



Department of Social Work

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Bachelors Degree: springfield.edu/bsw

Masters Degree: springfield.edu/msw

Bachelor of Social Work Program Practicum Manual

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**SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL WORK
PRACTICUM EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Welcome to Practicum Education

Congratulations on reaching this exciting milestone in your social work education. Practicum is where the concepts, theories, and skills you have studied in the classroom come to life. It is often the experience students remember most from their time in the program, and we are so glad you are here.

Practicum is a shared effort. The Office of Practicum Education, your faculty, your practicum agency, your supervisor, and you all play a role in making this experience meaningful. When everyone brings consistent effort and open communication, students grow into confident, capable social work professionals.

As a BSW student, your practicum reflects the generalist foundation of the program. You will build skills across multiple levels of practice, working directly with individuals, families, and groups, while also gaining exposure to community level work. This range prepares you to practice effectively across many settings, roles, and systems. All practicum requirements and expectations are designed in accordance with the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (see the Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures).

This Practicum Manual is your guide to the purpose, expectations, processes, and tools that shape your practicum experience. Please review it closely alongside your assignments on Brightspace and your placement information in the Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC), where all practicum documentation, forms, and evaluations are now managed.

We know starting practicum can feel like a big step, and questions are completely normal. If anything in this manual is unclear or you think something important is missing, please reach out. We welcome your feedback and want this to be a resource that truly supports you.

We are excited to work with you this year and to help you build a practicum experience that is both challenging and rewarding.

Kind Regards,

Nicole Silva, LCSW
Director of Practicum Education

Michele Mariani
Practicum Support Specialist

Andrew Schoolnik, PhD, LCSW, MEDL
BSW Program Director and Assistant Professor

SECTION I: SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Springfield College

Springfield College follows a philosophy called "Humanics," which focuses on developing the whole person: spirit, mind, and body, in service to others. The College prepares future leaders in both public and private sectors who work to improve quality of life around the world.

The College's mission reflects this commitment:

"The mission of Springfield College is to educate students in spirit, mind, and body for leadership in service to humanity by building upon a foundation of Humanics and academic excellence."

Springfield College has a long history of educating students in a way that supports social responsibility, which fits naturally with social work values.

Department Mission

The Department of Social Work BSW Program's mission is built on this same Humanics philosophy. It focuses on educating the whole person and developing socially conscious leaders committed to serving humanity. Our mission statement reflects this:

"Through the teaching of social work practice and knowledge building, informed by research and wisdom, the Springfield College Bachelor of Social Work Program prepares individuals to meet universal human needs in order to engender mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and societal systems at all levels, locally, regionally, nationally, and globally, with respect for diversity and enhancement of quality of life for all, based on principles of economic and social justice, dignity, and human rights."

Accreditation

The BSW Program is currently in Candidacy for Accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Here is what that means in practice:

- Candidacy means the program has applied for accreditation and had its first benchmark approved.
- Candidacy usually takes about three years, and there is no guarantee a program will move on to full accreditation.
- If you start the program while it is in Candidacy, you will be retroactively recognized as a graduate of a CSWE accredited program once the program earns full accreditation.
- Candidacy applies to the program as a whole, across all locations and formats.

Accreditation gives students, employers, and the public confidence in the quality of the program and the competence of its graduates.

For reference, the Springfield College MSW Program has been continuously accredited by CSWE since 1989.

Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures

Each year, the BSW Program publishes a Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures. This handbook covers:

- Academic and professional standards
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Curriculum and course descriptions
- The NASW Code of Ethics
- CSWE's 2015^[1] Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)

Please review the handbook alongside this manual for the most complete picture of program expectations.

SECTION II: PURPOSE OF PRACTICUM EDUCATION

Practicum education is a core part of the social work curriculum at Springfield College, which focuses on generalist practice. Practicum takes place over one academic year.

Practicum is where classroom learning meets real world social work practice. It brings together everything you have learned in your Practice, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Policy, and Research courses and lets you apply it directly.

The main goals of practicum are to:

- Strengthen your ability to apply social work values, theory, skills, and knowledge across many types of systems
- Give you the chance to help empower vulnerable populations
- Bring the mission and goals of the BSW Program to life through real practice

You will apply and build your skills under the guidance of an experienced Practicum Supervisor. What you experience in the field gets brought back into the classroom, where you will examine it through the lens of social work values, knowledge, and the generalist approach. Practicum gives you the chance to:

- Carry out planned interventions across different levels, with supervision
- Learn to work effectively in different types of social work settings
- Understand how community and social service systems actually operate day to day

Practicum requirements are organized around four areas of learning, so you build a full range of generalist practice skills:

1. Direct service with individuals and families
2. Group work
3. Community development and organization
4. Administration and organizational development

The Department of Social Work places students in agencies throughout New England and New York State. This gives you exposure to diverse clients in both urban and rural settings. Agencies may include human service, educational, health, and criminal justice settings, where you will work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Throughout the year, we hold practicum information sessions. These give you a chance to learn more about what practicum involves, ask questions, and connect with classmates and instructors about your experiences.

SECTION III: DESIGN OF PRACTICUM SEQUENCE

A. BSW Practicum Year:

SWRK Major Requirements- Fourth Year	
Fall: SWRK 511 (Social Welfare Policy 1) SWRK 584 (Practicum- first half) SWRK 482 (Seminar)	Spring: SWRK 512 (Social Welfare Policy 2) SWRK 490 (Capstone Seminar) SWRK 585 (Practicum, second half)

You will spend **15 hours a week in practicum** for **15 weeks each semester**, fall and spring, for a total of **400** [2]hours over the year.

Before starting practicum, students must complete SWRK 531 (Practice 1 – Practice with Individuals and Families) and SWRK 532 (Practice 2 – Group Work), in that order. These courses build the theoretical knowledge and skills that support your practicum experience and help you work toward the practicum learning competencies.

You will also build assessment, policy, and program development skills through Human Behavior in the Social Environment 1, Social Welfare Policy and Services 1, and Social Work Research 1. Together with the weekly seminar, this coursework prepares you for your practicum in SWRK 54 and SWRK 585.

Direct Service

Your practicum will focus on direct service with individuals, families, small groups, and communities. This includes:

- Working with individuals and families on assessment, intervention planning, case management, and counseling
- Helping connect clients to other agencies and services through referrals
- Leading or co-leading at least one group (counseling, self-help, education, or support), and helping plan and organize it whenever possible

Community Work

You will also get experience applying your skills at the community level. This may include planning and running community meetings, conducting assessments, and supporting communities in advocating for themselves.

As part of this, you will design and carry out a community project that puts your understanding of community practice into action. "Community" here could mean your clients, potential clients, service providers, a geographic area, or another group you are working with. Your project should do at least one of the following:

- Help the agency better understand the community it serves
- Help the community access information or resources it needs
- Strengthen the community's ability to act on its own behalf

Seminar Components

Alongside your hours at the practicum site, your practicum year includes:

1. A weekly seminar that supports you in connecting classroom theory to real practice
2. Fall and Spring site visits from your Practicum Course Instructor

These components give you the chance to talk through practice issues with faculty and classmates, using your own practicum experience as the starting point. You will also complete process recordings, which are a key tool for reflecting on your own practice and developing effective use of self.

How Your Time Breaks Down

At least 20% of your practicum hours should go toward group work and community project activities. Up to 80% may go toward direct practice, including client-focused group work. This balance will shift naturally from week to week and agency to agency, depending on what experiences are available to you at the time.

B. Council on Social Work Education and BSW Program Generalist Year Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) sets the national standards for social work education through its 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). The Springfield College BSW Program is designed to reflect these standards throughout your coursework and practicum experience.

By the end of your Generalist Year practicum, you are expected to demonstrate the nine core competencies outlined in Table 1, along with the practice behaviors connected to each one. For more detail, see the current Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures and your practicum materials in the Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC).

Table 1 lists CSWE's nine Social Work Competencies. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and ways of thinking and engaging that make up generalist level practice. Each is paired with a set of practice behaviors, which are the specific, observable actions that show a competency in action. In short: the competency describes what you understand, and the practice behaviors show how that understanding shows up in your work.

C. Integration of Practicum with the Academic Curriculum

Your practicum and your classes are designed to work together, not sit side by side. Here is how that plays out across your courses:

Practice Courses

In SWRK 531 (Social Work Practice 1), you will explore clinical social work through a series of assigned journals and a long-form paper, *You As A Social Work Clinician*. your main written assignment draws directly from an individual or family case from your practicum. You will also complete a full psychosocial assessment for one of your clients. This course gives you the tools to conduct assessments and understand the helping process.

In SWRK 532 (Social Work Practice 2), your assignments draw from the group work you are doing in practicum, and may include a look at your Community Project. This course also covers how to plan, lead, and evaluate different types of groups, and includes an assignment on how agency goals or community needs shape why groups get started in the first place.[3]

In both Practice courses, you will keep a reflective journal connecting what you are learning in class, in your readings, and in the field. Role plays and recorded interviews in these courses also give you more ways to bring your practicum experience into the classroom.

Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE)[4]

In SWRK 501 (HBSE 1: Theories of Individual Development and Behavior), one assignment asks you to study a cultural or ethnic group. ~~Many students draw on their practicum clients or communities for this.~~ This course also introduces biopsychosocial theories you can apply directly to the clients **you will be** working with in the field.

SWRK 502 (HBSE 2: Systems Theories and Oppression) looks at how organizations are structured and how that shapes the way agencies respond to social needs, ~~often using examples from your own practicum agency.~~ This course also gives you the skills to understand and help improve how human service organizations function.

Policy Sequence (SWRK 511 and SWRK 512)

Your policy courses ask you to analyze policy through both rational and persuasive lenses, with attention to the political and social forces at play. These courses push you to connect what you see in your agency to the bigger legislative picture, and to think about how you might use policy analysis, development, or advocacy to create change. Your Community Project is a natural place to apply what you learn here.

Research[5]

SWRK 521 (Research 1: Practice Informed Research Methods) gives you the tools to critically evaluate your own work with clients, communities, and programs. **This will be useful information for analysis of your future practicum experience. When useful, this research can be shared with your practicum agency helping them apply your findings to their own policy and practice.**

SECTION IV: EXPECTED LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS IN PRACTICUM

In practicum and seminar, you will complete a set of learning activities designed to help you build competence in generalist social work practice, grounded in social work values and ethics. Your seminar is arranged by your Faculty Advisor.

Your practicum experience is organized into four components:

1. Direct Service with Individuals and/or Families
2. Group Work
3. Community Work/Project
4. Professional Practice and Effective Use of Self

Component 1: Direct Service with Individuals and/or Families

You will build your skills in client engagement, assessment, beginning counseling, and referrals. You will also learn to recognize and address the broader systems affecting your clients' lives, including the barriers that create unequal access to services.

To meet this component, you will:

- Work with 4 to 5 individuals and/or families, building on that number over the first semester and maintaining it for the rest of the year
- Complete at least 3 comprehensive psychosocial assessments each semester (6 total for the year), along with appropriate intervention plans
- Submit process recordings to your Practicum Supervisor weekly or biweekly (a minimum of 6 per semester)
- Submit at least 2 process recordings per semester to your Faculty Advisor[6], with written feedback from your Practicum Supervisor
- Practice case management, referrals, and interagency collaboration, using an ecological, person in environment, and strengths based approach

Component 2: Group Work

You will build skills to help lead effective social work groups, both client focused groups and administrative or team based groups, using skills like conflict management and building group cohesion.

To meet this component, you will:

- Participate in at least one client helping group (therapy, support, psychoeducation, etc.) as a facilitator, co-facilitator, or agency representative
- Participate in at least one administrative or team group (staff meetings, committees, etc.), which may connect to your Community Project

Component 3: Community Work/Project

You will take on a leadership role in a project that deepens understanding of a practice area, client needs, or community needs. Your project should:

- Build understanding of a practice area or community/client needs
- Engage members of the relevant community
- Use group work skills to reach its goals

Examples of past community projects: an anti-stigma campaign around mental illness, an advocacy campaign on early childhood education, a resource map for women released from incarceration, a Spanish language services directory, and a stress management program designed with a university community.

Component 4: Professional Practice and Effective Use of Self

You will demonstrate professional social work practice day to day, including making good use of supervision, building strong working relationships with colleagues, following agency policies, and applying the NASW Code of Ethics. You will also reflect on how your own values and experiences shape your work with diverse and historically marginalized clients.

See your Learning Contract for additional detail on this component.

Concurrent Coursework

Alongside your seminar, SWRK 584 (fall) and SWRK 585 (spring) require you to have already completed, in order, SWRK 531 (Practice 1, fall) and SWRK 532 (Practice 2, spring), and SWRK 501 (HBSE 1, fall) and SWRK 502 (HBSE 2, spring), and SWRK 521 (Research 1, spring).[7] These courses give you the theory and skills that support

your practicum work. You will also build assessment, policy, and research skills through SWRK 511 (Policy 1), SWRK 512 (Policy 2).

SECTION V. PRACTICUM STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Director of Practicum Education, Practicum Support Specialist, and Office of Practicum Education Staff

The Director of Practicum Education oversees the practicum program across the Department of Social Work, making sure every student has a practicum experience consistent with the program's mission and expected competencies. The Director's responsibilities include:

- Structuring the Generalist Year practicum experience
- Negotiating agreements with practicum sites
- Assigning students to placements
- Consulting with the Department Chair and BSW Program Director
- Organizing orientation and professional development for Practicum Supervisors
- Consulting with Practicum Course Instructors, the Educational Advisory Committee, and the Dean as needed
- Evaluating practicum outcomes
- Supporting all members of the Practicum Team: faculty, supervisors, and students

The Practicum Support Specialist and Office of Practicum Education staff handle the day to day work behind this, including:

- Building and maintaining agency partnerships
- Assigning students to agencies, in collaboration with Practicum Course Instructors
- Leading annual student orientation
- Orienting Practicum Supervisors to the program
- Running the annual Seminar in Practicum Instruction (SIPI) for new supervisors
- Working with Practicum Course Instructors, the Educational Advisory Committee, and the Educational Appeals Committee on student progress or placement concerns
- Making decisions about placement changes, in consultation with the appropriate parties
- Monitoring how well the academic curriculum and practicum expectations line up

2. Faculty Advisor

You will be assigned a Faculty Advisor by the BSW Program Director. You will be notified of your advisor by the start of the fall semester at the latest. Your Faculty Advisor's role is academic advising: orienting you to the program, reviewing your academic performance each semester, supporting you if you run into academic difficulty, and advising you on course selection, professional development, and career questions. Your Faculty Advisor does not oversee your practicum placement.

Plan to meet with your Faculty Advisor at least ~~twice~~ ^{once} [8] a semester, once early on to plan the semester and once mid semester to plan ahead (including summer courses, if relevant). It's your responsibility to reach out and schedule these meetings.

3. Practicum Course Instructor

Your Practicum Course Instructor teaches your Seminar and Capstone Seminar courses (SWRK 482 and SWRK 490) and oversees your practicum placement (SWRK 584 and SWRK 585).^[9] This is a different faculty member from your Faculty Advisor.

Your Practicum Course Instructor represents the Department of Social Work in the field. They explain and reinforce the standards for your learning experience and how your performance will be assessed. If problems arise with your agency's ability to provide good supervision or learning opportunities, your Practicum Course Instructor plays a key role in resolving them.

Your Practicum Course Instructor evaluates your progress throughout the year and stays in close contact with your placement agency. If concerns come up about your performance, they help identify ways to improve and, if needed, determine whether the concern requires formal action, such as an Educational Advisory Committee consultation or a letter of information or concern.

Your Practicum Course Instructor is required to visit your site at least once in the fall, and possibly once in the spring (Zoom is also acceptable). A spring visit may be waived if the agency and supervisor are already established with the program, you are on track with your hours and competencies, and everyone agrees a visit isn't needed. Any party, student, supervisor, or instructor, can request a spring visit regardless.

At each site visit, your Practicum Course Instructor will:

- Confirm that your agency orientation covered safety and harassment policies
- Review samples of your process recordings
- Review at least one of your psychosocial assessments
- Discuss and evaluate your Learning Contract and direct service caseload
- Discuss and evaluate the agency's learning opportunities and your progress toward your competencies

Additional Practicum Course Instructor responsibilities include:

- Reviewing your Practicum Supervisor's evaluation and issuing your practicum grade each semester
- Helping the Office of Practicum Education with placement matching
- Helping you set learning goals and self-assess your growth
- Supporting you through any practicum related challenges
- Staying in contact with the Office of Practicum Education about the quality of your training and supervision
- Consulting with your agency and supervisor if problems arise
- Teaching and grading your Seminar and Capstone Seminar coursework

4. Practicum Supervisor

Qualifications

Practicum Supervisors need at least two years of professional experience beyond their BSW or^[10] MSW (exceptions may be made case by case, consistent with CSWE and state licensing rules). Strong candidates also have:

- Experience supervising staff or students
- The ability to convey their enthusiasm for social work
- A commitment to ongoing professional development, including completing the Seminar in Practicum Instruction (SIFI) if new to supervision
- Respect for each student's individual learning style
- The ability to balance client and agency needs with student learning needs

- An understanding of generalist practice and the ability to teach across the curriculum
- The ability to advocate for students within the agency

Orientation

New Practicum Supervisors are oriented by the Director of Practicum Education and Practicum Support Specialist before the fall semester begins. This covers the BSW curriculum, program competencies, and expectations for supervision. New supervisors are strongly encouraged to complete SIFI (offered annually); supervisors who've completed an equivalent orientation through another accredited MSW program meet this requirement as well. Continuing education units are available.

Responsibilities

Your Practicum Supervisor is responsible for:

- Meeting with you for 1 hour of individual supervision each week (and making up any missed time)
- Providing a thorough agency orientation, including safety training
- Completing your Learning Contract with you early in your placement
- Developing your specific assignments (cases, groups, community project)
- Supporting the integration of classroom learning with practicum experience
- Staying in touch with your Practicum Course Instructor, including during site visits
- Working with you (and your Practicum Course Instructor, if needed) to resolve any difficulties
- Completing your evaluations at the end of each semester
- Giving you feedback on your process recordings (written feedback on at least 2 per semester; verbal feedback with signature on the rest)
- Modeling professional use of self

Supervisor Absence

If your supervisor misses a session, they are responsible for scheduling a make-up. If they're out for more than a week, they must arrange backup supervision. For absences longer than three weeks, they must notify your Practicum Course Instructor and the Office of Practicum Education so a qualified BSW supervisor can take over until they return. You will not receive credit for practicum hours completed without qualified supervision after three weeks, so let your Practicum Course Instructor know right away if you're not getting the supervision you need.[11]

Secondary Supervision

If helpful, your Practicum Supervisor may arrange a secondary supervisor with specialized expertise for a particular project, client population, or learning area. This person doesn't need to be a social worker, though a master's level helping professional is preferred. Secondary supervision supplements, but never replaces, your required weekly hour with your primary **BSW or** MSW level supervisor.

Supervisor Feedback to the Program

Practicum Supervisors are encouraged to share observations about student readiness, the structure of the practicum program, and the kinds of learning experiences their agency can offer. This feedback can be shared during site visits or directly with the Office of Practicum Education, and helps shape ongoing improvements to the program.

SECTION VI. AGENCIES AND PRACTICUM ASSIGNMENTS

1. Practicum Agencies

Practicum experiences take place across a range of human service settings throughout New England[12], including health, educational, criminal justice, mental health, and other settings where generalist practice can be learned. You may work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and governmental or non-governmental entities, and you will have the opportunity to work with diverse ethnic and cultural groups.

The Department selects agencies and programs that are sensitive to issues of diversity, align with the NASW Code of Ethics, offer a range of learning opportunities, and are committed to student education. Agencies are selected based on:

- **Alignment with social work values:** The agency's philosophy of service must be compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession and generalist practice, including nondiscriminatory practices regarding client race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, or ability. Each placement must offer a range of activities appropriate to generalist practice.
- **Commitment to social work education:** This includes providing qualified BSW-level supervision with adequate time and resources, offering learning activities that build generalist skills as described in your Learning Contract, and providing safe, adequate working space.
- **Accessibility:** As required by law, practicum sites should, as a whole, be accessible to students with disabilities, though not every individual site will be able to accommodate every student. The Office of Practicum Education works to ensure equal access and collaborates with Springfield College's Disability and Accessibility Services as needed.
- **Orientation:** Agencies must provide a thorough orientation, including safety and harassment policies (see Section XI for more detail).
- **Transportation:** Agencies are asked to reimburse mileage and related travel costs. Students must not be required to transport clients in their own vehicles or as the driver of an agency vehicle. If a student accompanies a client in an agency vehicle, an agency employee must drive, and a second agency employee must be present to take responsibility for the client.

Agency Requirements: Some agencies require students to meet conditions before starting, such as health forms, TB or Hepatitis B testing, or a CORI check (or its equivalent). Some agencies cannot legally accept a student with a record; others evaluate case by case. Some agencies also require a new employee/intern orientation, which must be completed before placement begins.

Agency Affiliation Agreements: All placement agencies sign an Affiliation Agreement, the legal agreement between the agency and Springfield College. Agreements are signed electronically through ELC, with copies retained by the Office of Practicum Education. Questions about Affiliation Agreements can be directed to the Director of Practicum Education or the Practicum Support Specialist.

2. Generalist Year Practica

Your placement is based on the areas of learning defined for the Generalist Year, your individual learning needs, and agency availability. Agencies should offer a broad range of clients whose needs require multilevel intervention, including direct service and group work with both clients and colleagues. Agencies should also provide opportunities to participate in community development and organizing activities, culminating in your community project.

3. Practicum Assignments

Finding a practicum placement is a partnership between you and the Office of Practicum Education, **not something that happens to you passively.**[13] You are expected to stay in regular communication with the Office of Practicum Education, complete required materials on time, reach out to prospective agencies, and conduct interviews. The more engaged you are in this process, the more likely you are to land a placement that fits your interests and to finalize it on schedule.

All assignments are approved by the Office of Practicum Education through a process designed to support successful learning outcomes. Practicum begins in the fall of your senior year. Summer placement hours are generally not available.

Process: The placement process begins in the spring semester of your junior year. You will complete the Practicum Placement Worksheet (PPW) and submit a current resume through ELC. The Office of Practicum Education reviews your submission and, based on that review and any needed discussion with you and your Practicum Course Instructor, connects you with a placement interview opportunity. You are then responsible for arranging and conducting the interview directly with the agency's Practicum Supervisor or designated contact.

Deadline: The PPW and resume are due in ELC per the Practicum Calendar. Students who have not actively engaged in the placement process by this deadline will be referred to their **Practicum Course Instructor**[14] for additional support.

Practicum Placement Process (ELC): Placements are identified, reviewed, and approved through ELC.

You are responsible for:

- Completing and uploading your PPW and resume in ELC by the deadline
- Completing Employment-Based Practicum paperwork, if applicable
- Reviewing placement options and discussing your interests and goals with Practicum staff
- Providing accurate placement site information, including agency and program name, address, your role, and your Practicum Supervisor's name, license state, and license number
- Monitoring your placement record in ELC and responding promptly to requests for more information

Your Practicum Supervisor and agency are responsible for:

- Keeping their ELC login active and current
- Completing the Official Practicum Agency Acceptance Form (OPAAF)
- Completing Employment-Based Practicum documentation in ELC, if applicable
- Notifying the Office of Practicum Education of any changes in student placement status, supervision, or agency capacity
- Letting the Office of Practicum Education know about placement openings and availability

The Office of Practicum Education is responsible for:

- Reviewing your ELC submissions and following up on missing information
- Connecting you with Practicum staff for placement support
- Maintaining your placement record in ELC and tracking your progress
- Coordinating with the agency to finalize the OPAAF
- Finalizing your placement record once confirmed, and distributing required documentation, including the OPAAF and Affiliation Agreement

4. Dual Practicum Sites

The Office of Practicum Education affiliates with agencies that can provide the full range of required practicum experiences. Rarely, when an agency cannot provide a specific required experience, a second site may be arranged to supplement your learning. This supplemental assignment is designed by you and the Office of Practicum Education, in consultation with your Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Course Instructor, and formally arranged by the Director of Practicum Education. Dual practicum sites are generally not recommended.

5. Liability Insurance

Springfield College provides practice liability insurance for your participation in practicum, at \$1 million per occurrence and \$3 million in aggregate. You may also wish to acquire your own personal practice insurance.

6. Employment-Based Practicum

In some cases, a practicum can be established within your current place of employment. If your employer isn't already an approved practicum site, a representative from the Office of Practicum Education will contact the agency to determine whether it can meet the requirements. The experience must be educationally focused, with assignments based on the required competencies.

Practicum hours in an employment-based placement may either:

- Take place over and above your regular working hours (not recommended for full-time employees), or
- Take place during your regular work week, designated exclusively for practicum work, partially or fully

The BSW Program encourages the second arrangement where possible, since it tends to be more workable for students employed full-time.

You must complete the Employment-Based Practicum Checklist and submit it to the Office of Practicum Education before your placement is finalized. The checklist must be reviewed, signed, and approved before the placement can proceed.

The agency must agree to:

- Provide learning opportunities that are separate from your regular job duties and meet practicum education requirements
- Assign a qualified BSW Practicum Supervisor who is not your regular job supervisor (if the same person must serve both roles, dedicated time must be set aside for practicum supervision)
- Keep your practicum evaluation separate from your evaluation as an employee. Your practicum performance is evaluated by your Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Course Instructor; your job performance is evaluated by your work supervisor.

If the employing agency cannot meet these requirements, you will need to pursue another placement through the Office of Practicum Education.

The BSW Program, through your Practicum Course Instructor, agrees to monitor and reevaluate the practicum regularly, help clarify the difference between work duties and learning assignments, and support communication between you and the agency to maximize your learning.

7. Student Exploration of a Potential Placement

In special circumstances, you may explore a placement site not currently among the Department's approved agencies. Before doing so:

- You must inform the Office of Practicum Education through the PPW process
- You must share the agency and contact person as soon as possible
- All arrangements with the agency must go through the Office of Practicum Education

Do not schedule an interview until the Office of Practicum Education has approved further exploration and confirmed that the site can meet the educational expectations of the practicum.

SECTION VII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Hours

You are required to complete approximately 13 hours per week of practicum, totaling approximately 200 hours per semester and 400 hours for the academic year. In addition to practicum hours, you must participate in the Practicum Seminar arranged by your Practicum Course Instructor. Plan to complete your hours during regular daytime business hours (8:00 AM–5:00 PM) for each 15-week semester, unless you've arranged something different directly with your agency.

Supervision, record keeping, staff meetings, and agency-sponsored trainings all count toward your practicum hours. With agency and supervisor approval, you may also count attendance at outside conferences or trainings, up to two events per semester.

Hours that do not count: Holidays, agency holidays, lunch breaks, commuting time, and any activity not required by the agency. Up to one hour per week may be used for process recording and counted toward your hours. If you record hours for unauthorized activities, you will need to subtract them and make up the difference through authorized practicum work.

Absences: Notify your Practicum Supervisor in advance of any planned absence, and as soon as possible for an unexpected one. For absences lasting more than a week, also notify your Practicum Course Instructor and the Office of Practicum Education. All missed hours must be made up.

Recordkeeping: Keep a careful record of your hours. Research or writing directly related to your practicum may occasionally be completed offsite, but only with your Practicum Supervisor's advance approval. If you have questions about what counts, check with your Practicum Supervisor, your Practicum Course Instructor, the Director of Practicum Education, or the Practicum Support Specialist.

Timing of hours: You will begin practicum in early September. Many students complete the first half of their hours before winter break. You are generally expected to continue completing hours over winter break unless your agency agrees otherwise; if the break is approved, you must resume by no later than two weeks after spring classes begin. You cannot "bank" hours to finish early. The second semester typically wraps up by late April or early May, and cannot end before April 15 without prior approval from your agency and the Office of Practicum Education.

This schedule is designed to give you a practicum experience of sufficient length for real professional growth, and to align with your concurrent Practice courses each semester.

Exceptions: With approval from the Director of Practicum Education or Practicum Support Specialist, alternative scheduling may be considered. You may begin up to two weeks before fall classes start without special permission, as long as the plan is worked out with, and approved by, your agency.

Making up missed hours: You must complete the full 400 hours for the year. If your agency is closed on a day you'd normally attend, you and your Practicum Supervisor need to plan how you'll make up the time.

Other circumstances: If illness or another circumstance puts you behind on hours, you will receive an "Incomplete" for that semester until the hours are completed. You may negotiate additional hours during the semester break. If you're still short at the end of the year, you'll need to complete the remaining hours, typically over the summer.

Time Sheets: Practicum time sheets are completed in ELC and signed by you and your Practicum Supervisor at least once a month. Completed time sheets are provided to your Practicum Course Instructor at the end of each semester.

Required Documentation for Graduation: The following must be in your ELC file to graduate: Learning Contract, process recordings, midyear evaluation, community project proposal and summary, final evaluation, and completed time sheets. Retain your own copies of everything.

2. Integration of Learning

Integrating your academic and practicum experience is central to your social work education. You are expected to bring your practicum experience into your coursework, and to apply what you learn in class to your practice in the field. Your Practicum Seminar, arranged by your Practicum Course Instructor, along with your concurrent Practice courses, gives you structured opportunities for this integration.

3. Utilization of Supervision

Supervision is the primary method of instruction in your practicum, so making the most of your weekly hour with your Practicum Supervisor matters. Educational supervision is different from typical workplace supervision. You will get the most out of it by being willing to name your uncertainties and treat your Practicum Supervisor as a partner in your growth.

To make the most of supervision:

- Submit process recordings for use in supervision (a minimum of 6 per semester; 2 of these go to your Practicum Course Instructor with written feedback from your Practicum Supervisor)
- Come prepared with an agenda, questions, and reflections
- Explore with your supervisor how your practicum connects to your coursework and readings
- Bring enough material, written and verbal, to make good use of everyone's time

4. Process Recording[15]

Purpose: Process recording gives you and your supervisor a detailed, moment by moment record of a session or meeting to review and learn from. Once complete, it goes to your Practicum Supervisor, who reviews it and adds comments for you to read before the following week's supervision.

Expectations: You must submit 6 process recordings to your Practicum Supervisor each semester, and 2 of those (with your supervisor's written feedback) to your Practicum Course Instructor by the dates listed in your practicum course calendar. Aim for one every other week. Recordings may focus on the same case over time or on different encounters. Not completing this requirement results in an Incomplete until it's met.

Method: A process recording is your written, verbatim reconstruction of a session, capturing what you remember of the conversation and behavior involved. This can cover a counseling session, a group or family meeting, a

community or administrative meeting, or even a brief or informal encounter. It's one of the few tools that gives a direct look at your developing skills.

ELC includes three process recording formats: a three-column format for individual and family work, a SODA (Summary-Observation-Developmental Stage-Assessment) format for groups, and a Meetings format for community or administrative work. Your Practicum Supervisor may prefer variations, which is fine. Audio or video may also be used with proper consent, but you should still prepare a written reflective summary.

Length: This varies by session, but most recordings run 3 to 5 single-spaced pages using the three-column format. You shouldn't spend much more time writing the recording than the encounter itself took.

Confidentiality: Process recordings are confidential. Disguise all identifying information using initials or altered names. Keep recordings in a locked, secure location at your agency, never in a client's chart, since they are a learning tool, not part of the client's official record. Talk to your Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Course Instructor if agency security is a concern.

Tips: Jot brief notes during or immediately after a session while it's fresh. The sooner you write it up, the more accurate it will be.

5. Record Keeping and Written Materials

Required by your agency: You are responsible for completing all charts, records, and other written work required by your agency before your practicum ends, whether on schedule or early.

Required by the program: Materials required by the BSW Program are found in ELC. It's your responsibility to make sure these are completed. Save your own copies before submitting anything, since your Practicum Supervisor may want copies too. Key documents include your Learning Contract, time sheets, process recordings, community project proposal and summary, and both evaluations. All completed materials are kept in your ELC practicum file after your practicum ends.

SECTION VII: LEARNING CONTRACT AND ACTIVITIES

Your Learning Contract is a formal agreement covering the structure and content of your practicum experience. It directly reflects the learning competencies described in Section IV, translating them into specific tasks, responsibilities, and practice experiences.

Each section of the contract includes a supplemental section for anything specific to you and your placement agency. You and your Practicum Supervisor are encouraged to use these supplemental sections to reflect your particular interests, or opportunities your agency and its clients present.

Your contract must be completed to the satisfaction of everyone involved, and signed by you, your Practicum Supervisor, and your Practicum Course Instructor by the time of your first site visit. The completed Learning Contract is retained in your ELC practicum file.

The contract defines the responsibilities of all three parties in meeting your learning needs and competencies, and represents a shared commitment to its terms. It also serves as the basis for evaluating both your performance and your agency's performance in providing learning opportunities (see Section IX: Evaluation).

If a significant change to your practicum structure or learning experience is agreed on by everyone during the contract period, an amendment, signed by all parties, may be attached to the original contract.

SECTION IX: EVALUATION

1. Evaluation of Student Performance

You are evaluated twice each year: at the midpoint (December) and at the end of the year (April/May). Both evaluations are completed by your Practicum Supervisor and reviewed by your Practicum Course Instructor, who uses them to assign your practicum grade. These evaluations are submitted through the Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC).

2. Evaluation of Practicum

At the end of the year, you will complete an evaluation of your practicum experience, including your Practicum Supervisor and your agency. This covers the quality of supervision, learning opportunities, agency support, and the overall strengths and weaknesses of the placement. This helps the Office of Practicum Education assess the value of the placement, both for you and for future students who may be placed there. This form is submitted through ELC by a designated time in May.

3. Evaluation of Practicum Course Instructor

In late April, you will evaluate your Practicum Course Instructor through IOTA, the College's course evaluation system. This evaluation is confidential and does not include your name or your agency's name.

SECTION X: SOCIAL WORK VALUES AND ETHICS

NASW Code of Ethics

As a BSW student, you are bound by the NASW Code of Ethics in both your coursework and your practicum. You are responsible for reviewing the Code (found in the Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures) and must sign off that you have done so before placement begins. If a faculty member or your Practicum Supervisor believes you have violated the Code, you may be referred to the Educational Advisory Committee, which could result in probation or dismissal from the program.

Harassment Policy

Harassment is any verbal or physical conduct that interferes with someone's work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Springfield College prohibits harassment based on race, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, class, or other protected categories.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances or conduct where:

- Submission is treated, explicitly or implicitly, as a condition of employment or academic standing
- Submission or rejection is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions
- The conduct interferes with someone's work or creates a hostile environment

Anyone found in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Dual Relationships and Conflict of Interest

In line with the NASW Code of Ethics, a Practicum Supervisor should not supervise a student with whom they have another kind of relationship, such as a therapist-client, business, or close personal relationship. The same principle applies to relationships between interns and their own clients.

If a proposed placement would create a dual relationship, you and the prospective Practicum Supervisor should notify the Office of Practicum Education so alternate plans can be made. If a dual relationship develops during placement, contact your Practicum Course Instructor right away. Your Practicum Course Instructor will work with you, your supervisor, and the Director of Practicum Education to resolve the situation in your best interest and in keeping with the Code of Ethics. If this does not lead to a resolution, your Practicum Course Instructor will use the Faculty Concern process outlined in the Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures.

Disclosure of Student Status

Massachusetts law and NASW guidance call for social work students to identify themselves to clients as trainees, students, or interns, verbally or through a name tag, except in emergencies where this would not be clinically appropriate. Your status should also be clearly noted whenever you sign a note in a client record.

The Department of Social Work requires you to identify yourself as a "Social Work Intern" unless your agency specifies a different title. Early on, you should also let clients know how long you will be working with them, unless your Practicum Supervisor determines otherwise.

SECTION XI: SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Concern for Safety

The Department of Social Work takes the safety of all students seriously during practicum. Serious threats are rare, but care and vigilance matter when carrying out social work responsibilities in agencies and communities. As a student, you can't be completely insulated from the realities of professional practice, and shouldn't be, but you may not yet have the experience seasoned practitioners use to assess danger and take precautions. Part of practicum is building those skills.

Role of the Agency: Every agency must include a review of its safety policies and protocols as part of your orientation, covering safety both at the agency and in the community. The Department also supports your preparation through this manual and through safety content in your coursework. If you have any safety concerns, talk with your Practicum Supervisor and, as appropriate, your Practicum Course Instructor, right away.

Reporting Threats or Harm: If you experience a direct threat or actual harm, notify your Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Course Instructor immediately (or your agency's director and the Director of Practicum Education, the BSW Program Director, the Department Chair, or the Dean, if others aren't available). The Department must be notified of any direct threat or potential harm to you.

Scope of Responsibilities: You should never be asked to take on responsibilities requiring specialized skills or that put you at increased risk beyond what's appropriate for a student intern. The Department does not allow students to physically restrain clients, dispense medications, or collect urine samples. If you're assigned something outside the typical scope of a BSW intern, your Practicum Supervisor should notify your Practicum Course Instructor and explain how it fits your education plan. If you're uncomfortable with any assignment, talk to your Practicum Supervisor and your Practicum Course Instructor. The Director of Practicum Education can also be brought into the conversation at any point.

2. Expected Agency Safety Guidelines

Many agencies operate under significant pressure, with reduced budgets and increasingly complex client needs. Nationally, social workers sometimes encounter challenging or threatening situations. These guidelines shape how the Department selects placement agencies. Adjustments for individual students or circumstances can be made in your Learning Contract with approval from your Practicum Course Instructor, the agency, and the Director of Practicum Education, in consultation with the BSW Program Director or Department Chair as needed.

Agencies must show a strong baseline commitment to safety for students, employees, and clients, with at least clear progress toward comprehensive policies, in order to serve as a placement site. An agency's safety policy should address:

- Building and office security
- How to reach the Practicum Supervisor or other relevant party if a client discloses risk of harm to self or others
- Emergency procedures, including when and how to call security or police
- Managing violent or agitated clients
- Safety on home visits: when, where, and under what conditions visits happen, and how backup is provided
- Alcohol, drug, and weapons policies
- Logging and communicating incidents or threats of violence
- Support for staff, clients, or family after an assault or threat
- A clear relationship and protocol with local police
- Disaster preparedness, response, and follow-up

Agencies should share these policies with you as part of orientation and provide safety training. Ideally, every agency has a well-rehearsed plan that staff and students know, from recognizing signs of agitation to when to call police or clear the building.

Assignments You Should Not Be Given: While you have the right to refuse a dangerous assignment, it helps to reach a shared understanding with your Practicum Supervisor, Practicum Course Instructor, and the Director of Practicum Education before placement begins about what is and isn't appropriate. The following should never be part of your assignments:

- Physically restraining clients
- Transporting clients in your own vehicle
- Transporting clients in an agency vehicle without a second agency employee present
- Driving an agency vehicle
- Providing treatment to a client with a known history of violence
- Handling bodily fluids, including blood or urine samples

You should never work at the agency at times or in areas where no other staff are present. Your Practicum Supervisor should always know, or be able to find out, where you are during practicum hours.

Home Visits: You should be fully trained before conducting home visits. Preparation should include:

- Choosing clients and home environments assessed as safe
- Discussing the neighborhood, including any risk areas
- Discussing risk-reducing behavior in the neighborhood and in the home
- Clarifying the visit's purpose and developing a specific plan
- Discussing what to do if the client or anyone else poses a threat
- Arranging appropriate backup and support

Depending on your experience, this might mean being accompanied by another worker, or simply having phone consultation available. Your Practicum Supervisor should know when a visit is happening, and phone consultation should be available at minimum. In some cases, you may be excused from making a home visit if it isn't necessary. The Department prefers that home visits be accompanied by an experienced staff member.

Agency Facilities: Agencies should also consider adequate lighting, a working emergency phone system, furniture arranged for easy exit, and minimal unescorted traffic through the space.

If you are threatened or injured during practicum, report it immediately to your Practicum Supervisor, your agency, and your Practicum Course Instructor, or the Director of Practicum Education, the BSW Program Director, the Department Chair, or the Dean if others aren't available.

3. Safety Guidelines for Students in Practicum

Security of Belongings: Keep your belongings in a secure, ideally lockable, space such as a desk drawer or file cabinet. Don't leave personal items visible and unattended, even behind a closed office door.

Working with Clients: The treatment process can make clients feel vulnerable and sometimes challenges their usual coping mechanisms, which can occasionally raise safety concerns for the client, you, or others. You may work with clients who struggle with reality testing, overwhelming emotion, or anger, and, rarely, some may be prone to violence or possess weapons. Others may be intoxicated, in withdrawal, or experiencing a medical or neurological crisis. Prepare with your Practicum Supervisor for handling situations like psychiatric emergencies, suicide or homicide risk, potential abuse, or the presence of weapons. You should not be assigned to work independently with very high-risk clients, though you may consult with your supervisor about them to build your skills. Never keep concerns about a potentially dangerous client or situation to yourself, even if you feel confident handling it. Bring it to your Practicum Supervisor or your weekly supervision right away, and make sure you understand your agency's protocol for when a client may be at risk of harming themselves or others.

Office Meetings: If you're meeting with a client you don't feel entirely safe with, talk it through with your Practicum Supervisor beforehand. Think about the room setup, where the exits are, and where each person should sit, and whether someone else should be present. Make sure backup is available for the time of the meeting, and if you're seeing a potentially risky client alone, have someone on alert nearby.

Traveling by Car: Know where you're going before you drive, and check a map if the area is unfamiliar. Stay alert, lock your doors, and keep windows closed. Always tell someone at the agency where you're headed and when you expect to return.

Home Visits: Make sure you're fully oriented to the safety considerations before a visit, and consider accompanying an experienced staff member first. Know something about the client beforehand, and if there's any safety concern, plan accordingly with your Practicum Supervisor, whether that means meeting in a public place or bringing someone along. Someone at the agency should know your itinerary and expected return time.

Think ahead about what to wear, where to sit, and staying alert. Don't interact with animals in a client's home, even if they seem friendly. If you feel threatened at any point, it's always okay to end the visit and leave. If a client seems uncomfortable with you entering their home, don't push the issue. If you're ever uncomfortable with an assignment for safety reasons, raise it with your supervisor, and if needed, that assignment can be adjusted or removed until you're ready for it.

[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.]

SECTION XII: ADDITIONAL POLICIES

1. Office of Practicum Education Files

A practicum file is created and maintained by the Office of Practicum Education for each student. Student and agency files are kept in the Office of Practicum Education and available by appointment; practicum staff must be present while you view your file. Files may not be removed from the office, and only authorized staff may add or remove materials.

Practicum documents are also stored in the Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC). Keep your own copies of everything you submit; your Practicum Supervisor may want to as well.

If you bring documents to the Office of Practicum Education in person, place them in the Office Administrator's mailbox in the school mailroom.

A file is also kept for each agency, which may include the Affiliation Agreement, supervisor resumes (for new supervisors), and other relevant placement documents.

2. Transportation Costs

You are responsible for the cost of your own transportation to and from your practicum agency, including parking, unless other arrangements are made directly with the agency. Your agency should reimburse you for transportation and other reasonable expenses incurred while carrying out agency assignments.

3. Liability Insurance

All BSW students are covered under a student liability policy maintained by Springfield College, funded through your registration fee. This policy applies only to activities required as part of your curriculum. Current coverage is \$1 million per occurrence and \$3 million aggregate. It covers acts or omissions in the provision of professional social work services, as well as injury to a fellow student during required curricular activities.

Copies of the liability insurance certificate are available from the Office of Practicum Education and can be sent to agencies on request. You may also wish to acquire your own personal practice liability insurance.

4. Transportation of Clients

You are not covered under the College's insurance policy for transporting clients in your own vehicle, and your personal auto insurance likely doesn't cover this either. You should also never drive an agency-owned vehicle. Because of this:

- Do not transport clients in your own vehicle
- Do not drive an agency vehicle, alone or with clients
- If you accompany a client in an agency vehicle driven by an agency employee, a second agency employee must also be present to manage the situation if the client becomes agitated or decompensates

5. Dress Code

Follow any agency-specific dress code. Unless your day's tasks or a supervisor say otherwise, dress in business casual, business professional, or formal business attire appropriate to your setting. Clothing should meet your agency's guidelines and be free of holes, tears, offensive language, or inappropriate designs.

Your professional presence matters during internship interviews, throughout your placement, and in class, and is typically more formal than your everyday social presence. Be mindful of scent as well; less is better, and no scent should be worn in medical settings.

6. Students Experiencing Difficulty

If you have questions or concerns about your practicum, start by talking with your Practicum Supervisor. Likewise, if your Practicum Supervisor has concerns about you, they're encouraged to raise them with you directly first. This manual and the Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures, both on the Department of Social Work webpage, are good first references.

If concerns can't be resolved between you and your Practicum Supervisor, both of you are encouraged to bring in your Practicum Course Instructor early, before problems become more serious. Your Practicum Course Instructor is expected to get involved early with any performance concerns and to help identify a path to improvement. Most issues can be resolved through discussion among you, your Practicum Supervisor, and your Practicum Course Instructor. If resolution is difficult, the Office of Practicum Education should be consulted.

If issues remain unresolved, they may be brought before the Educational Advisory Committee (EAC). See the Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures, under Academic Standards and Expectations, for that process.

7. Change of Practicum and Premature Termination of Practicum

Change of Practicum: Occasionally a change, extension, or termination of practicum becomes necessary, whether due to ongoing practicum problems, an EAC meeting, or a student's illness, family emergency, or other unexpected circumstance. If you believe a change is needed:

1. Discuss your concerns with your Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Course Instructor, who may consult the Director of Practicum Education and/or Practicum Support Specialist.
2. If a change still seems necessary, a joint meeting is arranged with you, your Practicum Course Instructor, and your Practicum Supervisor.
3. If you still believe a change is needed after that meeting, submit a written request to your Practicum Course Instructor, with copies to the BSW Program Director, the Director of Practicum Education, and the Practicum Support Specialist, explaining the reasons and the educational benefit of the change.
4. The Director of Practicum Education and Practicum Support Specialist determine whether the change is justified, consulting further as needed.

While a proposed change is under review, you're expected to remain in your current placement. A change usually disrupts your progress and can put you behind on hours, so it must offer a clear educational benefit. The Office of Practicum Education treats a change as a last resort, only after other options have been exhausted.

Premature Termination: Any early termination must be timely, planned, and professional. You are responsible for notifying agency staff, clients, and any groups in advance, and for arranging appropriate termination sessions to address the impact of your departure and ensure continued service to clients. Lean on your Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Course Instructor for support with this. Failing to conduct a planned, responsible termination is considered a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics and Department policy, and will be reviewed by the EAC, which could lead to sanctions.

8. Academic Assistance and Accommodation Planning

Academic Assistance: The Academic Success Center, located on the third floor of the Harold C. Smith Learning Commons, offers a range of support:

- Phone: (413) 748-3389
- Email: asc@springfieldcollege.edu
- Tutorial Services: peer tutoring in writing, math, science, and content-area coursework
- Academic Coaching: support with time management and learning strategies
- Disability & Accessibility Services (DAS): reviews documentation, determines eligibility, and coordinates accommodations
- MTEL Assistance Program: support for the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure

The Educational Testing and Assessment Clinic (ETAC) also offers psychoeducational assessments.

Accommodation Planning: If you have a documented disability on file with DAS, you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. It's your responsibility to self-identify, request accommodations in advance, and provide documentation. Apply through accessiblelearning.com/Springfield, or contact DAS directly at access@springfieldcollege.edu.

Title IX contacts for Department of Social Work students:

- Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Students): Sue Nowlan, Dean of Students Office, Campus Union Suite 325, (413) 748-3922, snowlan@springfieldcollege.edu
- Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Pregnancy/Parenting and Online Students): Camille Elliott, Learning Commons Room 306, (413) 748-3978, celliott@springfieldcollege.edu

Let your professor or advisor know of any accommodation request as soon as possible so they can coordinate with DAS.

9. Special Note to Students in School Social Work Placements Regarding Massachusetts Licensure

Springfield College's Department of Social Work does not have a state-approved preparation program for the Massachusetts School Social Worker/School Adjustment Counselor license. Since this pathway requires an MSW, it applies to you only if you go on to earn your MSW after completing your BSW. At that point, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) offers an alternative pathway called Panel Review for MSW holders, which requires:

- An MSW
- A passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills Test (MTEL); registration at www.mtel.nesinc.com
- A practicum of 900 hours, with at least 450 spent working with children, adolescents, and families in a school setting
- Demonstrated subject matter knowledge per DESE's guidelines
- A completed Panel Review application, including a portfolio review and interview; applicants typically need at least five years of relevant experience or education

More information:

- Licensure regulations: www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=11

- General licensure info and MEPID registration: www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/
- Application forms: www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/forms-guidelines.html#apply
- DESE contact: (781) 338-3000

TABLE 1: CSWE 2022 EPAS Generalist Year Competencies

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
You understand the profession's values and ethical standards, relevant laws and policies, and how to apply ethical decision-making frameworks. You recognize your own values, how your worldview and lived experience shape your professional judgment, and the importance of self-care, lifelong learning, and the ethical use of technology. You will: • Make ethical decisions using the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws, and ethical decision-making models • Demonstrate professional behavior, appearance, and communication (oral, written, and electronic) • Use technology ethically and appropriately in practice • Use supervision and consultation to guide your professional judgment
Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
You understand that every person has fundamental human rights, and you recognize the historical and ongoing injustices that produce oppression and racism. You critically examine how power and privilege are distributed in society and advocate for eliminating barriers to social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. You will: • Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels • Engage in practices that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
You understand how racism and oppression shape human experience at every level of practice, and how White supremacy and privilege affect systems and individuals. You understand diversity as the intersection of many factors (age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, race, religion, sexual orientation, and more) and how these shape identity, access, and opportunity. You will: • Practice in anti-racist, anti-oppressive ways across individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy contexts • Demonstrate cultural humility through self-reflection and self-regulation, treating clients as experts of their own experience

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

You understand how to use ethical, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in research, and how to critically evaluate research to inform practice decisions. You understand qualitative and quantitative methods and how to communicate findings usefully to diverse audiences.

You will:

- Apply research findings to improve practice, policy, and programs
- Identify ethical, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive research strategies that address bias in research methods

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

You understand how policy at the local, state, federal, and global level shapes wellbeing, access to services, and social justice. You understand the history of social welfare policy and actively engage in shaping policy within your own practice settings.

You will:

- Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how policy affects access to services
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, shape, and advocate for policies that advance justice

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

You understand engagement as an ongoing part of practice, grounded in the value of human relationships. You understand how bias, power, privilege, and your own experiences may affect your ability to engage effectively with diverse clients.

You will:

- Apply human behavior theory and person-in-environment frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
- Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice

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

You understand assessment as a collaborative, ongoing process, done together with clients to identify strengths and challenges and develop a shared plan. You recognize how your own bias and experience can shape your assessment and decision-making.

You will:

- Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment frameworks when assessing clients

- Collaborate with clients to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan, respecting their right to self-determination

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

You understand intervention as an ongoing, collaborative process informed by evidence and interprofessional practice. You know how to identify, analyze, and implement culturally responsive interventions and to manage transitions and endings well.

You will:

- Work with clients to choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions
- Use culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate on behalf of clients

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

You understand evaluation as an ongoing part of practice, aimed at improving practice, policy, and service delivery, using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens.

You will:

- Select and use culturally responsive methods to evaluate outcomes
- Analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve your practice effectiveness