

The Learning Contract is developed and planned by the student and Field Supervisor in consultation with the Faculty Advisor as needed. The Learning Contract should be completed and signed by Field Supervisor and student no later than October 1.

- Staple-in additional pages if needed.
- Learning contract is to be provided to Faculty Advisor for review and signature at Fall Site Visit.

**Learning Contract Information**

- The Learning Contract details the areas of skill development expected of the student in the field practicum experience. Please read the content carefully and note the learning activities that will be used to assure students have practiced and acquired the requisite skills and competencies.
- The Learning Contract should be made available to the Faculty Advisor for review and use during site visits to monitor learning and progress in skill development. An approval of the Learning Contract and signature verifying this approval from the Faculty Advisor is needed at the time of the first site visit.
- The completed and signed Learning Contract (retained in the Field Practicum Workbook), along with the completed and signed evaluations for that semester, must be present in the workbook at the conclusion of each semester in order for the student to receive grades for the field practicum experience.
- Renegotiation of portions of the Learning Contract may be initiated by any party, but changes must be agreed upon by all parties. Changes must be in writing and signed by all parties prior to implementation. See Learning Contract Supplement/Amendment for guidelines (last page of Learning Contract). Additional information may be documented as needed.

**DO NOT REMOVE**

**THE LEARNING CONTRACT FROM THE FIELD PRACTICUM WORKBOOK**

*However, it is strongly recommended that students and Field Supervisors make copies for their own use and records.*

Learning Contract Period: Begin \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_ (Dates practicum is expected to begin and end; typically September to May, but variations are possible)

**PLANNED STANDARD SCHEDULE OF PRACTICUM HOURS:**

|    | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Other |
|----|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|-------|
| AM | _____  | _____   | _____     | _____    | _____  | _____ |
| PM | _____  | _____   | _____     | _____    | _____  | _____ |

Weekly supervision session is scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF FIELD PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

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Size of Direct Service Caseload: \_\_\_\_\_

(Typically expected to be four to five individual cases or families. Caseload size will vary, depending on agency mission, complexity of cases, type of service provided, number of groups student is assigned, and other factors. Depending on the agency, screening, assessment, and brief treatment or crisis services can qualify to meet these expectations)

# COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION (CSWE) 2015 COMPETENCIES AND BEHAVIORS

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has established standards for social work education. The Springfield College School of Social Work field education experience expectations reflect these standards, which were presented in the organization's 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

These are consistent with the mission of the Springfield College School of Social Work program, which is:

*Through the teaching of social work practice and knowledge, the Springfield College School of Social Work prepares individuals to meet universal human needs in order to engender mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and societal systems at all levels, based on principles of economic and social justice, dignity, and human rights.*

CSWE's competencies and behaviors are expected to be integrated into field learning experiences assigned to students, and supervisors should consciously address these as assignments are developed and made. Upon completion of the Foundation Year field experience, students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the following Foundation Year competencies and behaviors through the performance of the expected learning components found in the Learning Contract that follows this section. For additional reference, please see the latest editions of the *Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures* and the *Field Practicum Manual*.

The nine CSWE Social Work Competencies are listed below. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate the competency. The behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, while the preceding narrative statements represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

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

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

## **Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

## **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

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

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage

in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, 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, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness.

Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse 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 with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

**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 with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

**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 recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

## EXPECTED LEARNING COMPONENTS

### Foundation Year Field Experience Component #1A and #1B:

#### **1A. Direct Service with Individuals and/or Families – Client Engagement:**

The student demonstrates effective social work engagement with clients and client systems, including assessment, beginning counseling, and referral skills.

#### **1B. Direct Service with Individuals and/or Families – Multiple Systems:**

The student recognizes, articulates, and addresses the multi-systemic elements of clients' conditions and circumstances, including pressures and influences that create unequal access to services and fulfillment of basic and culturally-relevant human needs.

### **Conditions for Learning/Mean of Assessment (student and supervisor must complete):**

Student will have the opportunity to engage in direct social work services with individuals and/or families. The number of individuals and/or families with whom the student will be able to engage is 4 – 5.

To reflect the nature of agency services and the individual learning needs of the student, this number of individuals/families may be reached over the course of the first semester, then maintained at 4 – 5 cases for the remainder of the internship. Given the range of social work agencies, there are a variety of ways the student may engage in direct service with individuals and/or families.

Please describe the client population with whom the student will be engaged and the sample responsibilities expected of the student and describe the specific behaviors available in the agency by which the student will be able to identify and intervene in client systems (e.g., access to client files, consultation with agency colleagues, communication with professionals at related/referral agencies, etc.):

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Estimated number of hours per week the student will be engaged in this field experience component: \_\_\_\_\_. Minimum expected by school for this component is: **160 hours** for total internship (for both Field Experience Components #1A and #1B) of the 450 hours.

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

**Foundation Year Field Evaluation Expectations for Successful Completion of Field Experience Component #1A.** The student demonstrates effective social work engagement with clients and client systems, including assessment, beginning counseling, and referral skills as evidenced by:

1. Practice with 4 – 5 individuals and/or families; activities encompass, at minimum, engagement, assessment, and beginning counseling and referral activities.
2. Completion of a minimum of three comprehensive psychosocial assessments and development of appropriate intervention strategies each semester for a total of six clients or families.
3. Completion of process recordings presented to supervisor weekly using individual family, group or administrative meeting formats found in Field Manual Appendices.
4. Production and presentation to faculty advisor of a minimum of two process recordings per semester, out of 24 total for the academic year, that illustrate development of interactive interviewing and communication skills, including empathy, beginning social work analysis, and self-awareness as a professional social worker.

**Foundation Year Field Education Expectations for Successful Completion of Field Experience Component #1B.** The student recognizes, articulates, and addresses the multi-systemic elements of clients’ conditions and circumstances as evidenced by:

5. Practicing counseling activities, client advocacy, case management, interagency collaboration, and referral and treatment planning reflective of the ecological model of social work practice, person-in-environment, and a strengths perspective.
6. Production of bio-psychosocial assessments that include comprehensive information consistent with the ecological model of social work practice, “person-in-environment”, and a strengths perspective.

**If relevant, list other specific, direct practice behaviors, activities, and assignments related to working with clients with complex needs for the student during this practicum that will provide evidence of movement toward mastery of expected competencies:**

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## Foundation Year Field Experience Component #2: Group Work:

The student practices and demonstrates the skills necessary to conducting and, if possible, directly facilitating effective social work groups including both client helping groups and administrative task groups, using skills related to conflict management, development of cohesion and consensus, and movement toward group goals, as appropriate for the group.

### Conditions for Learning/Mean of Assessment (student and supervisor must complete):

Student will have the opportunity to engage in one or more client helping groups (therapy, support, or psycho-education, etc.) as facilitator, co-facilitator, or agency intern/representative. (Student may move from intern/ representative to co-facilitator to facilitator, if appropriate to agency setting and acquisition of individual skills, as appropriate, over the course of the internship.)

Please describe the helping group in which the student will be engaged:

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Estimated number of hours per week the student will be engaged in this field experience component: \_\_\_\_\_ . Minimum expected by school for total internship is: **160 hours of the 450 hours.**

Student will have the opportunity to engage in one or more collegial/administrative groups (team meetings, committee work, etc.). Participation in these groups may link to the Community Work/ Project Field Experience Component. Student may facilitate or co-facilitate these groups or participate in them as a member. (See End of Semester Evaluations for detailed outcome expectations.)

Please describe the collegial/administrative group in which the student will be engaged (note if this/these groups will be linked to the student's community work project):

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Estimated number of hours per week the student will be engaged in this field experience component: \_\_\_\_\_ . Minimum expected by school for total internship is: **160 hours of the 450 hours.**

**Foundation Year Field Education Expectations for Completion of Field Experience Component #2.** The student practices and demonstrates the skills necessary to conducting and facilitating effective social work groups, both client helping groups and collegial administrative groups, as evidenced by:

1. Participation in a client-focused helping group (therapy, support, psycho- education, information provision, or other) as co-facilitator, facilitator, or agency intern representative.
2. Participation in a collegial/administrative group as co-facilitator, facilitator, or agency intern representative (this group may be linked to Field Experience Component #3: Community Work/Project).

**If relevant, list other specific, direct practice behaviors, activities, and assignments related to working with clients with complex needs for the student during this practicum that will provide evidence of movement toward mastery of expected competencies:**

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**Foundation Year Field Experience Component #3:**

**Community Work/Project:**

The student articulates and addresses the contextual and interactive role of community for clients, colleagues, and/or the placement agency.

**Conditions for Learning/Mean of Assessment (student and supervisor must complete):**

Students will have the opportunity to engage in community work or a project that promotes increased understanding of an area of practice, clients' needs, and/or community needs. The community work experience or project may link to Field Experience Component #2B, engagement/participation in collegial/administrative group(s).

Please describe the planned community work or project in which the student will engage:

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Estimated number of hours per week the student will be engaged in this field experience component: \_\_\_\_\_. Minimum expected by school for total internship is: **90 hours of the 450 hours.**

**Foundation Year Field Education Expectations for Completion of Field Experience Component #3.** The student articulates and addresses the contextual and interactive role of community for clients, colleagues, and the placement agency as evidenced by acting in a leadership role in a community project that:

- a. promotes increased understanding of an area of practice, clients' needs, and/or community needs,
- b. engages members of an identified community,
- c. utilizes collegial/administrative group work skills to realize its goals (may be linked to the group work field experience component).

If relevant, list other specific, direct practice behaviors, activities, and assignments related to working with clients with complex needs for the student during this practicum that will provide evidence of movement toward mastery of expected competencies:

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***See next page for "Details for Discussion" Sheet Related to Community Project***

# Worksheet

## Details for Discussion Related to Community Project

1. Summary of Project:
2. With whom in the agency will the student work in developing and carrying out this project?
3. What will be the "product" of the project?
4. How will the community or clients benefit from the project?
5. How will the organization benefit from the project?

**Foundation Year Field Experience Component #4:  
Professional Practice and Effective Use of Self:**

Student demonstrates an understanding of professional social work practice, including effective use of supervision, development of effective relationships with colleagues, adherence to agency policies and procedures, and use of the NASW code of ethics, as evidenced by effective, day-to-day, ongoing practice as a professional member of the placement agency. Student demonstrates an understanding of how his or her values and ethics influence work with diverse populations of clients, including ethnic and cultural, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and ability-challenged populations.

**Conditions for Learning/Mean of Assessment (student and supervisor must complete):**

Supervisor and agency agree to provide settings and experiences where the student will demonstrate an understanding of professional social work practice and effective use of self. Use of supervision, engagement with colleagues, knowledge of agency policies and procedures, and use of the NASW Code of Ethics will be evaluated.

In recognition of the nature of agency services and the individual learning needs of the student, this field experience component should be interwoven throughout student assignments.

Please describe specific expectations of the student related to professional practice and effective use of self:

*(Also see Mid-Point and Final Evaluations for detailed outcome expectations.)*

**Specific Means of Assessment for Field Experience Components #1-4:**

As part of completing the Learning Contract consider carefully what will be used to assess student competence in the areas above. Check off sources that will be used:

- Supervision discussions**
- Discussion of coursework experiences**
- Review of process recordings**
- Observation of student in practice with clients**
- Observation of student interacting with colleagues**
- Observation of student in groups of colleagues, such as team meetings**
- Observation of student presentations in agency or community contexts**
- Review of paperwork and/or reports completed by the student**
- Reports from colleagues**
- Results from a project taken on by the student**
- Other possible sources of assessment of student competencies noted by supervisor and student:**

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**SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE REQUIRED RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR ALL  
STUDENTS IN FIELD PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES**

- I. Student interns shall behave in a legal, ethical, and moral manner in the conduct of their Field Practicum Experience, maintaining both a personal and professional integrity, and avoiding any actions or involvement in procedures not approved by qualified supervisors which would cause harm to others.
- II. Student interns will understand their responsibilities and practice within the limits of their defined roles, training, and competencies as defined and approved in the Affiliation Agreement. They shall be expected to adhere to all agreed upon requirements with regard to attendance, required clock hours, and performance of duties as contracted or amended.
- III. Student interns shall respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the individuals and the groups with whom they work. They shall not misrepresent their roles or competencies to agency staff, clients, patients, or others. Professional concerns or problems with others shall be discussed with the agency or faculty advisor.
- IV. Student interns shall, at all times, respect the confidentiality of information about clients or patients in the course of their Field Practicum Experience. They also shall be aware of agency policies or guidelines relating to research or training with human subjects.
- V. Student interns will avoid undertaking any activity in which competency, personal problems, or conflicts of understanding are likely to lead to inadequate performance. If, or when, such a situation arises, they shall seek Field Supervisor or Faculty Advisor assistance to determine the appropriate course of action.
- VI. Student interns acknowledge having read the NASW Code of Ethics, the current Field Practicum Manual, and the current Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures.

**FOUNDATION YEAR LEARNING CONTRACT SUPPLEMENT/AMENDMENT TO  
LEARNING CONTRACT**

(Optional or as needed)

*Use this space to describe supplements to the contract. Staple-in additional sheets as necessary.*

Component/Competency Supplemented (if relevant): \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Expectations: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Conditions for Learning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Means of Assessment (Specific practice behaviors, activities, and assignments that will provide evidence of movement toward mastery of expected competencies): \_\_\_\_\_

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## Preparing for the Faculty Site Visit: Information for Students and Supervisors

1. An orientation to the agency has been provided, including safety policies and protocols, sexual harassment policies, and other relevant policies and training.
2. Learning Contract (contained in workbook) is completed, and signed by student and Field Supervisors and is provided to Faculty Advisor at first site visit and signed by him or her.
3. Learning Contract is guiding assignments.
4. Required learning opportunities are available.
5. One and a half hours of weekly supervision is taking place (or 1 hour of direct supervision if group supervision is also available).
6. Student is using his or her written agenda and presenting process recording weekly in supervision.
7. Two of the minimum of 12 process recordings completed per semester by the student and reviewed by the Field Supervisor have been or will be provided to the Faculty Advisor for review.
8. Community (first placement) or administrative (second placement) work and project are discussed.
9. Opportunities for discussion of student and Field Supervisor issues are provided during the site visit.
10. If relevant, opportunities for discussion of ideas, plans, or possibilities for next practicum are provided.
11. Other issues of concern are raised.

[Materials from the Schools of Social Work at Boston University, Smith College, and the University of Michigan were used in preparing this section, with appreciation. An additional resource for students, Field Supervisors and Faculty Advisors is the National Association of Social Workers Massachusetts Chapter's website, which included extensive materials related to safety for social workers and guidelines for agency safety policies ([www.naswma.org](http://www.naswma.org))]

### SIGNATURES FOR ENTIRE LEARNING CONTRACT, Pages 11-21

**"I agree to/approve the provisions that are presented in this Learning Contract..."**

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**Field Practicum Student**

**Date**

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**Field Supervisor**

**Date**

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**Faculty Advisor**

**Date (these must be provided)**

**END OF LEARNING CONTRACT**