

# SOCIAL WORK STUDENT HANDBOOK

## Social work department Practicum Contacts

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## Welcome to Alverno College Social Work Department

Social Work is a challenging profession with a substantial range of career options and opportunities in the greater Milwaukee area as well as in the region, state, and nation. Social Workers help people move forward with their goals and life, including overcoming barriers, social inequality, and harmful oppression. Social Workers help individuals, families, organizations, and communities secure resources that empower dignity, self-determination, and strengths. Because of the ongoing need for social justice action, it is essential that Social Work continuously adapts to support individual, families, organizations, and communities' inequalities, underrepresentation, and oppression.

This *Social Work Department Practicum Education Manual* is an essential resource that is to be read by the Student prior to the Student starting Practicum Education in the BSW program. To foster Student success, the *Social Work Department Practicum Education Manual* is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis and is accessed on the Alverno College Social Work Department website along with being posted on Moodle.

Additionally, The *Social Work Student Handbook* is also an excellent tool that provides the best explanation of goals, expectations, and requirements of Alverno College's Social Work Degree. To foster Student success, the *Social Work Student Handbook* is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis and is accessed on the Alverno College Social Work Department website along with being posted on Moodle pages of most Social Work courses. Thus, Students are expected to refer to it as their main source of Alverno's Social Work Department and follow the included requirements, policies, and procedures. Students are encouraged to contact the Social Work Department Chair with any questions and/or suggestions about the Social Work Department. Lastly, Students should also review *Building a Community of Learners: A Community Guide*

and *Student Handbook* (Alverno College Student Handbook) for further information about being a Student at Alverno College.

Further, National Association of Social Worker (NASW)'s Code of Ethics, NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice, and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)'s 2022 EPAS (Educational Policy Accreditation Standards) are excellent supplemental sources to this *Social Work Department Practicum Manual*.

### BSW Social Work Practice

Social Work is a respected, client-centered, evidence-based, practice-driven, future-focused profession and by gaining a CSWE-accredited BSW degree, graduates will have increased their cultural competency skills, gained knowledge and skills at the individual, group, family, organization, and community levels, and increased their employment and graduate school opportunities. Alverno College's Social Work Department prepares BSW graduates to be employed as generalist Social Workers. The social work department will continue to work with CSWE and Alverno College to ensure Students are earning a degree of rigorous academic standards and professional competency demands. Our graduates are eligible for Social Work certification (licensure) with the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) in Wisconsin and may successfully transfer their license to other states. However, certification or licensure is not required for all Social Work and human services positions.

In the Milwaukee area, in the state of Wisconsin, as well as nationally, Social Work has been growing and this growth is expected to continue, according to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and Bureau of Labor Statistics. Social Work has successfully defined itself as a respected profession and has made its mark on several human services arenas, such as hospitals, child welfare, and with veterans while gaining more marketability than other human services disciplines in the areas of mental health, domestic violence and sexual assault, schools, residential and in-home services for older persons, youth work, supports for people with disabilities, social action coalitions, and nonprofit leadership and management.

Social work is highly person centered and interactive. Practicum opportunities for students to practice working with and on behalf of others to develop their social work identity and skill set is the focus of the practicum placement. Students must be prepared to attend their practicum in person. The agency site may not be able to commit to, nor does the social work department guarantee, being able to identify a fully remote practicum for any student. Most agency staff work on-site, though many agencies now have some hybrid opportunities which may provide some flexibility in scheduling for students. The Social Work Department has a responsibility to be aware of and responsive to the context of the practice communities with whom we partner and what they will support structurally, while maintaining educational integrity.

## Social Work Program Vision, Purpose, & Learning Outcomes

### BSW Vision

Alverno College's Social Work Department is driven to motivate life-long learners who are client-centered, adaptable, culturally respectful, knowledgeable, social justice change leaders.

### BSW Purpose Statement

Dedicated to educational advancement and community engagement, we prepare generalist Social Workers committed to professional ethics and values, service, strengths, social justice, and human rights. The

purpose is to provide an engaging and enriching learning environment that supports life-long learning as Students demonstrate competency in their knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes of generalist Social Work education. Graduates, who are client-centered, ethics-grounded, social justice-focused, strengths-based, human rights-centered, and future-driven, will advocate for the advancement of the quality of life for individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

## BSW Learning Outcomes

The Social Work Department learning outcomes reflect the learning that Students demonstrate prior to earning a bachelor's in social work (BSW).

The Learning Outcomes are:

1. Graduates are able to apply their understanding of an effective, ethical, and culturally competent Social Work practice that emphasizes the strengths of people, families, groups, organizations, and communities to define, process, solve, and prevent social problems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
1. Graduates are able to apply their gained knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes of the Social Work profession, which emphasizes applied research and scholarship to positively impact generalist Social Work professional practice and social welfare policy.
1. Graduates are able to apply their comprehension of person-centered, theory-driven, evidence-based and culturally enriched knowledge that engages, assesses, intervenes, and evaluates for socially and economically vulnerable and oppressed people, groups, families, organizations, and communities in a respectful manner while fostering human diversity and social justice perspectives.

## CSWE Accreditation, EPAS Competencies, and Performance Indicators

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for Social Work Education, accredits the Social Work Department. The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Social Work Program at Alverno College is officially accredited as of March 2021. The Social Work Department curriculum is rooted in a framework established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Specifically, the program endeavors to develop Social Workers who promote human and community well-being by being able to demonstrate the following nine (9) core competencies upon graduation.

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. Practicum Education is the signature pedagogy for Social Work. As the signature pedagogy, Practicum Education is the heart of academic learning in which Students are taught to function as a Social Work professional at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice. The intent of Practicum 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 (2) interrelated components of curriculum – classroom and practicum – are both important within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Practicum Education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which Students demonstrate the nine (9) Social Work CSWE Competencies.

The Practicum Education component of the Social Work Department clearly connects theoretical and conceptual contributions of classroom learning to the practicum. First, during classroom lectures, role-plays, interactive activities, guest speakers, service-learning projects, agency class tours, volunteerism, work experiences, undergraduate research tasks, and/or domestic travel opportunities as well as via assignments and assessments, Students focus on how to apply the related material to the Social Work Profession. Then, once Students are in the practicum via their Social Work Practicum Education placement, they are expected to demonstrate the CSWE nine (9) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Social Work Practicum Education supports academic excellence and practicing professional competence as evidence of such learning is demonstrated in the assignments and assessments, the class sessions as a group of related Students, and the one-on-ones and midterm and final assessments with the Practicum Supervisor. Each competency has its own description and measurable behaviors.

The following descriptions and practice behaviors are taken from **CSWE's 2022 EPAS** for Baccalaureate and Master's Social Work Departments:

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

### CSWE EPAS Competencies, Definitions, and Performance Indicators:

#### **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.

Social Workers:

1. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;

2. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
3. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
4. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

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

Social Workers:

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

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

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

Social Workers:

1. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
2. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and

constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

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

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

Social Workers:

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

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

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

Social Workers:

1. 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
2. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on

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

Social Workers:

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

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

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

Social Workers:

1. 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
2. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

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

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

Social Workers:

1. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
2. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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

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

Social Workers:

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

## **Practicum Education Curriculum**

Practicum Education is an essential component of the Social Work degree program thus, Students are required to complete two (2) experiences at the BSW level.

Below are the two (2) Practicum Education courses for the BSW program, their course descriptions, and course outcomes. In an effort for the Students to be successful in Practicum Education, the Social Work Program will:

1. The Social Work program will provide Students a learning environment where they are able to apply their understanding of an effective, ethical, and culturally competent Social Work practice that emphasizes the strengths of people, families, groups, organizations, and communities to define, process, solve, and prevent social problems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
2. The Social Work program will provide Students a learning environment where they are able to apply their gained knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes of the Social Work profession, which emphasize applied research and scholarship to positively impact generalist Social Work professional practice and social welfare policy.
3. The Social Work program will provide Students a learning environment where they are able to apply their comprehension of person-centered, theory-driven, evidence-based and culturally enriched knowledge that engages, assesses, intervenes, and evaluates for socially and economically vulnerable and oppressed people, groups, families, organizations, and communities in a respectful manner while fostering human diversity and social justice perspectives.

## INTERN 383: Internship Seminar

The first internship experience for the BSW Student is INTERN 383. The Career Studio of Alverno College administers this internship. INTERN 383 serves as an internship and is completed during the junior year and a minimum of 120 hours is required for this two (2) credit course. The student must contact the Career Studio one semester prior to wanting to complete INTERN 383 to discuss internship sites and complete required paperwork.

## SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education

The second experience for the BSW Student is the senior Practicum. SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education is completed in the Social Work Department once Students are accepted in the Social Work program and during the final semester of the undergraduate degree. This course requires a minimum of 400 hours completed in one semester. This is the comprehensive Social Work Practicum Education course, serves as a practicum, and is used to evaluate the Student's ability to demonstrate all of the CSWE EPAS competencies. Practicum Education is defined as a high impact practice and the pedagogical course for Social Work education. This includes gained knowledge and skills, exposure to evidence-based practice, cultural diversity, and appreciation of the Code of Ethics. As Students apply their academic coursework to social work-based opportunities, they demonstrate and achieve core competencies known as fundamental to baccalaureate Social Work.

This course should be taken during the Student's final semester of their undergraduate education. Students are to take SW 483 (9 credits) with no more than 3 additional course credits so that the Student has enough time to be at their Practicum Education site. For a Student to take more than 12 credits in the semester with SW 483, they will need to request permission from the BSW Practicum Director. Such Students will not be permitted to enroll in SW 483 without this approval from the BSW Practicum Director. If a Student adds any courses after enrolling in SW 483, they may be dropped from that course until their course load gets changed/approved.

Practicum Education is designed in a way for Students to practice Social Work theoretical frameworks (Erikson's eight (8) stages, Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, Saleebey's strengths perspective, and bio-psycho-social framework), concepts (self-determination, person-in-the environment, and person-centeredness), and techniques (assessment, program evaluation, interviewing) learned in the classroom. With this baccalaureate Social Work program celebrating the generalist Social Work approach, Students have the freedom to explore areas of interests and strength via their Practicum Education experiences. In addition to a traditional practicum, this course supports Students with advancing their career development skills, such as updating their resume, interviewing for Social Work positions, completing online employment applications, discussing women in leadership, processing individual professional self-care, working towards graduate school, and/or other related topics.

As the Student begins SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education, the Student represents themselves as a future professional Social Worker and represents Alverno College as one whom we have deemed ready to work directly with those in need of care. This serves as a transitional time from being a Student of Social Work to becoming a Social Work professional. As such, it deserves the Student's careful attention and commitment. To this moment, Students bring professional skills, the knowledge they have gained throughout coursework, their experience from their prior internship, and their willingness to be professionally challenged in new ways. The Student will bring expertise in receiving

and creatively responding to feedback and the ability to apply ethical professional interaction skills to a particular work setting.

### SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education Course Information

- Credits: 9
- Required Hours: 400 hours (minimum)
- **Course Description:** This Social Work Practicum Education course is designed to provide the student with an opportunity to apply social work knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom to an approved community agency/organization. This includes gained knowledge and values, practice and professional skills, exposure to evidence-based practice, and appreciation of the NASW Code of Ethics. Practicum Education is defined as a high impact practice and the pedagogical course for social work education. As students apply their academic course work to social work-based opportunities, they demonstrate and achieve the CSWE EPAS nine (9) competencies and associated behaviors and dimensions known as fundamental to baccalaureate social work. Students are supervised by both an experienced social worker and by an academic social work faculty member. The student is expected to learn a holistic and broad knowledge base of the agency/organization while practicing as a social worker in the agency/organization setting. Via this 9-credit course, students are expected to complete at the minimum 400 hours at their assigned agency/organization as well as attend regular course seminars and complete all academic assignments/assessments. Consent by instructor needed. Please see the SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education Syllabus for Course Outcomes.

### Criteria for Acceptance into SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education

Social Work Practicum Education is a significant step for a Student both educationally and professionally. Because the Social Work Department wants each Student to be successful, only Students who meet the listed requirements will be considered for Practicum Education. The application and process for Social Work Practicum Education begins the semester before the course begins. Listed below are the basic requirements and criteria for applying to SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education:

- Students must be BSW Social Work major.
- Students must be in good academic standing.
- Students must have successfully completed or are currently enrolled in SW 200, SW 250, BSC 255, BSC 256 or BSC 257 or MT 256, SW 300, PPS 229, INTERN 383, SW 400, and SW 430 prior to enrolling in SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education.
- Students confirm that they have read and willfully agree to abide by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and the NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practicum Education.
- Students will attend a Group Pre-Practicum Education Meeting as led by the BSW Practicum Director regarding SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education.
- Students must complete the Application to SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education form and submit it to the BSW Practicum Director (See Appendix A). The Course Instructor will review this form with the Student when they have an Individualized Plan for Practicum Education Meeting.
- Students must complete and submit a Student Interest Form expressing their site/placement interests in Practicum Education sites and placements to the Course Instructor. (See Appendix B). The

Course Instructor will review this form with the Student when they have an Individualized Plan for Practicum Education Meeting.

- Students will understand that they need to complete a minimum of 400 hours in SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education in one (1) semester. Students must have the time to meet the intense weekly time commitment of approximately 30-35 hours per week in SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education for a traditional, 16-week fall or spring semester OR 40 hours for a 12-week summer session. Students will engage in self-reflection and create a plan on how they will achieve this goal. Students will share their plan with their Course Instructor.
- Students will understand that they will demonstrate all nine (9) of the CSWE EPAS Competencies and related behaviors and dimensions as outlined in the *Social Work Department Practicum Education Manual* while they complete a minimum of 400 hours at their Practicum Education site in one (1) semester. Students will also be responsible to attend regular on-campus classes and successfully complete academic assignments/assessments in SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education.
- Students will attend an individual session with their Course Instructor named the Individualized Plan for Practicum Education Meeting to discuss Practicum Education Site Placements and to gain approval before registering in SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education. The Course Instructor will give appropriate Students approval to register for SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education in person. The Course Instructor will then email the Registrar's Office and notify them that the Student is allowed to register for the course.
- Students will understand that once they have been given approval to register for SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education, the Student should register for it as soon as permitted through the Registrar's Office. It is essential that Students understand that if they do not register in a timely manner, it may affect their ability to begin their Practicum Education placement on time thus negatively influencing their hours and experience in Practicum Education.
- Students will understand that they will go through an interview process with their desired Practicum Education site. Students will create a resume and reference list in the course, PPS 229: Pre-Professional Seminar (or similar course). Students should update their cover letter, resume, and list of references and then submit them to their Course Instructor for review before their SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education interview at their placement site.
- Students will understand that Practicum Education placements may ask them to complete a background check and that they will be required to have malpractice/liability insurance. The Student is responsible for paying for and completing the process for liability/malpractice insurance. The Course Instructor can share the website link with you.
- Students will understand that Practicum Education Placements are not guaranteed until their Course Instructor and the Agency Practicum Supervisor confirm them. Students will further understand that once the Course Instructor, the Agency Practicum Supervisor, and the Student all agree to the Practicum Education Placement, Students cannot change their minds and look for a different Practicum Education Placement.
- Students will understand that in the Social Work Practicum Education Placement, Students will be representing themselves, Alverno College, and the Social Work Department. Students will use professionalism, emotional maturity and use the Alverno College eight (8) abilities as they demonstrate the nine (9) Social Work competencies.

## Requirements for All Social Work Practicum Education

The Social Work Practicum Education course requirements apply to all Social Work majors. Additionally, only Social Work majors can take Social Work Practicum Education courses.

### Background Check Clearance

The Social Work Profession often works with people who are vulnerable. Therefore, all Social Work Students entering Social Work Practicum Education should be aware that almost all Practicum Education sites require Students to complete a background check. Most Practicum Education sites will ask Students to complete a background check before officially offering the Practicum Education site. Most Practicum Sites run their own background checks. For Students who need to complete a background check completed through Alverno College, the following is the procedure: Students are to report to the Alverno College Human Resources Department. Human Resources who will conduct a Wisconsin Caregiver Background Check on the Student. Currently, (as of May 8, 2024) Alverno College provides this service for a fee of \$10 for Wisconsin only addresses. If you have lived out of state, the background check fee is approximately \$13 and up (Price can change without notice). Once the Human Resources Department runs the background check, the Human Resources Department then emails the Business Office to inform them to add the fee to the Student's account. Updated background check instructions or background check forms can be obtained from the Alverno College Human Resources Department.

If Students cannot complete a background check and/or have concerns about their background, Students should notify the Practicum Director immediately to attempt to find a Practicum Education Site. Please be aware, if Students are not able to complete a background check, there are no guarantees that the Practicum Director can find you a Practicum Education site. Additionally, Students need to be aware that any past, current, or pending felonies, criminal charges, convictions, and/or penalties against them in any jurisdiction may make them ineligible for Social Work Practicum Education placement. Students need to further understand that they are required to disclose any past, current, or pending felonies, criminal charges, convictions, and/or penalties during the Practicum Education Placement process.

### Additional Agency/Organization Requirements

Practicum Education sites may additionally require Students to undergo a separate criminal background check and/or other types of background checks and/or medical testing (i.e. tuberculosis testing and/or drug testing and/or vaccination requirements). Students will be informed of these additional requirements by the Practicum Education site beforehand and Students must comply with these practicum site mandates before beginning the practicum placement. In these situations, the Student will incur the cost of these checks (immunizations, drug testing, TB skin test, Department of Justice background check, etc.). The Student can purchase a package depending on the Practicum Education site's specific needs from CastleBranch (<https://mycb.castlebranch.com/>). The package codes are LV21 (background check, immunization TB test, and health information) and LV21dt (drug test). LV21 is \$103.75 and LV21dt is approximately \$40 (as of November, 2024). If the Student chooses not to complete these additional requirements for the Practicum Education site, the Student should discuss this with the Course Instructor and/or Practicum Director and discuss being placed at a different site that does not have the same requirements.

## Student Professional Liability Coverage (Malpractice Insurance)

Social Work Students entering Social Work Practicum Education are required to have professional liability coverage. The Student will be given the application link for the student liability insurance at the Group Pre-Practicum Education Meeting as led by the Social Work Practicum Director the semester beforehand. The Student is responsible for the cost of liability insurance and must provide the Practicum Director proof of their liability insurance before their practicum begins. As of 2024, the student rate is \$25 (\$15 if member of NASW). Directions to apply for liability coverage through Preferra Insurance Company are as follows:

- Visit: <https://socialworkinsure.com/>
- Click on APPLY ONLINE for STUDENT
- Answer YES to the following two (2) questions:
  - Are you a social work professional or student?
  - Do you need a student field placement policy?
- Purchase liability insurance
- Submit Proof of Coverage to Field Practicum Director (Diana Johnstone) BEFORE starting placement.

## Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Social Work Department may share relevant Student information with appropriate persons who may include the Department Chair of Social Work, the Social Work Practicum Directors, the Course Instructor, the agency/organization Practicum Supervisor, the Student's Academic Advisor, the Career Studio Staff, the Dean of the School of Professional and Graduate Studies Office and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Relevant information is defined as information that may involve the practicum placement selection, clients, agency/organization Practicum Supervisors, the Student learning experience or school policy.

Such information will be shared to enable informed choice by Practicum Supervisors, protect clients, protect Students, and to facilitate the learning process. Agency/Organization Practicum Supervisors are also expected to share relevant information with the Social Work Practicum Director, the Course Instructor, and/or the Social Work Department. The Student will be required to sign a release of information form as part of their Application to Practicum Education Form for the purpose of arranging, placing, and assessing the Student for Social Work Practicum Education. This release includes all contents of the application to Social Work Practicum Education. This release gives the Social Work Practicum Director/Course Instructor/Social Work Department permission to release the above information to agencies/organizations with whom the Student may interview and/or be placed.

## Practicum Education Key of Titles/ Positions with Practicum Education

- Practicum – often refers to Social Work Practicum Education within the Social Work Department.
- Course Instructor - is the person who teaches the Social Work Practicum Education Course. More often than not, it will be taught by the Social Work Practicum Director.
- BSW Social Work Practicum Director – is the person who oversees the Practicum Education component of the BSW Social Work program.
- Agency Practicum Supervisor – is the person who supervises the Student intern in the assigned practicum placement setting (agency/

organization) while they are completing their Social Work Practicum Education course experience.

- Task Coordinator – is the person who supervises the Student intern during their Social Work Practicum Education course experience, yet does not meet all the requirements of a Practicum Supervisor. When a task coordinator is used, there is still a Practicum Supervisor and sometimes the Social Work Practicum Director plays the role of Practicum Supervisor in such unique situations. And the Student will need to participate in weekly consultation meetings with the Social Work Practicum Director.
- Academic Administrative Assistant – is the office manager who provides a wide variety of administrative support to the Social Work Department.
- Internship – often refers to INTERN 383: Internship Seminar course and the Career Studio office.

## Social Work Practicum Education Roles and Responsibilities

### Responsibilities of the STUDENT are to:

1. Work with the Course Instructor to process and finalize practicum placements. Students are not to secure their own placements; they are to work with the Course Instructor. Students will complete interviews with possible practicum sites. The Course Instructor makes placement decisions based on Student interests, skills, and strengths as well as the agency/organization strengths and needs. In addition, Alverno College and the Social Work Department's policies are taken into consideration.
2. Arrange their schedule so they can meet the practicum hourly requirements. Many agencies/organizations are only open during certain hours. Students with limited time may have a difficult time securing a Practicum Education placement. Evening and weekend placements are difficult to secure, which could cause some Students to forfeit a practicum opportunity, pushing back their graduation. Thus, Students are encouraged to be as flexible as they can with their schedules as to open more Practicum Education opportunities for themselves.
3. Make sure they are enrolled in the designated Practicum Education course. Once the Student has successfully enrolled in the designated Practicum Education course, the Student must show proof of liability insurance to the Practicum Director. Student's failing to meet this requirement will result in delaying the start of the Practicum Education placement.
4. Most Practicum Education sites may require Students to complete a criminal background check and/or other types of background checks and/or medical testing (i.e. tuberculosis testing and/or drug testing and/or vaccination requirements). Students will understand that if your potential practicum site requires it, the Student must complete the Site's mandates. If the Student has concerns about the potential Practicum Site's requirements, please contact the Practicum Director.
5. Take responsibility for obtaining and supplying any personal documentation that is required by a Practicum Education site.
6. Be at their Practicum site for the required hours. For example, SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education requires that Students will complete a minimum of 400 hours total in their practicum placement in one semester. Therefore, Students must complete at least 400 hours, which calculates to 30 to 35 hours a week for 16 weeks for fall or spring courses or 40 hours a week for 12 weeks summer courses. One semester practicum gives the Student an advantage of becoming

immersed into the position and truly understanding the role of a full time Social Worker in an agency/organization. Alverno College does not require Students to complete practicum hours during college assigned breaks or final exam week. Students are not to end their placement prior to the last weeks of classes even if their required hours are completed. Exceptions in the scheduling of required hours for the semester can be made only with permission by the Course Instructor in consultation with the agency/organization Practicum Supervisor.

7. Complete the Learning Plan Contract within the first two (2) weeks of the semester.
8. Arrange a weekly schedule cooperatively with the agency/ organization, adjusting the hours to allow for mutual needs. Students are permitted to workday, evening, and weekend hours. Students must take a minimum of half hour for lunch and for evening meals unless an exception is granted upon request to the Social Work Department.
9. Take responsibility for reporting to the practicum placement at the appointed times and notifying the appropriate person at the agency/ organization promptly if for any reasons the Student cannot get to work on time or will be unable to report to work. A pattern of repeated irresponsible tardiness and/or absence will result in removal from Practicum Education placement.
10. Alert the agency/organization Agency Supervisor and/or the Course Instructor immediately if their safety is compromised.
11. Demonstrate satisfactory work habits in relation to agency/ organization assignments, including confidentiality, using appropriate language, and professional behavior.
12. Adhere to NASW Code of Ethics, NASW Social Work Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competency, and the CSWE EPAS Competencies that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker.
13. Observe the rules and policies that guide the agency/organization and their operation, including safety, use of technology, confidentiality of material, promptness, reliable and responsible general conduct, and appropriate dress.
14. Read literature for orientation to the agency/organization or to deepen understanding required for delivering the agency/ organization's services.
15. Take responsibility for inquiring and learning from involvement in the actual delivery of services within the assigned Practicum Education setting.
16. Accept and constructively use the supervision and feedback provided by the Practicum Education site.
17. Keep a weekly journal which will be submitted through Time2Track. Information on Time2Track will be provided to SW 483 students at the onset of the semester in which they are enrolled in SW 483. Any hours not logged in their journal (via Time2Track) will not count toward the total hour requirement of the Practicum Education course.
18. Report to the Practicum Education class and other required meetings as scheduled. Time spent in Practicum Education class may be credited towards required Practicum Education hours.
19. Thoroughly complete and turn in all Practicum Education forms in a timely manner. Fulfill all course assignments, requirements, and expectations.
20. Thoroughly read, comprehend, and follow the *Social Work Department Practicum Education Manual* and the *Social Work Student Handbook*.

### **Responsibilities of the Alverno PRACTICUM DIRECTOR/ COURSE INSTRUCTOR are to:**

1. Aim to match the professional interests and goals of the Student with those of the agency/organization, in joint planning with the Student. Placements are not guaranteed until the Practicum Director, Student, and Agency Practicum Supervisor are all in agreement.
2. Ensure the agency/organization the right to screen Students referred for practicum, and to accept or reject Students according to the demands of the agency/organization and the needs of its clients. Agencies/organizations are expected to comply with Equal Employment Opportunity regulations in making decisions regarding Students.
3. Provide the agency/organization Practicum Supervisor with information regarding the Student within the limits of FERPA laws.
4. Ensure that each Practicum Education Student has general liability insurance and has completed Practicum Site mandates before beginning at the Practicum Education site.
5. Provide the Agency Practicum Supervisor and the Student with any Practicum Education forms necessary for successful completion of the Practicum Education Course.
6. Provide an orientation for new Agency/Organization Practicum Supervisors.
7. Provide an ongoing educational program for Agency Practicum Supervisors regarding supervision, Social Work curriculum, and current Social Work educational issues.
8. Adhere to NASW Code of Ethics, NASW Social Work Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competency, and the CSWE EPAS Competencies that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker.
9. Provide opportunities for Agency/Organization Practicum Supervisors to evaluate the Alverno College Social Work Practicum Education Program and to participate in curriculum development.
10. Be available for telephone, Zoom, and/or face-to-face meetings or consultations as needed.
11. Withdraw the Student from the agency/organization if careful evaluation indicates that satisfactory learning is not taking place.
12. Schedule Practicum Education site visits with the Agency/ Organization Practicum Supervisor and Student on Zoom and/or face-to-face agreed upon location.
13. Offer Practicum Education class/seminar and other meetings with Students as scheduled.
14. Maintain confidentiality of any information designated by the Practicum Education site as confidential.
15. Review Practicum Education forms completed by Students and Agency Practicum Supervisors.

### **Responsibilities of the AGENCY PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR are to:**

1. Hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate (BSW) or master's (MSW) Social Work degree, have the ability to have Social Work licensure, as well as two (2) years of post-degree professional experience in social work. However, in the rare occurrence of the Agency Practicum Supervisor not meeting these requirements, the Course Instructor will work with the Agency Practicum Supervisor and the Student. Arrangements can be made for supervisors who have unique skills and/or opportunities, or who have an advanced degree in a related human service area, such as a Task Coordinator. In this instance, the Course Instructor will work with the Practicum Education site



and the Course Instructor is responsible to ensure the Social Work perspective is reinforced.

2. Provide the Course Instructor with a description of the professional activities planned for the orientation and for the Student placement.
3. Prior to the Student's arrival, arrange adequate working space and equipment necessary for the Student to complete assigned tasks.
4. Provide the Student with an orientation to the organization's safety policies. Assist the Student as to how to introduce themselves to the client population. The Practicum Education site must identify the Student as a Student/Person in training status.
5. Provide the Student one (1) hour of regularly scheduled supervision each week and be available at other times for consultation with the Student.
6. Adhere to NASW Code of Ethics, NASW Social Work Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competency, and the CSWE EPAS Competencies that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker. The organization may not engage in discriminatory practices in either the hiring of personnel and/or the acceptance of Students or clientele.
7. Suggest reading materials for the Student, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the agency/organization.
8. Assign the Student guided professional Social Work experiences tailored to the Student's individual needs and abilities and the agency/organization's needs and strengths. The experiences should stress BSW generalist practice principles at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and, as such, provide as broad a variety of Social Work interventions as possible within the framework of agency/organization purposes and structure. Opportunities for contact with diverse populations and oppressed persons should also be emphasized.
9. Supervise, monitor, and evaluate the Student's performance on tasks, activities, course assignments, the ongoing development of the Learning Plan Contract, the nine (9) Social Work Competencies and associated behaviors with the dimension of Skills at Midterm and Final Assessment.
10. Assist the Student with applying Social Work knowledge, skills, and values, such as the Code of Ethics, theoretical frameworks (strengths perspective), and concepts (person-in-environment and self-determination).
11. Submit written evaluations of the Student's performance on the forms provided by the Alverno College Social Work Department.
12. Take responsibility to communicate promptly with the Student and the Course Instructor as problems appear in the Practicum Education site. In situations where personal or potential injury occurred, report this information to the Course Instructor as soon as possible.
13. Attend Practicum Education meetings and/or training as scheduled.
14. Be responsible for determining any tasks Students may not perform at the agency/organization due to either agency/organization or regulatory policies.
15. Assist the Student with the termination phase of practice with the clients. Assist the Student with the process of departing from the agency/organization.

## Criteria for Selecting Practicum Education Sites and Practicum Supervisors

Social Work Practicum Education settings and partnerships are developed on an ongoing basis. Some potential methods of gaining new

practicum sites are: agency/organization request, faculty connections, staff connections, Student connections, alumni, and essential stakeholders of Alverno College, Social Workers in the community, and the Social Work Advisory Council. The Social Work Department selects practicum agencies in which the Student can be provided with an opportunity to apply the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the academic setting to practical problems in agencies/organizations. Close supervision by departmental faculty and Agency Practicum Supervisors creates an opportunity for Student growth and is an important part of the Practicum Education. Only agencies/organizations that have entered a contractual, educational partnership (Affiliation Agreement, See Appendix C) with the Alverno College Social Work Department are designated as practicum education sites.

The Social Work Practicum Director completes the initial assessment with the agency/organization and the potential Agency Practicum Supervisor candidate. The Practicum Director, in consultation with other faculty, is responsible for assessing whether a Practicum Education setting and/or Practicum Supervisor meet the necessary criteria.

The necessary criteria for Agency Practicum Education sites and/or Agency Practicum Supervisors include the following:

- Social Work Practicum Director connects with the potential Agency Practicum Supervisor candidate to assess their interest and motivation to commit to the Agency Practicum Supervisor role.
- Social Work Practicum Director completes an Agency Practicum Supervisor Interest Form to see if they meet all criteria. (See Appendix I).
- The Agency Practicum Supervisor candidate submits their resume to the Social Work Practicum Director.
- The Social Work Practicum Director assesses the Practicum Supervisor candidate and their agency/organization setting on the following:
  - Has a BSW or a MSW degree from a CSWE-accredited program (If it is an MSW practicum, the agency supervisor MUST have an MSW).
  - Has at least two years of post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work
  - Has the potential to have Social Work licensure.
  - Availability to foster a professional experience in Social Work, appropriate for BSW practice.
  - Ability to provide a positive orientation toward human diversity and policy of non-discrimination and inclusion toward staff, client systems, and Students.
  - Availability of a Practicum Education experience that provides all levels of Social Work practice (micro, mezzo, and macro) and an opportunity for the Students to practice a variety of Social Work skills.
  - Availability to attend required site visit meetings with the student and Course Instructor.
  - Availability to offer a practicum setting where Students are able to achieve all CSWE nine (9) EPAS Social Work competencies and congruent behaviors.
- Adheres to NASW Code of Ethics, NASW Social Work Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competency, and the CSWE EPAS Competencies that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker.
- Agency/organization willingness to commit to an educational learning experience for the Student, including such factors as

supervisory time, physical space, and professional tasks to advance the Student's abilities and strengths.

## Affiliation Agreement between Alverno College and Agency/Organization

Social Work Practicum Education uses the Affiliation Agreement to ensure the partnership is mutually beneficial for both Alverno College and the Practicum Education setting. The agreement outlines the responsibilities of the Course Instructor/Practicum Director as well as the Agency Practicum Supervisor. (See Appendix C). The Social Work Practicum Director will ensure that the Agency Practicum Supervisor and the administrator of their practicum setting have signed the Affiliation Agreement (See Appendix C). The Social Work Practicum Director will house these agreements in a locked filing cabinet and will ensure that the Agency Practicum Supervisor has a copy of their agreement. The Affiliation Agreements will also be kept on the Social Work Department OneDrive. These agreements are good for five (5) years, yet either party may request to terminate the agreement at any time. The Social Work Practicum Director is responsible for tracking and ensuring all agreements are kept up to date.

## Evaluating Practicum Setting Effectiveness Congruent with the Social Work Competencies

The practicum setting and the Agency Practicum Supervisor must meet all eligible requirements for Student Practicum Education placement.

The Social Work Practicum Director with Course Instructor(s) must see that the Agency Practicum Supervisor (including Task Coordinator when used) and agency/organization provide a practicum setting where Students are able to achieve all nine (9) CSWE EPAS Social Work competencies and associated behaviors and dimension of Skills. There are several methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the practicum setting. The Affiliation Agreement (See Appendix C) is one example and the Practicum Education Site Paper – Student Assignment is another example. Indirectly, the Practicum Director and Course Instructor(s) use all Site Visits, seminar classes, assignments, assessments, and weekly logs as methods of evaluation that the practicum setting and Agency Practicum Supervisors are providing an effective Practicum Education experience.

The procedures are as follows:

- The Practicum Director ensures that the practicum setting is willing to be effective with practicing and applying the competencies prior to signing the Affiliation Agreement (See Appendix C). Then prior to renewing the Affiliation Agreement, the practicum setting agrees to continue to be effective in practicing and applying the competencies.
- Each Practicum Setting is taught the nine (9) competencies including how to practice them as well as evaluate them. This training is held prior to the first Student placement as well as Practicum Supervisors are encouraged to ask any questions throughout the placement. Questions throughout the duration of the Student placement are always welcomed and responded to on a timely basis.
- The Learning Plan Contract is used indirectly to assess the effectiveness of the practicum setting's ability to apply and evaluate the nine (9) competencies. The Social Work Department celebrates each practicum setting's ability to apply all of the Social Work competencies and related behaviors, including the ability to assess/evaluate the Student on the midterm and final assessment tool.
- The site visits, seminar, the weekly logs, the paper assignments, and any other assessments listed below are used to indirectly evaluate the practicum setting's effectiveness.
- The Practicum Education Site Paper specifically asks Students to describe their experiences at the practicum setting. This paper is used to assess and evaluate the practicum setting's ability to apply all of the nine (9) Social Work competencies.
- The Agency/Organization Supervisor Exit Survey is given at the end of each semester to all Practicum Supervisors. One of the goals of this tool is to assess their confidence in being a competent Practicum Supervisor, which includes the ability to apply and evaluate the nine (9) Social Work competencies. Should the Practicum Supervisor wish not to complete the survey, Agency Practicum Supervisors are welcomed to share their thoughts and ideas with the Alverno Practicum Director.
- Social Work Practicum Director connects with the Agency Practicum Supervisor to assess their interest and motivation to commit to the Agency Practicum Supervisor role on an ongoing basis.

## Student and Placement Matching Process

The Practicum Director and/or the Course Instructor are responsible for the placement of Students with the designated practicum setting. They are responsible to ensure that the application requirements, placement process, courses requirements, and related forms are successfully discussed and completed. Then, the Social Work Practicum Director is responsible to ensure that the Students have completed related paperwork, such as background checks, liability insurance, and so on, prior to being placed at their designated practicum setting.

The Practicum Director and/or Course Instructor guide the process of matching the Student with an appropriate practicum setting and supervisor once the Student has been deemed professionally ready (formerly "accepted" via the screening and application process) as a Social Work major. Placements are not guaranteed until the Practicum Director, Agency Practicum Supervisor, and Student are all in agreement.

The procedure and steps are:

- Students determine that they are ready for a Practicum Education experience, both personally and academically.
- Students attend the Group Pre-Practicum Education meeting organized by the Social Work Practicum Director. This is held the semester before their practicum course to allow preparation time.
- Students process their goals, interests, and strengths and then review the available list of possible Practicum Education sites.
- Students confirm that they have the ability to achieve the hours required for the Practicum Education course.
- Students must complete and submit the Application to Practicum Education form to their Course Instructor. (See Appendix A).
- Students complete the Student Interest Form and provide their Course Instructor their top three (3) placement sites. (See Appendix B).
- Students meet with their Course Instructor during an Individualized Plan for Practicum Education Meeting. At the Individualized Plan for Practicum Education Meeting, the Course Instructor will give appropriate Students approval to register for the Practicum Education course. This is done by the Course Instructor emailing the Alverno College Registrar's Office and giving them a list of students who are allowed to register for the course. The Individualized Plan for Practicum Education Meeting will also include a discussion about

the completed Student Interest Form. The Course Instructor will review this form with Students to determine the most appropriate placement site for the Student. Students should also process any transportation concerns about how the Student will get to their Practicum Education placement and/or if their practicum placement will require a Student to drive. During this time, the Student should share if they will need accommodations for a disability while at their Practicum Education site. If a Student needs assistance in how to ask for accommodations, the Alverno College Office for Student Accessibility can help the Student with the process.

- Students must follow the requirements regarding completing the Student Liability Insurance application. The Social Work Practicum Director/Course Instructor will need proof of all Students Liability Insurance before they begin their placement.
- The Social Work Practicum Director makes the initial contact to the Practicum Education site if there is not an Affiliation Agreement in place. The Social Work Practicum Director will create the Affiliation agreement. The Social Work Practicum Director will ensure that a current Affiliation Agreement is in place with the Practicum Education site. (See Appendix C). The Course Instructor makes the initial contact to the Practicum Education site regarding availability for a Student. If the site is available to accept a Student, then the Course Instructor will share the contact information with the Student. The Student will proceed with setting up an interview with the agency/organization. The Social Work Practicum Director will ensure that a current Affiliation Agreement Form is in place with the Practicum Education site.
- Students interview with the placement site and complete any paperwork that the agency/organization deems necessary. The Student should have their cover letter, resume, and reference list ready for the interview.
- Students understand that Practicum Education placements are not guaranteed until their Course Instructor and the Agency Practicum Supervisor approve them. Students will further understand that once Course Instructor, the Agency Practicum Supervisor, and the Student all agree to the Practicum Education placement; Students cannot change their minds and look for a different Practicum Education placement.
- Once all three (3) parties have agreed, everyone will sign the Learning Plan Contract/Midterm and Final Assessment Form (See Appendix D) and the Role Expectation Form. (See Appendix E).

## Practicum Education and Student Employment

Students are encouraged to seek Practicum Education placements at agencies/organizations that are different from their current employment.

By securing diverse settings, Students may expand their professional interests, enhance other Social Work strengths and skills, as well as network with other community resources. Further, securing a different placement will ensure the Student is truly a “Student” during their Practicum Education course. However, the Social Work Department understands that sometimes Students wish to seek a practicum opportunity with their current employer. This includes accepting employment during the Practicum Education course. In such cases, the Social Work Department has specific policies and procedures that identify how to proceed when Students request a practicum placement in their current place of employment.

This policy is:

- Students seeking a Practicum Education placement in their place of employment must receive approval by the Course Instructor. Additionally, Practicum Education assessments/assignments in places of employment must be educationally focused and structured appropriately to achieve the goals and objectives of the Practicum Education course. Following this process carefully ensures the Student’s academic learning including meeting all of the Practicum Education course objectives, requirements, and competencies are met. This includes ensuring the role of the Student as a learner as well as to ensure Student assignments/assessments and Practicum Education supervision are not the same as those of the Student’s employment.

All Practicum Education in places of employment must meet all of the Practicum Education Site and Agency Practicum Supervisor requirements, with the additional requirements of:

- The Practicum Education placement must be in a different program within the agency/organization and be clearly distinct from responsibilities of paid employment. In order to provide new learning opportunities, the practicum placement should be in an area that is different from where the Student is currently employed, has been employed, or had a previous experience.
- The Agency Practicum Supervisor must be a different person than the Student’s current employment supervisor.

### Practicum Placement Changes

Ideally, Students and Agency Practicum Supervisors will stay together for the duration of the Practicum Education course. However, at times, it is necessary to change Practicum Education placement sites. Some example reasons are: Agency Practicum Supervisor resigns their position at the agency/organization, unsatisfactory performance of the Agency Practicum Supervisor, and/or unsatisfactory performance of the Student.

### Problem Resolution Process

Practicum Education Students are expected to demonstrate professional standards of practice outlined in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. Ongoing supervision is key to identifying problems early in the Student’s practicum. The Agency Practicum Supervisor has the responsibility to document and address any work-related concerns or unprofessional behavior in a timely manner with the Student and provide appropriate guidance to remedy the concerns. Should the Student continue displaying unprofessional behaviors at their placement, the Agency Practicum Supervisor should report this to the Course Instructor and/or Practicum Director. If there are unresolved concerns in Practicum Education, including but not limited to the Student’s academic performance, professional behavior, professional performance, disposition, professional ethics, and Alverno College policies and procedures, the Practicum Director will immediately notify the Department Chair of the Social Work Department for additional support and assistance. Each case will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, during Practicum Education, the Student will contact their Course Instructor with any placement concerns or requests for placement changes. The Course Instructor will ensure that a plan of action that works for the Student and the Agency Practicum Supervisor is achieved. The Course Instructor may consult with the Practicum Director or related faculty/staff for support and/or assistance. Each case will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## Dismissal from Social Work Department

If there are severe Student academic concerns with the Practicum Education course, the Student may be dismissed from the Social Work Department. Please see the *Social Work Student Handbook* for more information.

## Appeal and Grievance Procedures

If the Student wishes to appeal a dismissal or any other related decision, they are to follow the appeal and grievance procedures outlined in the *Social Work Student Handbook*.

## Student Safety

Student safety is a priority and is essential. Students are to receive a full safety orientation to their assigned agency/organization including safety policies and procedures. This training is to be provided by the Practicum Education agency/organization itself, since each agency/organization may differ in terms of its needs and challenges regarding working safely in their organization. Agency Practicum Supervisors should promote an environment where the Student feels comfortable, supported, and expected to discuss safety issues and concerns and make safety a regular agenda item of weekly supervision. Agency Practicum Supervisors, to the extent possible, should be mindful of assigning cases and responsibilities appropriate to a Student's skill and experience level. Social Work can be unpredictable and at times can be dangerous for its Social Workers. It is critical that Students are trained and prepared to manage such situations via agency/organization policies and best practices. Such preparation cannot guarantee a risk-free Practicum Education environment, yet it can reduce such risk.

Students who do not receive safety orientation and training should take the initiative to inquire about this topic with the Agency Practicum Supervisor.

Policies regarding safety are as follows:

## #Safety Orientation for the Student by the Agency Practicum Supervisor should encompass:

- Environmental safety including fire safety, the organization's disaster/emergency preparedness plans (tornado, inclement weather), weapon's policy, etc.
- Tour of agency/organization including signing in and out, after hour's policies and procedures, building security, parking, and any neighborhood or community issues or considerations. In addition, security of personal belongings should be included in a building orientation.
- Risk reduction strategies employed by the organization including use of safety devices (cell phones, security alarms, calendars for tracking staff/intern locations, etc.).
- Nature and type of population served and any potential associated safety concerns that may occur including the potential for boundary issues, threats or aggression, and agency/organization policies related to the presence of substances or clients who are intoxicated and/or under the influence.
- In-home/community-based safety procedures. Use of universal safety precautions in attending to service provision with individuals, groups, families, and the community.
- Health safety including potential exposure to infection, communicable disease, biohazards, and pests including universal precautions related to exposure to bodily fluids or infection, any

recommended or required immunizations, procedures for pests/vermin such as lice, scabies, bed bugs, cockroaches, etc.

- Approaches to working with potentially violent or unpredictable client situations. Each practicum agency/organization should develop a plan of safety for all Students in placement.
- Responses to threatening statements, letters, phone calls, emails, and other communications directed to the Student or other agency/organization personnel.
- Students should not be left to staff an office or see clients without other staff present in the building, unless instructed, trained, and supervised by the Agency Practicum Supervisor.
- Opportunities for Students to observe and shadow their Agency Practicum Supervisor on community-based visits.
- Allow Agency Practicum Supervisors opportunities to observe and mentor Students on community-based visits.
- Discussion of the risks of providing personal information to a client/the community, including social media. (Please see Social Work Department Social Media Policy below).
- Use of supervision and consultation when safety issues are present.
- If the Student questions their safety, they are encouraged to speak to their Agency Practicum Supervisor and/or the Course Instructor.

## #Student Transporting Clients

- Alverno College Social Work Students may NOT TRANSPORT CLIENTS. Students may drive their own car to and from the Practicum Education site, appointments, meetings, trainings, home visits, etc. To reiterate, Students may NOT transport clients due to the high liability risk.

## #Physical Restraint

- Alverno College Social Work Students are NOT to perform physical restraint on clients, unless instructed, trained, and supervised by the Agency Practicum Supervisor.

## #Home Visits

- Students may NOT conduct any home visits with clients without receiving prior approval from the Agency Practicum Supervisor.

## #Critical Incident / Personal Injury

- For purposes of this policy, Critical Incident is defined as:
  - Injury to the Student and/or client under the immediate care/supervision of the Student,
  - Threat of violence to a Student by a client or practicum agency/organization staff,
  - Abusive behavior by the Student towards a client or agency/organization staff,
  - Law violation by the Student, or
  - Any event that could have a profound impact on the Student
- In the event of a Critical Incident, the Student should:
  - Obtain medical attention if needed,
  - Immediately notify the Agency Practicum Supervisor of the incident,
  - Establish with the Agency Practicum Supervisor if further action (law enforcement involvement, etc.) is warranted, and
  - Contact their Course Instructor within 24 hours of the incident and report what happened, who was involved, and where/when it happened. The Course Instructor will share the incident with the Practicum Director.

- The Course Instructor will follow up with the Student to address any emotional/physical safety concerns and plans for the future.
- The college does not provide accident or health insurance for Practicum Education Students.

## Social Media Policy from the Social Work Department

During the orientation with the Student, it is highly encouraged to address social media within the profession of Social Work, drawing particular attention to how social media may affect the organization both positively and negatively. Additionally, it may be helpful to have a discussion of the risks of providing personal information to a client/the community, including social media. The Social Work Department, with the support of the Social Work Advisory Council, has developed a social media policy.

Even with the development of this policy, Students are encouraged to practice professional caution as well as follow the NASW Code of Ethics.

Due to Social Work professional standards and the obligation to follow the NASW Code of Ethics, Social Workers, including Social Work Students, are to continually assess the ethical and practice implications of social media use. Privacy, confidentiality, and the establishment/maintenance of professional boundaries must be considered as well as the necessary precautions to protect the Student/employees and clients.

It is acceptable that there are applications for social media within Social Work. Social media has a broad range of utility in Social Work practice.

Social Work has many practical applications including education, advocacy, outreach, mobilization, fundraising, and evaluation. Social Workers are to be careful about how they may be branding their agency/organization or projects/programs. Additionally, it is the Social Worker's professional responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries online as much as possible to protect both their privacy and the privacy of their clients, for example via their Practicum Education placement agency.

### The NASW Code of Ethics (2021) standards that are applicable to social media include:

- Texting, email, and social media are quick and effective ways to communicate with others, however, many ethical, legal, and clinical issues must be addressed when using these communication tools. The potential for unintentionally sharing protected information is significant and must be considered. In general, consider the security, privacy, and confidentiality of all communication methods and when in doubt seek consultation and supervision.
- Students should be reviewing and adhering to all agency/organization guidelines and policies regarding the use of all means of technology in the agency. Students should be expected to exercise great care and professionalism in how they represent themselves, the Social Work Department, Alverno College, and the Social Work profession as a whole in any use of technology. For example, it is very easy for an outsider to misinterpret statements or images out of context.
- Students should only use their agency/organization email address, agency phone number, and agency approved social media tools to communicate with clients. All correspondence should be of a positive and professional nature. Students should not give their personal email or personal phone number to clients. Additionally, Students should also be aware that if they do choose to communicate with clients by email, typically the agency/

organization's internet service provider generally retains all emails and could be read and monitored by the system administrator.

- No client information should be shared on any social networking sites.
- Students should not take and/or share photographs of clients without the client or the client's guardian consent. It is a breach of confidentiality. Students should know and adhere to the agency's policy on photographs and use of cell phone cameras.
- Students should maintain the appropriate and professional level of privacy settings. Students should be aware of the safety related concerns with the information that they make available about themselves and their family/friends/others online. Students should be aware that social media sites are public domains, and any information can be accessed by anyone. Once information is in cyberspace, it never goes away. It can become public and permanent.
- Students should not ask or accept a current or former client as a "friend" on any social networking sites, unless approved by the Practicum Education placement site.
- As a professional courtesy, Students should refrain from making any negative references or negative comments about their educational experience, such as Alverno College as an entity, anyone associated with Alverno College, such as their Practicum Education Site, Agency Practicum Supervisor, clients, professors, guest speakers, colleagues, and/or classmates. If Students have negative concerns or thoughts, they should practice professional conduct as outlined by the NASW Code of Ethics and the *Social Work Student Handbook*.

## Alverno College Harassment, Violence, and Nondiscrimination Policy

(Title IX) (As documented on the Alverno College website: <https://www.alverno.edu/Civility-Sexual-Misconduct-and-Harassment>)

In keeping with its mission to promote the personal and professional development of all members of the Alverno community and to provide a safe and welcoming campus, Alverno College fosters a climate of mutual concern, respect and caring. Alverno is committed to promoting a rich learning environment that is free of violence, discrimination, harassment, and other barriers to Students learning, healthy growth and development. All members of the Alverno community (including Agency Practicum Supervisors) are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.

### Nondiscrimination Statement

Alverno College intentionally creates a welcoming and inclusive learning community in which all members recognize and respect the rights and human dignity of every other member. The College values diversity and seeks talented Students, faculty and staff from a variety of backgrounds. In keeping with its long-standing Catholic Franciscan foundations, Alverno College does not discriminate against any Student, employee or applicant on the basis of any individual's age, citizenship, color, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, military status, national origin or ancestry, pregnancy or parenting status, political belief or affiliation, race, religion or creed (except in campus ministry staff positions), sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status in the administration of its educational programs and activities or in its employment practices. Furthermore, the College prohibits the

harassment of Students and employees, as harassment is a form of discrimination.

In the area of undergraduate enrollment, Alverno College's weekday undergraduate programs will remain exclusive in respect to gender identity, but not as to any of the other aforementioned characteristics.

Alverno College, an institution dedicated to the education of women, pays particular attention to issues of harassment, discrimination, or violence on the basis of sex, gender, pregnancy or parenting status. Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that results in discrimination, harassment, or violence toward a Student or employee is illegal and unacceptable, undermining the mission of the college. Such conduct, whether on or off campus, is expressly prohibited by the college and is considered a serious violation of human rights.

In alignment with federal Title IX regulations, Alverno College has procedures to receive, investigate, respond to, and resolve complaints of discrimination, including harassment based on gender. Title IX violations include discrimination on the basis of sex or gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, and include sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, nonconsensual sexual acts, and sexual misconduct. This policy applies to conduct between men and women or between members of the same sex. In this policy, "discrimination," refers generically and inclusively to all forms of discrimination based on sex or gender, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual assault and sexual violence. Sexual misconduct includes but is not limited to conduct prohibited at Wisconsin Statutes 940.225.

This document outlines the investigation procedures by Alverno College in response to allegations of gender-based misconduct and sexual harassment involving one or more Alverno College Students. Students who are on leave (disciplinary or otherwise), on a study abroad, or internship will be considered an Alverno College Student, unless a Student has terminated their relationship with the college.

If a Student experiences any form of harassment or discrimination while in Social Work Practicum Education, they are strongly encouraged to notify the Agency Practicum Supervisor and the Course Instructor immediately. Additionally, Students may contact Alverno College's Title IX Coordinator, Jason Pilarski, Director for Campus Safety at [jason.pilarski@alverno.edu](mailto:jason.pilarski@alverno.edu) or telephone: 414-382-6151.

## Criteria for Monitoring Students

The Practicum Education Course Instructor is responsible for monitoring Student Practicum Education. The *Social Work Department Practicum Education Manual*, course syllabus, Site Visits, midterm and final assessments, assignments, and class discussions during the seminar class will clearly outline how Social Work Students will be monitored in their Practicum Education setting. Agency Practicum Supervisors will provide supervision to the Students as an additional way to monitor Students. At any point, if the Student is not meeting the requirements of this policy, additional meetings, assessments, and paperwork may be added.

The criteria are:

- Students must be registered for the appropriate Practicum Education Course prior to beginning their practicum placement.
- Students are required to attend Practicum Education course seminars. Please see the syllabus for exact dates. For example, SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education meets six (6) to eight (8)

times for two (2) to four (4) hours. Students are allowed to count the course seminar hours towards their required hours.

- Students are required to follow the Social Work Practicum Education course syllabus and course schedule as well as complete all assignments and assessments to successfully complete the course.
- Students are required to be at the Practicum Education placement site for the required hours. **For example**, SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education Students must complete at least 400 hours, which calculates to 30 to 35 hours a week for 16 weeks for fall or spring courses or 40 hours a week for 12 weeks in summer courses. If the Student or the agency/organization needs to decrease or increase the number of hours per week, the Student, the agency/organization, and the Course Instructor all need to agree to the suggested change. The Student still needs to achieve the required 400 hours to successfully pass the course.
- Students are to be at their Practicum Education site on the days and times agreed upon with their Agency Practicum Supervisor. The Student will arrive on time and stay for the entire shift. The Student will contact the Agency Practicum Supervisor if they cannot attend Practicum Education placement due to an unforeseen circumstance.
- Students are not required to do practicum education hours on days when Alverno College is closed and/or designated holidays. Some Students may choose to complete practicum hours during these days as a method of achieving the required hours needed, which then should be reported on their Weekly Practicum Journal and Log Form.
- Students begin their Practicum Education placement at the start of the semester. Students are expected to complete their Practicum Education placement by the end of the semester. Students are to keep track of their hours on the Weekly Practicum Journal and Log Form (See Appendix F). If a Student identifies a concern with the hours, they are to discuss this with the Agency Practicum Supervisor and the Course Instructor.
- Students are expected to remain in their Practicum Education placement during the entire Practicum Education course. Students may not finish their Practicum Education placement early. Students should talk with the course instructor should they have questions regarding this policy.
- During Practicum Education, Students are expected to put their personal phone away so that the focus can remain on the learning and experiencing the Practicum Education site.
- Students are expected to follow the agreed-upon Learning Plan Contract as well as the Role Expectation Form and Midterm/Final Assessments. Students are expected to complete and submit the Weekly Practicum Journal and Log Form, Assessments, Assignments, possibly the Performance Improvement Plan, and any other agreed upon forms with the Agency Practicum Supervisor and/or Course Instructor.

## Professional Social Work Supervision

(See Appendix I).

Students are to be supervised by a CSWE-accredited BSW or MSW Agency Practicum Supervisor who has two (2) years post-Social Work degree experience (MSW required for MSW student). Supervision between the Student and Agency Practicum Supervisor is to be once a week for an hour as a way to assist in monitoring the Student's progress. During supervision time, Students and Agency Practicum Supervisors

are encouraged to discuss the Student's progress. However, in the rare occurrence of the Agency Practicum Supervisor not meeting these requirements, the Course Instructor will work with the Agency Practicum Supervisor and the Student. Arrangements can be made for supervisors who have unique skills and/or opportunities, or who have an advanced degree in a related human service area. In this instance, the Course Instructor will work with the practicum site and the Course Instructor is responsible to ensure the Social Work perspective is reinforced and that the Student is taught Social Work knowledge, skills, values, and strengths.

In some instances, Students may be placed in a setting where there is a "task coordinator" and an Agency Practicum Supervisor. A task coordinator may be an individual from another discipline (counselor, community organizer, etc.) or a Social Worker who does not have the required experience or degree to perform the role of Agency Practicum Supervisor, but may provide the day-to-day oversight of the practicum placement. The Task Coordinator with the Agency Practicum Supervisor are to work in collaboration to ensure that: the Student's learning plan goals are being met, Social Work is being role modeled, and the Student is taught the Social Work perspective, including Social Work knowledge, skills, values, and strengths.

The Social Work Department's policy states: When a qualified Task Coordinator has to be used, the Task Coordinator will assume the role of providing the Student a Social Work learning experience, which will be under the leadership of the Course Instructor or an indirect Agency Practicum Supervisor. The Course Instructor or the indirect Agency Practicum Supervisor will be directly responsible to ensure that the Student meets the practicum requirements, including fully understanding the Social Work perspective and are taught Social Work knowledge, skills, values, and strengths. The Course Instructor or the indirect Agency Practicum Supervisor will meet with the Student weekly. During this consultation, the Student and indirect Agency Practicum Supervisor will process material traditionally covered with another Student and supervisor meeting. The Course Instructor or indirect Agency Practicum Supervisor will ensure the Task Coordinator is supported in their role as Task Coordinator. In such a case, the indirect Agency Practicum Supervisor meets all the requirements of the Agency Practicum Supervisor as noted above, yet does not provide direct supervision.

## Site Visits

The Course Instructor schedules two (2) site visits with each Practicum Education placement. The site visits usually are held in person at the practicum agency or via Zoom, if the site is not local to Milwaukee. The site visits include the Agency Practicum Supervisor, the Student, and the Course Instructor. The Course Instructor is available if additional site visits are warranted or requested.

### First Site Visit

The first site visit is generally scheduled during the first few weeks of the Practicum Education placement. The Agency Practicum Supervisor, Student, and Course Instructor review, discuss, and sign two (2) forms. The first form is Role Expectation Form (See Appendix E). The purpose of this form is to clarify the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the Course Instructor, Agency Practicum Supervisor, and the Student, in order to facilitate a holistic educational experience. The signed original contract is housed with the Course Instructor and the Agency Practicum Supervisor and Student can be emailed the scanned document.

The second form reviewed at the site visit is the Learning Plan Contract/Midterm and Final Assessment Form (See Appendix D). The Learning

Plan Contract is an assessment tool related to the nine (9) CSWE competencies and associated behaviors and dimensions that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker. The Learning Plan Contract allows the Student and Agency Practicum Supervisor to establish specific tasks for how the Student will accomplish each competency. It also specifies learning activities appropriate to the unique opportunities within each agency or organizational setting. Essentially, the Learning Plan Contract should serve as a map for the Student's learning goals and experiences for the semester. The Student and Agency Practicum Supervisor also identify how these tasks are to be verified during the midterm and final assessment. The Learning Plan Contract is to be completed by the first site visit. During the site visit, the form will be reviewed and discussed. Once the Learning Plan Contract is completed, the Student will gather the required signatures and submit it to the Course Instructor.

### Second Site Visit

The second site visit is scheduled approximately during the Midterm point of the semester. During this visit, the Midterm Assessment and the Learning Plan Contract are reviewed and discussed. (See Appendix D). Prior to the meeting, ideally the Midterm Assessment is completed by the Agency Practicum Supervisor and discussed with the Student as part of their supervision. The Student's overall progress is reviewed relating to the nine (9) CSWE Competencies and associated behaviors. The Agency Practicum Supervisor, Student, and Course Instructor will discuss if a Performance Improvement Plan (See Appendix H) is needed. Lastly, discussing the termination process is a fundamental part of this visit as well as discussing the Student's last day of placement at the Practicum Education site.

### Evaluating Student Learning at Practicum Setting Congruent with the Social Work Competencies

Students will follow their Learning Plan Contract/Midterm and Final Assessment Form which serves as a map for the Student's learning goals and achieving the nine (9) CSWE EPAS Social Work competencies and associated behaviors and the assigned dimension that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker. Then, the weekly supervision between the Student and their Agency Practicum Supervisor is another means of evaluation. Further, the Course Instructor evaluates the Student's learning via the learning plan contract, the midterm and final assessments, Practicum Education seminar course, the assignments, and weekly journal and logs.

## Student Learning Plan Contract

(See Appendix D).

Evaluation of a Student's performance in Practicum Education is accomplished by the use of an individualized Student Learning Plan Contract. Every Student in Practicum Education develops a Student Learning Contract using the Learning Plan Contract / Midterm and Final Assessment Form. The Learning Plan Contract is an assessment tool related to the nine (9) CSWE competencies and associated behaviors and dimensions that guide the Social Work professional performance, dispositions, and ethics while performing the role as a Social Worker. The Learning Plan Contract allows the Student and Agency Practicum Supervisor to establish specific tasks for how the Student will accomplish each competency. It also specifies learning activities appropriate to the unique opportunities within each agency or organizational setting. Essentially, the Learning Plan Contract should

serve as a map for the Student's learning goals and experiences for the semester. The Student and Agency Practicum Supervisor also identify how these tasks are to be verified during the midterm and final assessment. The Course Instructor reviews and approves the Learning Plan Contract / Mid Term Assessment and the Final Assessment Form.

Students are expected to successfully complete all sections of the Student Learning Contract. Deficiencies may result in a performance improvement plan which defines the remediation required to bring competency to an acceptable level and may include additional assignments, additional practicum hours, and/or repeat of the course, to dismissal from the Social Work Program.

## Midterm and Final Assessments

(See Appendix D).

Student performance is formally evaluated by the Agency Practicum Supervisor at midterm and at the end of the semester using the Student Learning Plan Contract and the Midterm and Final Assessment Form. Students are expected to complete both a Midterm and Final Assessment with their Agency Practicum Supervisor. The Midterm and Final Assessment are on the same form as the Learning Plan Contract and are connected to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies and associated behaviors and the dimension of skills. Both the Midterm and Final Assessment are documented in writing and the Student uploads the completed, signed, and dated form into appropriate platforms such as: Moodle, LiveText, and/or VoiceThread. The Course Instructor will review and assess both the Midterm and Final assessments.

The Midterm and Final Assessments serve many purposes, such as:

- They serve as a checklist to ensure the Student has had the opportunity to apply all the CSWE competencies and associated behaviors.
- They serve as a means to assess the Student's strengths and areas of improvement. Such feedback can be valuable to the Student's personal, educational, and professional growth. A Performance Improvement Plan is needed at the Midterm site visit for a practice area receiving a score of "partially met" or "not met." Please note that a Performance Improvement Plan can be implemented at any time during the semester should it be warranted.
- They assess the Student's status with the CSWE competencies, which benefits the Student, the Practicum Education program, and the Practicum Agency.
- They serve as a department assessment tool for the Social Work Department.

The Midterm and Final Assessment rating scale is as follows:

- Exceeded - 4
- Met - 3
- Partially Met - 2
- Not Met - 1

## Performance Improvement Plan

(See Appendix H).

A Performance Improvement Plan is needed at the Midterm Assessment for a practice area receiving a score of "partially met" or "not met." Please note that a performance improvement plan can be implemented at any time during the semester should it be warranted.

The performance plan should:

- Clearly identify what skill(s) or behavior(s) needs improvement and identify any associated goal(s);
- Include what specific actions the Student will take to demonstrate improvement;
- Include specific deadlines;
- Indicate what measures of success will be utilized to determine if the remedial plan is successful; and
- Have all parties' signatures on the plan (Student, Agency Practicum Supervisor, and the Course Instructor.)

## Supervision in Practicum Education:

Students and Agency Practicum Supervisors are to have weekly supervision for one (1) hour. During supervision time, Students and Agency Practicum Supervisors are encouraged to discuss the Student's progress. Performance assessment is an ongoing process that starts with the Student's first day of placement and culminates in a written evaluation at the mid-term and at the end of the Practicum Education placement. Ongoing evaluation of the Student's progress is a built-in aspect of supervision and should be provided both in verbal and written formats. Students are also expected to develop the ability to evaluate their own practice throughout the practicum experience and share this with the Agency Practicum Supervisor. If there has been continuous sharing throughout the placement, written evaluation will hold no surprises. Ideally, the Student should be able to anticipate what the Agency Practicum Supervisor is going to say before it is written.

## Practicum Education Seminar Class

Practicum seminars are a form of learning where Students come together to learn from each other's Practicum Education experiences. The discussions will be related to topics pertinent to real world Social Work and methods of applying gained academic learning to the practicum setting. The practicum seminar schedule is further defined in the course syllabus. Students are required to attend Practicum Education course seminars and are allowed to count the course seminar hours towards their required practicum hours. **For example**, SW 483: Social Work Practicum Education meets as a class approximately six (6) to eight (8) times for two (2) to four (4) hours.

## Weekly Practicum Journal and Log (Submitted through Time2Track)

(See Appendix F).

Students are expected to keep an accurate account of their practicum placement hours in their Weekly Practicum Journal and Log (submitted through Time2Track). Students are expected to keep a journal of dates, activities they are performing, observations, and progress on the nine (9) CSWE EPAS competencies. Students are expected to complete The Practicum Journal and Log form on a weekly basis (submitted through Time2Track).

## Paper Assignments and Presentations

There will be two (2) paper-writing assignments required of Students. These assignments will be in the course syllabus and announced in class. Assignment directions will be provided in class and via Moodle or Voice Thread, including the due dates. The two (2) paper assignments are a Self-Reflection Paper on their Social Work Practicum Education experience and a Practicum Education Site Paper based on their Social



Work Practicum Education site. Both of these papers will include a professional presentation format.

## Role Expectation Form

(See Appendix E).

In an effort to help clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Course Instructor, the Agency Practicum Supervisor, and the Student, Alverno College has developed the Role Expectation Form to fully describe the mutual responsibilities. The Student, Course Instructor, and the Agency Practicum Supervisor agree upon their specific roles in signing this form.

## Student Contact Information Form

(See Appendix G).

In an effort to have clear contact information, the Student will complete the Student Contact Information form within the first two (2) weeks of Practicum Education. The Student will keep a copy for themselves, give a copy to the Agency Practicum Supervisor and submit a copy in Moodle to the Course Instructor.

## Additional Agreement COVID-19 Form

(temporary form used during the coronavirus pandemic)

(See Appendix J).

In an effort to clarify the importance of safety and that the Practicum Education Site is providing a safe working environment, Alverno College Social Work Department has created this additional agreement form regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. As of Fall 2023, this form is not required to complete due to the Federal COVID-19 Public Health Emergency has been declared ended.

## Progress Codes

The Course Instructor assigns progress codes of either satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) for Social Work Practicum Education. Progress codes are based on the assessment by the Course Instructor of the Students' performance at the Practicum Education placement setting using: Learning Plan Contract, Midterm and Final Assessments, quality of the Weekly Practicum Journal and Log Form, participation in the course Seminar, completing all course Assignments, and the Student's ability to successfully meet all nine (9) of the EPAS and associated behaviors and the dimension of skills. An "S" progress code indicates that Students performed at an overall satisfactory level for the course. If Student earned a "U," they should meet with their Course Instructor and/or Social Work Department Chair to explore their options. A satisfactory progress code is required to continue to advance with the Social Work Department, including graduating with a Social Work degree.

## Grade Point Equivalency (GPE)

Alverno College requires all Students to meet the standards established by the faculty in their given disciplines. In all courses listed on the official transcript, Students have met these standards. Courses in which Students did not meet these standards or criteria are not recorded.

A Student must successfully complete the courses and external assessments required for their major(s) and minor area(s) of study as printed in the bulletin for the semester and year of their entry.

Alverno College recognizes and values the documented educational significance of narrative feedback and self-assessment of Student

learning. We also want to open opportunities for our Students in competitive scholarships, practicums/internships, employment, and advanced degrees where narrative transcripts are not easily communicated or recognized. To facilitate these opportunities, faculty submit grade equivalencies to the registrar at the end of each semester for each Student. Students can request to see these equivalencies by submitting a release form to the registrar. Alverno recommends that Students meet with their advisor before requesting their grade point equivalent to discuss the purpose of their request. They are not part of the official transcript but can be used in situations where this information is required. The collection of grade equivalencies is a service to the Students pursuing scholarships and professional opportunities and never has been, nor will it be, a substitute for narrative feedback. This process is only to be requested when needed and is to be defined as an exception to the academic philosophy of Alverno College.

## Conclusion

Transitioning from academic learner in the classroom to a practicing Social Work Student is an exciting time in a Student's life. This manual is meant to provide Students with basic information and a basic framework of Social Work Practicum Education. Students should refer to this manual as often as necessary. Additionally, the Practicum Education class seminar is another resource for the Student as it is designed to assist Students in Practicum Education with practical information as they move towards graduation. Please see the Alverno College Social Work Practicum Director with any questions or concerns. The Social Work Department at Alverno College wants to see Students succeed in Practicum Education.