EBP**

MSW students are encouraged to get diverse learning and practice experiences over their two practicum placements, so staying in the same EBP for both years is not an ideal option. However, sometimes students have the opportunity to stay with the same agency but take on a completely different role that allows for diverse and new learning. In that case, staying at the same agency in an EBP might be an option, although students have to submit a separate continuation proposal to the Field Education Program. **Exceptions to EBP policy may be considered by the Director of Field Education on a case-by-case basis when it can be demonstrated that the proposed practicum can provide a unique educational experience in a new program, or with a new focus, and with a new agency field instructor.**

**The student's employer, the University of Montana School of Social Work, and the student will work together to assure that the following EBP conditions are met:**

- The student must be in good academic standing and in good standing at their employing agency. **Students wanting to complete an EBP must have been employed a minimum of 3 months** before requesting an EBP because an unsuccessful probationary period is also likely to result in disruption of the student's field placement.
- Employment supervisor and/or BSW or MSW Agency Field instructor (= practicum supervisor) must agree that the student's practicum performance will not influence their

employment evaluation.

- The agency must be willing to allow the student/employee to attend classes and have an educationally focused field placement experience.
- The educational opportunities in the place of employment must permit achievement of the 9 social work competencies and skills compatible with the student's social work practice classes and course of study, i.e., Generalist (for BSW and 1<sup>st</sup> year MSW) or Specialization (for 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSW)
- Agency Field Instructors for BSW students must have a BSW or MSW from an accredited social work program plus 2 years post social work degree experience. Agency field instructors for MSW students are required to have an MSW from an accredited social work program and two years of post-MSW work experience.
- The Agency Field Instructor and employment supervisor of a student may be the same person. In such cases, supervision time for field education learning must be separate from supervision time for employment (e.g. separate supervision times each week or 30 minutes focused on work and 30 minutes focused on practicum learning). Our goal is to ensure the role of the student as a learner while they are engaging in their paid employment position. In other words, the student's role as a student should be prioritized along with their learning and skill development.
- If the agency does not have a qualified social work field instructor on staff, they must arrange for an approved off-site BSW/MSW supervisor to provide the required supervision and designate an on-site task supervisor/ agency field instructor to provide daily oversight and support (e.g., some organizations have board members or volunteers that meet degree requirements and can serve in the outside supervisor role). The Field Education Program is available to brainstorm options.
- Student can only count a **maximum of 20 hours per week** towards practicum hours.
- The agency must be willing to sign the UMSSW Practicum Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and agree to the EBP specific requirements of the MOU. The MOU may not be altered or amended unless agreed to by all persons (student, employer, and field education program). Accordingly, if an agency alters the terms of placement without informing the UMSSW Field Education Program, the field faculty will suspend the EBP placement, which will not be resumed unless a revised agreement can be arranged in a timely manner. Any revised agreement must be written and signed by the Executive Director of the agency (or their designee), the student-employee, the faculty liaison, and filed with the Field Education Program.
- The Employment Based Practicum Application must be received by the deadline

specified by the Field Education Program. The application requires a letter of support from the agency director/ employment supervisor as well as a current job description. In addition, students applying for an EBP must be able to demonstrate how their employment role either offers a new role with new and distinct learning opportunities OR how their current employment role relates to the core social work competencies. Once the application is returned to the Field Office, it will be reviewed, and a response will be given as soon as possible to indicate whether the placement has been approved. A site visit may be required as part of the application review process prior to determining approval.

- **Employment Based Practicum is not the same as a paid internship** (i.e. a practicum position receiving a small educational stipend or hourly pay for the 15 hours per week a student contributes to their practicum agency). Consequently, paid internships/ practicums do not fall under the same requirements as the EBP.

### **Application and Approval Process**

1. The student either requests an EBP application by sending an email to [um.sw.fieldoffice@umontana.edu](mailto:um.sw.fieldoffice@umontana.edu) OR for specialization year MSW students, they will be asked to complete a practicum plan that will automatically attach required EBP forms to their Sonia account.
2. In addition to the regular practicum application (not required for second year MSW students), the student, in consultation with their employer, completes the EBP Application via their SONIA account no later than July 31.
3. The Field Education Program reviews the application, follows up with additional questions or concerns, and, if necessary, arranges a meeting with the student, the work supervisor, and the proposed agency field instructor (if different than the work supervisor) to discuss the terms and structure of the placement and assure that all parties understand and approve the educational arrangement.

### **Termination of EBP**

If a student in an Employment Based Practicum is terminated from their employment role, consequently leading to termination of their practicum, the same academic review process will apply as for non-EBP placements (refer to student handbook). Termination of employment may ultimately lead to a pause in practicum and a delay in a student's graduation timeline.

## **Practicum Requirements and Policies**

### **Practicum Hours**

#### **MSW Generalist Students**

MSW Generalist students are required to complete a total of 450 practicum hours. The first practicum semester should run concurrently with Foundation Integrative Seminar I (SW576) and the second semester of practicum with Foundation Integrative Seminar II (SW

577).

### MSW Specialization Students

The first practicum semester should run concurrently with Advanced Seminar I (SW 578) and the second semester of practicum with Advanced Seminar II (SW 588).

### MSW Summer Practicum Hours

Students can count a maximum of 50 hours towards their 450 hours of Specialization Year practicum in the summer before starting classes in the fall semester. **This option must be discussed with the Director of Field Education prior to counting hours and students must have all required practicum forms completed.** MSW Supervision requirements have to be met for those hours and all practicum hours need to be documented in Sonia.

### Qualified Activities

- Tasks and responsibilities assigned by AFI (ideally direct service centered)
- Initial onboarding activities, ongoing trainings
- Individual/ group supervision hours (with AFI or MSW supervisor)
- Agency meetings (staff, clinical, program meetings etc.)
- Range of external learning activities, e.g. research, advocacy work, visiting other agencies, attending conferences or community meetings
- Synchronous seminar hours qualify only if student attends!
- **Travel and on call hours DO NOT count towards practicum hours!**

### Tracking Practicum Hours

Students are responsible for tracking practicum hours in Sonia and in order for hours to qualify they must all be approved by the AFI. Hours entered in Sonia will be reviewed by the Director or Assistant Director of Field Education each semester. **Students are asked to submit timesheets once a week in bulk, i.e. 15 hours in one timesheet versus submitting individual hours. Students are not able to count more than 20 hours of practicum each week.**

### Scheduling, Vacations, School Breaks, and Absences

Students are regarded as adult learners and professionals in their practicum and are required to engage in proactive and effective communication. This starts with discussing and arranging a feasible practicum schedule and consistent hours each week with their AFI. Students are required to maintain a significant presence in the practicum placement throughout the semester and complete the total number of required hours for the semester, i.e. students are asked to complete a minimum of 15 hours each week and follow a set schedule (e.g. two eight hour days, three five hour days).

Practicum agencies are encouraged but not required to work around the university's academic calendar. Students should consider agency and client needs when scheduling school breaks, vacations, and absences and engage in effective communication with their AFI (and if needed field faculty) to inform the agency of absences. It is important to set a

schedule that meets student and agency needs at the beginning of the semester to avoid conflicts and possible misunderstandings. Students are also responsible for arranging practicum schedules to accommodate required university classes and final exams.

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

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

#### Winter and Spring Break

Students are not obligated to continue their practicum hours during the winter or spring break, but they may do so if it fits their schedule, their learning objectives, and the needs of the practicum agency. Again, students need to coordinate with their AFI and communicate effectively.

#### **Practicum Forms**

Students are responsible for submitting the following documents via Sonia before they are allowed to start practicum and count hours:

- Practicum Application
- Memorandum of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities (MOU)
- Essential Skills and Functions Form
- Acknowledgment of Risk Form
- WHO Training Certificate (part of risk form)
- Application for Employment-Based Practicums (if needed)
- Application for Continuation of Practicum (if needed for specialization year)

#### **Deadlines for Securing a Practicum and Submitting Forms**

Students must secure a practicum by the end of week four of the fall semester. All required paperwork must be submitted by the end of week four. **Students must withdraw from practicum courses; SW 576, and SW 586 (MSW) if they have not secured a practicum and submitted paperwork by the end of week 3.** Students will be required to postpone their practicum start date until the following fall semester.

The student's learning agreement must be completed and submitted via Sonia by the end of week four, unless otherwise communicated with the AFI and Field Faculty (e.g. in situations when a student started practicum several weeks into the fall semester, an extension to complete the learning agreement may be provided).

**Both the learning agreement and mid-year and final evaluation have to be completed and submitted via Sonia by the student, AFI, and the Field Liaison to receive a final grade. Both the learning agreement and mid-year and final evaluation have to be completed and submitted via Sonia by the student, AFI, and the Field Liaison to receive a final grade. Students missing Learning Agreement deadlines repeatedly will be asked to pause their practicum until the form has been completed and approved by all parties.**

**No grade will be given for practicum without completed paperwork and students might be asked to pause their practicum until all forms are submitted, including:**

- Learning Agreement
- End-of-Semester Evaluation
- Regularly entered and approved timesheets

### **Learning Agreement**

The Learning Agreement is developed in collaboration with the student, Agency Field Instructor and Field Liaison if needed. The MSW Generalist Learning Agreement addresses generalist practice from an integrated framework. The MSW Specialization Learning Agreement addresses advanced integrated practice. Students are to identify learning objectives and activities that will assist them in reaching the learning goals. **Examples of both sets of learning agreements can be found in the appendix and on the student's Sonia page in the right hand document section.**

### **Changing Practicum Placements**

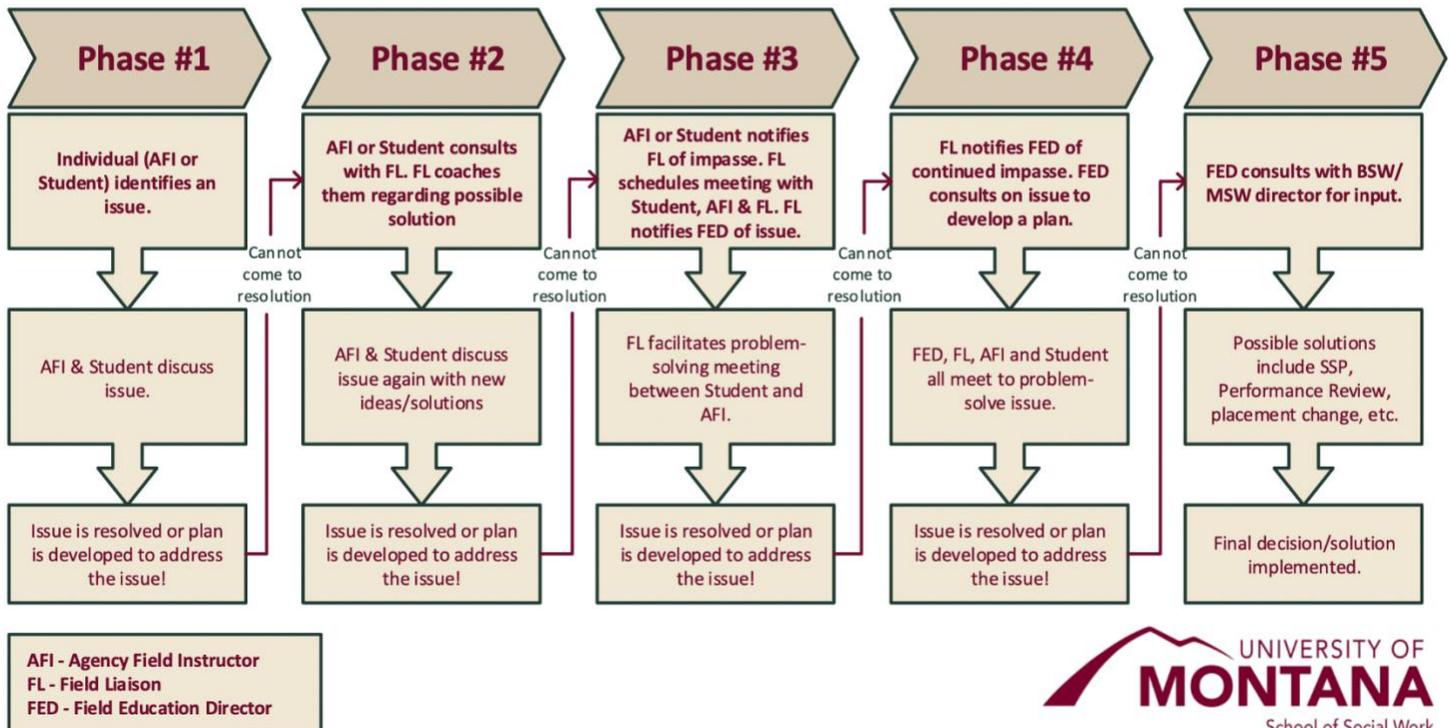
**Unless there is an educationally sound reason for a change in placements, students are required to follow through on their professional commitment to the practicum agency and its clients and stay the full academic year. Practicum change requests will generally not be considered throughout the first term in the placement unless there are ethical or safety concerns at the practicum agency.** It takes time to settle into a placement at an organization and students are asked to be patient with the learning curve that comes with practicum. This includes 1-2 month of onboarding and shadowing which can feel slow to students but is a critical component of laying a strong foundation for more independent practice at the agency during the second half of practicum. Students are encouraged to utilize their seminar course, field liaison, and regular supervision with their AFI to bring up thoughts and concerns about how things are going, what they might be missing in the experience so far, and how their learning needs are met or what adjustments might have to be made. Your field liaison is a great person to provide additional support and help you brainstorm ways to appropriately and professionally address the situation at your practicum site. The first site visit, which should happen within the first 4-6 weeks at the placement, is a great opportunity to bring up what has been going well so far and what areas of the practicum experience might need some adjustment moving forward.

**Students are encouraged to view potential problems at practicum, with AFIs, with coworkers etc. as a learning moment and utilize their support systems and other tools to**

work through issues. Changes in practicum settings will not be considered without prior attempts at resolving problems or concerns. The following flowchart outlines the steps students, Agency Field Instructors, and field liaisons should follow when working through a difficult issue:

## Problem-Solving Phases in Field Education

We know challenges can arise during field placement experiences and members of the field triad (Student, Agency Field Instructor, Field Liaison) may need guidance to help develop a winning solution. The following flowchart outlines the steps Students, Agency Field Instructors, and Field liaisons should follow when working through a difficult issue. Whether the issue is brought forward by the Student or Agency Field Instructor, all problem solving will start In Phase #1. While we know that some may require more dialogue and input, we always aim to resolve issues early and not reach the later phases of this process. If and when an issue cannot be resolved by working through the process, Phase #5 may involve a Student Support Plan (SSP), Performance Review, placement changes, and/or other serious actions regarding the student's placement.



Should concerns persist throughout the first half of practicum, and only **AFTER** all the above [problem-solving phases](#) have been completed, will the Field Education Team consider changes of placement for the following reasons:

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

**Students are required to complete [THIS REQUEST TO CHANGE PLACEMENTS](#)**

After completing the request to change placements, students should continue working

with their Field Liaison in their current placement until a decision is made, or unless they are given written permission to end their placement by the Director and/or Assistant Director of Field Education. The Field Education Program will review any hours already completed and determine if and how many hours can be counted towards the 450 required hours. Changing placements throughout the practicum term may delay your practicum and graduation timeline.

**Please note that students cannot terminate their placement without prior approval from the Director/Assistant Director of Field. Self-termination will result in a performance review and could lead to termination in the program.**

### Termination of Practicum

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

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

### Academic Review and Special Advising Process

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

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

The academic review process is guided by the BSW/MSW Student Handbook policies and University of Montana academic misconduct policies found in the Student Conduct Code [website](#).

### Required Co-requisite Courses

Students complete two semesters in a generalist practicum and two semesters in a specialization practicum. Seminars are held every semester and run concurrently with the practicum.

The generalist practicum seminar (SW 576, 577) provides an introduction to the profession of social work and explores the practicum experience. Students receive guidance and feedback while integrating classroom material with the practicum. Students develop generalist social work skills and a foundation for social work values and ethics. Students receive assistance in writing the Learning Agreement.

The advanced integrated practicum seminar (SW 578, 579) prepares students to engage in practicum learning experiences as an integrated practitioner. Students will write their Learning Agreement with the integrated practice model as a focus. Students also develop an Individualized Learning Plan, which includes practicum activities that will fulfill specialization year learning objectives. In addition, students utilize the seminar for peer consultation on their portfolio development.

Grading for practicum seminar courses is by Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR). Students must receive a grade of CR in all seminar courses. **Students cannot move into specialization year seminar and/or practicum without having successfully completed generalist year seminar and/or practicum.**

### **Practicum Supervision & Roles and Responsibilities**

Practicum supervision is an integral part of students' learning and development as professional social workers. Students receive weekly supervision from Agency Field Instructors and support and mentoring through their Field Liaisons (= Seminar Instructor) and other members of the Field Education Program as needed.

#### Director of Field Education

- Assume responsibility for the overall oversight of direction and coordination of the practicum.
- Oversee screening of student applicants and assess their personal and professional readiness for practicum.
- Oversee assistance of students and agencies in the placement process.
- Provide guidelines for and coordinate evaluation of the student.
- Provide orientation, training and ongoing support for Agency Field Instructors.
- Be available to students, agencies and field liaisons for consultation and facilitation of student/agency issues.
- Assign the grade for each student's practicum.
- Assume responsibility for removing a student from a placement should that become necessary.
- Conduct site visits as needed.

#### Assistant Director of Field Education

- Meet each semester with the student and the Agency Field Instructor together.
- Assume responsibility with the Agency Field Instructor for the end of semester

- evaluations of the student's performance.
- Assist in orienting new Agency Field Instructors to the School of Social Work curriculum and practicum program.
- Act as a resource person for students in regard to questions, resources, and suggestions for learning opportunities.

#### Agency Field Instructor

- Per CSWE accreditation guidelines, AFIs must hold an MSW degree with at least 2 years of post-degree experience. All efforts must be made by the practicum agency to identify and provide MSW supervision on site. If the agency cannot meet this requirement, the UMSSW Field Education Program will support the student with additional outside supervision.
- Provide direct supervision to the student on a regular basis (ideally once a week for 30-60 minutes).
- Orient new students to agency structure and function, student responsibilities, policies and procedures, and to commonly used community resources.
- Provide guidance to student in developing a Learning Agreement to structure the practicum experience.
- Structure assignments/practicum tasks to help the student learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice (BSW students) and advanced practice opportunities (MSW students).
- In consultation with the student, assign duties and responsibilities of increasing difficulty and challenge as appropriate.
- Provide suitable office space and support staff as available.
- Utilize the student as a learner who will assume numerous responsibilities of benefit to the agency rather than as someone to fill the needs of an understaffed agency.
- Follow policies and procedures outlined in the UM BSW or MSW practicum manual.
- Monitor student performance, providing feedback regularly to the student.
- Utilize practicum software program Sonia, to approve student timesheets, approve and provide comments if needed to the student's learning agreement, and evaluate the student at the end of each semester.
- Complete agency evaluation of the practicum experience at the end of the second semester.
- Provide students with disabilities with reasonable accommodations agreed upon by UM Office of Disability Equity and the Director of Field Education.
- Reimburse students for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the same manner as for agency employees.
- Participate in Agency Field Instructor Training and/or complete online Agency Field Supervisor training.

### Field Liaison

- Meet each semester with the student and the Agency Field Instructor together.
- Assume responsibility with the Agency Field Instructor for the end of the semester evaluations of the student's performance.
- Assist students in completing the Learning Agreement to structure the practicum experience.
- Assist students in applying and integrating theory into practice.
- Act as a resource person for students in regard to questions, resources, and suggestions for learning opportunities.

### Outside MSW Supervisor

- Students placed in practicum agencies without an on-site MSW supervisor are assigned an Outside MSW Supervisor.
- Provides bi-weekly group supervision to the student.
- Works collaboratively with Field Liaison, AFI and Director of Field Education.
- Provides guidance to student in developing a Learning Agreement to structure the practicum experience.
- Follows procedures outlined in the UM School of Social Work MSW Manual.
- Monitors student performance by providing feedback regularly to the student.
- May attend end of semester evaluation.

### **Expectations of Practicum Students**

Practicum students will be expected to:

- Act as adult learners and professionals and engage in effective communication throughout the field placement process and practicum experience.
- Read and understand the UM BSW and/or MSW Practicum manual.
- Complete all paperwork required for practicum, including the Practicum Plan, timesheets and learning agreements all accessed via the practicum software, Sonia.
- Coordinate and attend site visits with the Agency Field Instructor and Field Liaison at least three times over the two semesters.
- Adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Adhere to UMSSW Anti-Racist Principles.
- Behave in a professional manner, taking responsibility as an adult learner to understand duties and carry out assignments.
- Make yourself reasonably available for weekly supervision meetings with the Agency Field Instructor.
- Prepare for supervisory meetings by reviewing your Learning Agreement, adhering to deadlines, completing work, and formulating questions about assignments.
- Be in attendance at the agency on days and times agreed upon by the student and the agency field instructor, and if unable to attend practicum will notify Agency Field Instructor as soon as possible.

- Work the required hours for completion of a practicum, submit practicum timesheets via Sonia, and abide by agency policies and procedures, including confidentiality.
- Provide proof of professional malpractice insurance and health insurance. While serving in this practicum, student understands that he/she is not an employee or a volunteer of the University of Montana or the Agency. As such, UM and Agency do not provide worker's compensation insurance coverage for students. Student understands that he/she is performing the practicum as part of the BSW or MSW educational program and agrees to maintain health insurance coverage throughout the practicum.
- Discuss with Agency Field Instructor, Field Liaison, and/or Field Education faculty any areas of disagreement, dissatisfaction or confusion in respect to any part of the practicum experience.
- Bring to the attention of the Field Liaison and/or Field Education of any questionable professional practices within the agency.
- Complete an evaluation of the practicum experience at the end of the semester.

### Practicum Evaluation

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

### Student Performance Evaluation

Evaluation of student performance in the practicum is completed at the end of each semester via Sonia. Evaluation forms are found by logging into Sonia and navigating to the Forms tab. Agency Field Instructors evaluate student performance based on the Learning Agreement with student progress measured against the accomplishment of each of the 31 (46 for MSW Concentration students) practice behaviors. It is anticipated that by the completion of the practicum, students will have been exposed to all of the core competencies and practice behaviors. Students receive an N (in progress) grade at the end of the first semester of practicum. **A CR/NCR grade for both fall and spring is issued at the end of the second practicum semester based on the score received in the second evaluation.**

### Unsatisfactory Practicum Performance

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

## End-of-Semester Evaluations

### First End-of-Semester/ Mid-Term Student Performance Evaluation

**The student**, near the end of the semester, will arrange for and attend the End-of-Semester Evaluation meeting with the Agency Field Instructor and Field Education Faculty. **Both the student and the Agency Field Instructor** will complete the Mid-Term Evaluation prior to the scheduled meeting with the student and Director or Assistant Director of Field Education. The mid-term evaluation is qualitative and asks the student and AFI to reflect on several prompts, including areas of success, areas of growth, learning goals for semester 2, use of supervision, and other feedback.

### End of Practicum/ Final Student Performance Evaluation

**The student**, at the end of the practicum, will arrange for and attend the Final Evaluation and site visit meeting with the Agency Field Instructor and Field Education Faculty.

**The Agency Field Instructor** will complete the second semester evaluation prior to the scheduled meeting with the student and Field Education Faculty. The Agency Field Instructor will provide a numerical rating for each of the practice behaviors and provide comments regarding the student's performance. Practicum performance and development in each of the competencies and practice behaviors is evaluated via a competency rating scale (1-5):

- 5: Demonstrates Competency- Student demonstrates competency and a beginning autonomy with this practice behavior in complex situations.
- 4: Emerging Competency- Student demonstrates beginning-level competency with this practice behavior but requires ongoing opportunities to demonstrate mastery.
- 3: Developing Competency with Assistance- Student demonstrates inconsistent competency with this practice behavior and thus requires assistance and/or coaching.
- 2: Minimal Competency- Student rarely demonstrates competency with this practice behavior.
- 1: No Competency- Student does not demonstrate competency with this practice behavior.

The evaluation form will compute the total score (a CR/NCR threshold). Agency Field Instructors will have the opportunity to make comments regarding the total score and grade associated with it.

The evaluation comments and scores by the Agency Field Instructor will be reviewed by Field Education Faculty along with progress and recommendations noted. The Director or Assistant Director of Field Education is responsible for recommending the final evaluation grade.

### **Evaluation Directions**

Agency Field Instructors will need to meet with their student prior to completing the online evaluation. Since the evaluation mimics the student's learning agreement, it is important that students and agency field instructors consult on the student's progress in each of the practice behaviors. During the meeting the number of hours the student has completed will be reviewed as well to ensure they have been entered in Sonia. At the end of each semester, the student should have completed approximately 225 hours. Agency Field Instructors will receive information on how to complete the evaluations through Sonia each semester.

### **Practicum Grades**

First semester practicum students receive a letter grade of N indicating the course is in progress, which will be changed when all practicum credits are completed.

A Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR) grade for both semesters of practicum will be issued at the end of the second practicum semester. Students will be rated on a 1 to 5 scale; no basis to judge, no competency, minimal competency, developing competency, emerging competency, and demonstrates competency. The evaluation ratings for all practice behaviors will be averaged for the final score that will determine the grade of Credit or No Credit. MSW Generalist students must receive a score of 70-100 to receive a grade of Credit. MSW Specialization student must receive a score of 105-150 to receive a grade of Credit. Any score below these values will receive a grade of No Credit.

If at the end of the second practicum semester a student has not completed all practicum hours a grade of incomplete will be entered. Incompletes automatically turn into a letter grade of NCR after 12 months, thus students have up to one year from the end of the second semester of practicum to complete their hours. Extensions of hours past the regular term must be approved by the Director of Field Education first. MSW students wishing to return to complete their degree after a year or more please refer to the Time Limits section, on page 35, of the Master of Social Work Specific Policies in this handbook.

### **Agency Evaluation of Practicum Process**

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

### **Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience**

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

# Appendices

## A. Master of Social Work

B1. Overview of Generalist Approach to Social Work

B2. Individualized Learning Plan

B4. Guidelines for Ethical Practice in Practicum and in Classroom

B5. Graduate School Leave of Absence Form

B6. Course Completion Checklist

B7. Board of Behavioral Health Licensing Requirements & Application Checklist

## B. Field Education

B1. Supervision Overview, Topics, and Agenda

B2. MSW Generalist Learning Agreement and Evaluation

B3. MSW Specialization Learning Agreement and Evaluation

B4. Employment Based Practicum Guidelines

B5. Acknowledgement of Risk

B6. Professional Standards: Essential Attributes and Functions

B7. Interruptions for Field Education Policy