



***Master of Social Work (MSW)  
Student Handbook & Field Manual  
2025-2026***

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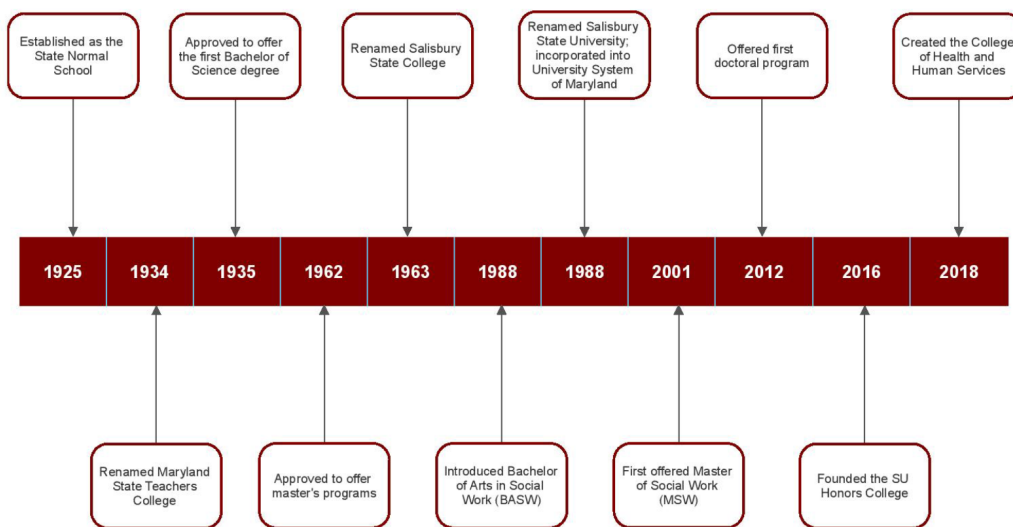
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## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Salisbury University and the School of Social Work. This Master of Social Work (MSW) Student Handbook & Field Manual provides prospective and admitted students all the information necessary to understand program requirements and opportunities; student roles, rights, and responsibilities; and available services and support from both the university and School of Social Work.

### About Salisbury University and the School of Social Work

From a “normal school” for teachers to a Maryland University of National Distinction, Salisbury University (SU) has served as a resource for the Eastern Shore and beyond since 1925. A timeline presents highlights of the University’s history:



Salisbury University’s social work program was established in 1974 as a department and evolved to the School of Social Work in 2018 within the College of Health and Human Services. Highlights about the School of Social Work and the undergraduate and graduate programs include:

- Accreditation by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE); the BASW program was first accredited in 1974 and the MSW program in 2001.
- The largest graduate program on the Salisbury campus.
- One of the highest success rates for passing the Maryland licensure exam compared to graduates from other institutions.

The School of Social Work offers many options to pursue social work as an undergraduate or graduate student:

- Both a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) programs on the Salisbury campus.
- Dual-degree program with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (1990).

- Regional campuses for BASW and MSW programs; located at:
  - Cecil College Northeast Campus (2006).
  - Eastern Shore Higher Education Center at Chesapeake College (2006).
  - University System of Maryland at Hagerstown Campus (2006).
  - University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland (2013).
- Online MSW program (2015) and online BASW program (2022) for full-time residents of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, District of Columbia, New York, New Jersey, and North Carolina.
- BASW and MSW programs through a partnership with University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) Europe. Active-duty military, veterans, spouses and dependents, and Department of Defense (DoD) employees in our military communities are eligible to participate in our programs.

The Director of the School of Social Work is the Chief Administrative Officer and oversees all the operations of the School of Social Work. The BASW and MSW Program Directors are appointed by the Director to serve a three-year term.

Others who provide administrative support to the Director of School of Social Work are the following: Director of Undergraduate Field Education; Director of Graduate Field Education; and Site Coordinators at Cecil College, Eastern Shore Higher Education Center (ESHEC), University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH), University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland (USMSM), and SU/University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC).

### **The School of Social Work Mission Statement**

The School of Social Work's Mission is to be student-centered and dedicated to excellence in the education of professional social workers at the baccalaureate and master's level. The school is committed to the pursuit of social and economic justice and will provide leadership through professional development, service, consultation, and research to strengthen society while contributing to the expansion of social work knowledge.

You can also follow us on social media to stay connected:

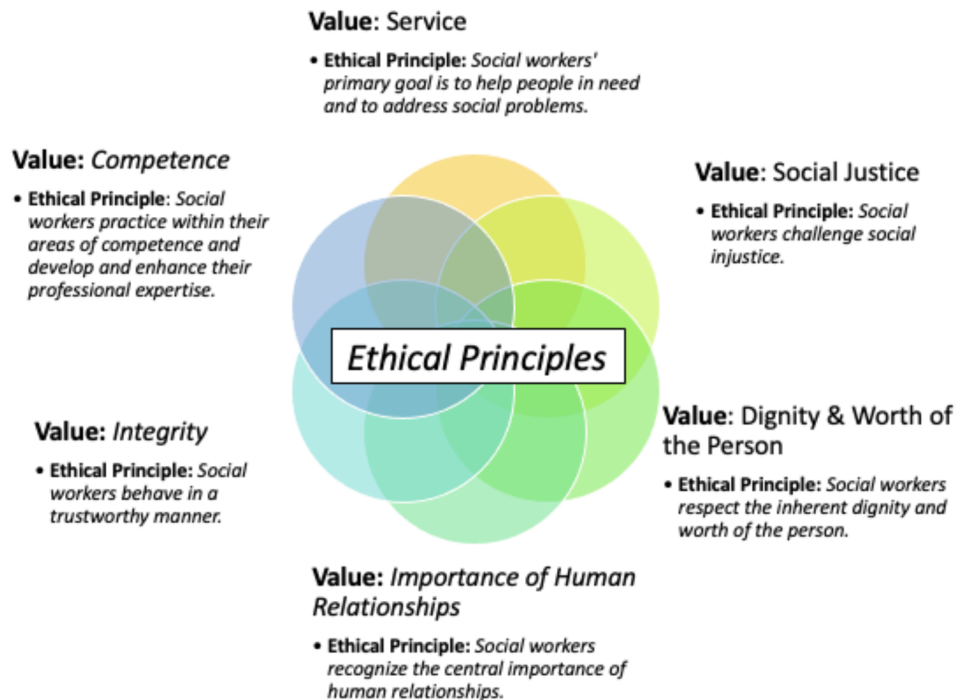
- Facebook: Salisbury University School of Social Work
- Instagram: @SUSocialWork

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

Salisbury University strives to foster an environment where differences are celebrated as much as commonalities. The School of Social Work and the MSW Program are committed to an iterative and continual analysis of all aspects of its learning environment to support the development of a diverse community amongst students, faculty, and staff. The School continues to adhere to and promote respect for differences as is evidenced by our [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan](#).

## Social Work: A Code of Ethics

Social workers adhere to a broad set of ethical principles and well-defined professional [NASW Code of Ethics](#) as defined by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the social work profession's largest membership association. A summary of the major principles of that code are:



The Ethical Standards of the profession concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society.

## THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

Social work is more than academics and adhering to a Code of Ethics. To be considered and hired as a social worker in the State of Maryland, candidates must:

- Graduate with a degree in social work from an accredited college or university (curriculum includes a field practicum). The accrediting body for social work programs is the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE).
- Apply for, take, and pass a social work licensing exam through a process that is managed by the [Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners](#). The licensure exam itself is taken through the Association of Social Work Boards.

Most states require social work licensing through licensure exams. Students interested in practice outside of Maryland should contact the Licensing Board or State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for more information concerning the licensing requirements of that particular state. If you are interested in practicing outside of the State of Maryland, the NASW will assist you in identifying the contact information to that specific state. For more information, please visit [NASW Find a Chapter](#).

There is a variety of paths a social worker can take after they graduate with either their BASW or MSW degree. Pathways are dependent upon state licensure requirements. These pathways may include clinical or non-clinical work. Additionally, there are varying degrees of licensure that one can pursue.

Please visit Information on [Licensure from the School of Social Work](#) to learn more about licensure and career opportunities.

### National Associations for Social Workers

The following table provides information about organizations related to the social work profession. These national associations aim to advance the field of social work by encouraging participation in networking, advocacy, and increasing competence. Visit the links below to review the individual benefits of each association.

| <b>Social Work Associations</b>                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)</a>                          |
| <a href="#">Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)</a>                           |
| <a href="#">National Association of Social Workers (NASW)</a>                     |
| <a href="#">National Association of Black Social Workers</a>                      |
| <a href="#">Latino Social Work Organization</a>                                   |
| <a href="#">Association of Asian American Social Workers</a>                      |
| <a href="#">International Federation of Social Workers – North America Region</a> |

Students are encouraged to join while they are still in school to take advantage of reduced membership rates.

## **THE GRADUATE PROGRAM**

The Master of Social Work Program is designed to inform students about advanced direct practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Classes are conducted in hybrid and online models of delivery. Field Instruction is provided in social service agencies throughout the region and offers students the “hands on” supervised experience necessary to develop the required skills. Salisbury graduates are highly regarded by the social services community.

### **Master of Social Work (MSW) Program Mission**

Grounded in social work values and ethics, Salisbury University offers an innovative student-centered MSW program that prepares graduates to make an impact in their local and regional communities and at national and international levels. Salisbury University MSW graduates serve as leaders in the implementation of socially just, culturally-responsive, equitable, evidence-based, and theory-informed interventions.

### **MSW Program Goals**

- Goal I: Perform as professional social workers in advanced direct practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations.
- Goal II: Develop a professional identity grounded in social work ethics and values.
- Goal III: Apply knowledge of diversity, and difference, and the impact on life experiences and identity formation.
- Goal IV: Demonstrate critical thinking, ongoing self- reflection, and awareness of continued professional development as essential components of culturally competent advanced direct social work practice.
- Goal V: Engage in scientific inquiry, evidence-based practice, and program evaluation.
- Goal VI: Enhance an understanding of human rights, human and community well-being, and social and economic justice.

### **Generalist Practice**

Ensuring a coherent and integrated curriculum in both the classroom and field that leads to the development of competent, ethical, and culturally-responsive generalist social work practitioners requires intentionality with regard to the curriculum design. Using generalist practice as the framework for the curriculum design, two sources are used to frame the programmatic definition of generalist practice. The first comes from the Council on Social Work Education (2015) which states:

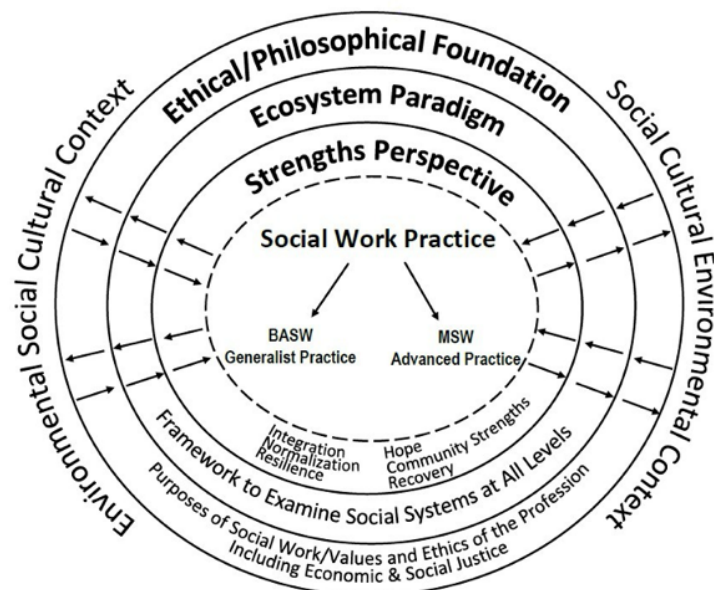
Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical

principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. (p.11)

Kirst-Ashman (2015) defines generalist practice as “the application of an eclectic knowledge base, professional values and ethics, and a wide range of skills to target systems of any size for change” (p. 7). When engaging in a comprehensive review of the BASW curriculum, in preparation for this self-study, faculty used these two definitions of generalist practice to guide their evaluation. During the review process, curricular conversations centered on outlining the specific knowledge, values, skills, as well as cognitive and affective processes needed to practice as a generalist social worker in today’s world while exploring innovative ways in which to help develop these aptitudes.

With attention on curriculum coherence, the faculty use an overarching contextual model along with a collective understanding of generalist social work practice. This contextual model conceptualizes and differentiates the program’s vision, its overall direction, and the relationship between various components of the program. This model provides an overall conceptualization of the entire school and how the programs (e.g. undergraduate, graduate foundation, and graduate specializations) interact. Operationally, this model serves as the contextual “grounding” for the curriculum. As a “coherence test” for the curriculum, coherence is justified when a curricular component is consistent with the contextual model of the program.

## Salisbury University Social Work Contextual Model for Social Work Practice



The contextual model of social work practice adopted by the school comprises several characteristics. First, the entire model is embedded in a social-cultural environmental context. Second, faculty agree that social work practice is rooted in an ethical-philosophical foundation that is compatible with the purposes of social work as stated in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (CSWE, 2022) and the Social Work Code of Ethics (NASW, 2008). Third, the model is characterized by the ecosystem paradigm that provides a framework to examine social systems. Within the ecosystem paradigm, the strengths perspective guides perceptions away from a problem or deficit conceptualization of a presented issue and toward a positivist framework for assessment, intervention, and evaluation. As a school, the curriculum is firmly entrenched in this model. Likewise, what is taught throughout the curriculum is clearly guided by the principles rooted in this model. Building and maintaining the curriculum as a coherent, integrated whole involves continuous interplay between the contextual model (i.e. the guiding principles of person-in-environment, strengths perspective, and systems paradigm), the program's mission and goals, the attributes necessary for entry-level practitioners, and the concepts of respect for diversity, social work values, and ethical practice. These key components serve as the underpinnings for the curriculum.

### **Generalist Practice Social Work Competencies**

The Salisbury University social work curriculum prepares its graduates as entry-level generalist social workers with practice grounded in the core competencies and practice behaviors of generalist practice. The nine core competencies outlined by the [Council on Social Work Education](#) (2022) are listed below, and are followed by a description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes expected at the generalist practice level. Also included is a list of the behaviors that operationalize our generalist practice curriculum.

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

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning

and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.
- Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
- Manage personal and professional value conflicts and affective reactions.
- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes,
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

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

Social workers:

- Advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.
- Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

### *Competency 3: Engage Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Practice*

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are

understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination, and they recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power and systemically oppress, marginalize, and alienate.

Social workers:

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

#### *Competency 4: Engage Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice*

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

Social workers:

- Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs.

- Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

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

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

Social workers:

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

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

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

Social workers:

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

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

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

Social workers:

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment and other culturally responsive interprofessional theoretical frameworks when assessing clients and constituencies.
- Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing mutually agreed-on goals.

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

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

Social workers:

- Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve mutually agreed-on plans and increase the capacities of clients and constituencies.
- Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate, with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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

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

Social workers:

- Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes.
- Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### **Specialized Practice**

The MSW Program is designed to help students achieve their maximum potential through a carefully structured curriculum of generalist and specialized courses. Students in the MSW program have the choice of two specializations: Clinical Social Work and Advocacy or Social Change and Leadership. Both specializations are grounded in the values of the profession and share a strong foundation in advocacy on behalf of under-served, historically oppressed and/or marginalized populations. Students in both specializations develop an understanding of the role of trauma, resiliency and justice in the lives of those with whom they work. While these specializations allow students to focus more heavily on intervention at either the micro and mezzo level, or the mezzo and macro level, they share a set of core classes that promote anti-discriminatory practice with diverse populations on a vast array of issues.

#### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

The Clinical Social Work and Advocacy Specialization prepares students to work with diverse individuals, families and small groups with a special focus on interventions that enhance the person-in-environment fit and address biopsychosocial and behavioral functioning. Students who specialize in Clinical Social Work and Advocacy will be prepared to assume a variety of roles in multi-disciplinary settings, including, but not limited to, mental health clinics, health care facilities, family service agencies, palliative and hospice care, schools, veterans services, the military, in-patient treatment facilities, social service agencies, recovery programs, forensic services, court services, and private practice.

## *Social Change and Leadership*

The Social Change and Leadership Specialization prepares students to work with organizations and communities to address systemic issues and to promote just and equitable social structures. Students who specialize in Social Change and Leadership will be prepared for careers in administration, policy, organizing, activism and advocacy. Graduates of this specialization may assume positions in a variety of settings, including, but not limited to, local, state and federal agencies; non-profit advocacy organizations; grassroots advocacy organizations; health and human service agencies; elected office; and political campaigns.

### **Specialized Practice Social Work Competencies**

#### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers integrate professional values and ethical principles in all aspects of their work. Clinical social workers recognize the importance of the professional relationship in practice with individuals, families, and groups. Clinical social workers model professionalism that reflects their understandings of both the social work role and that center service to clients. Clinical social workers engage in continuous clinical supervision that promotes professional growth and self-reflection.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Use clinical supervision and consultation to continuously examine professional roles and boundaries, engage in ongoing self-correction, and ensure that practice is congruent with social work ethics and values.
- Apply ethical decision-making models and theories in clinical work with individuals, families, and groups.
- Model appropriate professional use of self in clinical practice with individuals, families, and groups.
- Incorporate technology into clinical practice with individuals, families, and groups to facilitate equity, inclusion and access to services.

#### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers demonstrate an understanding and commitment to culturally responsive and anti-racist practice. Clinical social workers engage strong professional communication skills to engage and work with diverse individuals, families, and groups. Clinical social workers understand the role of culture in the life experiences and help-seeking behaviors of diverse client groups. Clinical social workers engage in a process of continual praxis in which they reflect on the influence of own identities, life

experiences, and biases on their practice and then use these reflections guide them in culturally humble and anti-racist practice.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Advocate for equitable distribution of human rights without prejudice.
- Use knowledge of the effects of oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma on client and client systems to guide treatment planning and intervention.
- Contextualize all client conceptualizations (assessments) utilizing lenses of social justice, including aspects of identity and social location that may marginalize clients and/or contribute to their inequitable distribution of social and economic resources.
- Intentionally apply tenets of anti-racist practice, including the centering of issues of race and racism, recognition of personal privilege, and understanding privilege and power in defining or limiting opportunities, access, and equity based on race.

#### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers recognize that all work with clients occurs in a larger socio-political context. Clinical social workers apply theoretical understandings of that context to assess the impact of these contexts on clients and client well-being. Clinical social workers advocate for policies, services, and practices that ensure basic human rights and that promote social, economic, racial, and environmental justice.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Formulate culturally responsive interventions for diverse clients that are ethically grounded and informed.
- Apply tools of self-reflection and critical thinking to increase self-awareness mediating the impact of their own experiences, cognitive processes, and personal affective responses.
- Understand and build knowledge regarding the powerful impact of diversity factors in shaping trauma experiences, help-seeking behaviors, and responses to trauma at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Demonstrate awareness of one's intersectionality and cultural background and how these factors may impact one's practice.

#### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers are critical consumers of evidence-based research and can apply evidence-based principles to inform practice in diverse settings. Clinical social workers work in solidarity with diverse stakeholder groups in the generation of practice and program knowledge.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Identify, implement, and evaluate assessment tools for use with diverse populations.
- Identify and assess the relevance of evidence-based practices in interventions with diverse individuals, families, and groups.

*Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

*Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice*

Advanced direct practitioners recognize the connection between clients, practice, and both public and organizational policy. Advanced direct practitioners communicate to stakeholders the implications of policies and policy change in the lives of clients. Advance direct practitioners develop organizational policy.

Advanced direct practitioners understand and when applicable apply knowledge of the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences of policy.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Identify local, state, and federal level social policy and their direct implications on the well-being of clients and service delivery within agencies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the larger economic policies, political environments, and changing trends on the agency.
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice as a leader within an agency context.

*Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers strive to ensure that clients are collaboratively engaged in all phases of the planned-change process. Clinical social workers recognize that the process of engagement models a restorative and trusting relationship with clients. Clinical social workers are cognizant of the interplay of culture, belief systems and prior experiences of trauma in the engagement process. Clinical social workers demonstrate an awareness of the conscious use of self and the ability to critically self-reflect as integral to establishing helping relationships.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Integrate and utilize theoretical frameworks to engage diverse individuals, families, and groups.

- Evaluate complexity of client circumstances and design appropriate engagement strategies that affect change with diverse individuals, families, and groups.
- Develop and sustain empathy, self-awareness, and other interpersonal skills in clinical work with clients.

### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers engage in ongoing assessment as a component of the dynamic and interactive process of clinical practice with diverse individuals, families, and groups. Clinical social workers are familiar with diagnostic criteria, including the DSM, and are able to incorporate these criteria into multidimensional assessments. Clinical social workers are mindful of the effect of their personal experiences and affective responses as they perform assessments and make decisions.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Demonstrate mastery of multidimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment with individuals, families, and groups.
- Demonstrate ongoing self-awareness of the impact of personal experiences on the assessment process.
- Conduct trauma-informed assessments that explore and examine the effects of all types of trauma, trauma context, and history of trauma exposure and assess for risks, strengths, and protective factors in a developmental context across the lifespan.
- Select and use empirically sound assessment techniques that are culturally and developmentally appropriate for use with diverse client groups.

### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers use multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to intervene with individuals, families, and groups. They critically evaluate, select, and apply evidence-based as well as culturally appropriate interventions and clinical techniques with diverse client populations. Clinical social workers demonstrate the differential use of clinical strategies for a range of presenting concerns. Clinical social workers collaborate with other professionals to coordinate interventions.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Demonstrate mastery of evidenced based, culturally appropriate interventions and clinical techniques with individuals, families, and groups.
- Differentially integrate and utilize culturally relevant theoretical frameworks, research knowledge, and client preferences to inform intervention.

- Demonstrate ongoing self-awareness of the impact of personal experiences on the intervention process.
- Advocate for the advancement of trauma-informed systems of care, expanded access to effective trauma-focused interventions, and social justice for marginalized and oppressed people who are most at risk for experiencing trauma.

### *Clinical Social Work and Advocacy*

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

Clinical social workers evaluate practice with individuals, families, and groups to ensure effectiveness. Informed by theory, they continue to develop and utilize the processes of practice evaluation and program evaluation to demonstrate intervention and program effectiveness with diverse client populations. Clinical social workers use evaluation findings to inform best practice.

Practitioners in clinical social work and advocacy:

- Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of intervention outcomes.
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, quantitative and qualitative methods, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of client and program outcomes.
- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions, clinical processes, outcomes, and client satisfaction within a single case design.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

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

SCL social workers integrate professional values and ethical principles in all aspects of their work. SCL social workers recognize the importance of the professional relationship in practice with organizations, communities, and stakeholder groups. SCL social workers model professionalism that reflects their understandings of macro social work roles and varied stakeholders within whom they work. SCL social workers engage in continuous self-reflection that promotes professional growth and self-reflection. SCL social workers understand the importance of leadership and the varied ways in which leadership is exercised.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Apply models of ethical decision-making in work with organizations, communities and stakeholder groups.
- Use self-evaluation and reflection to critically navigate competing personal and professional values, as well as trade-offs involved in making strategic decisions.
- Model appropriate professional use of self in the different social work roles required in professional macro environments.

- Incorporate technology into macro practice to facilitate equity, inclusion and access of diverse stakeholder groups.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

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

SCL social workers use consultation and self-reflection to practice multicultural reflexivity. SCL social workers are aware of the dynamics of power and privilege inherent in the social work position. SCL social workers assess how social identity, privilege, and marginalized status are affected by and affect systems. SCL social workers formulate inclusive engagement strategies, policies, and organizational practices and advocate for equitable distribution of human rights. SCL social workers promote the development of diverse leadership and staff teams. SCL social workers understand and can assess the global interconnectedness of human rights violations and oppression.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Advocate for a reduction of service disparity and increase in equity in the delivery of health, social, racial, economic and environmental programs for diverse and oppressed populations.
- Use evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence in advocacy for policies that advance social and economic wellbeing.
- Advocate with administrators and legislators to influence policies that improve services for clients.
- Integrate knowledge of human rights theories, frameworks, international documents, conventions, and covenants into practice to improve social, economic, and environmental well-being.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

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

SCL social workers advance human rights and social, environmental, and economic justice on behalf of individuals, families, organizations, communities, and the larger society. They understand mechanisms of privilege and oppression and assess the impact of these mechanisms on services, resource availability, opportunity, and justice for diverse communities. SCL social workers recognize historical legacies of oppression and discrimination and challenge social policies and practices that tolerate or promote racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other discriminatory treatments of people based on identities, including age, disability, religion, and national origin. They utilize communication, planning, fundraising, policy practice, and other macro skills to advocate for just, equitable policies and programs that promote human rights for all.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Create a climate of inclusion that builds on the strengths of diverse constituencies, integrates diverse points of view, and facilitates full engagement in ways that embrace the cultural and spiritual histories of people.
- Demonstrate cultural humility and critical self-reflection in interaction with diverse stakeholder groups.
- Communicate in a manner that recognizes cultural differences and does no harm/
- Intentionally apply tenets of anti-racist practice, including the centering of issues of race and racism, recognition of personal privilege, and understanding the role of privilege and power in defining or limiting opportunities, access, and equity-based on race.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

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

SCL social workers work in solidarity with diverse communities and client groups to identify, produce, and disseminate empirically supported and culturally relevant knowledge. SCL social workers integrate evidence-based practices into the design of programs and policies. SCL social workers critically evaluate research to identify disparities and disproportionality in outcomes and services. SCL social workers critically evaluate research and evidence-based practices to ensure representation and cultural relevance to diverse populations.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Engage in critical analysis and ongoing review of research findings, macro practice models, and practice wisdom to inform organizational, community, and policy practice.
- Develop and select research questions that strategically inform the research process and its impact on communities, programs, organizations, and policies.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

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

SCL social workers understand the historical, cultural, and ideological foundations of modern social welfare policy. They employ analytical frameworks to critically analyze, formulate, influence the passage of, and implement policies at organizational, local, state, federal and international levels. SCL social workers understand and utilize political power, including electoral processes, to influence policy-making and implementation. They have a strong understanding of democratic processes, including the role of citizens and non-citizen residents in policy-making processes. SCL social workers utilize coalition building and principles of community organizing to work in solidarity with diverse stakeholders and advocate for just and equitable policies.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Analyze policies at local, state, national, and international levels to assess their impact on individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities and on the values of human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
- Engage, motivate, and mobilize constituents to participate and lead in the policy process.
- Encourage broad-based participation in the political process through voter mobilization and educating the public about positions of candidates for office, political party platforms, the benefits of political engagement, and electoral processes and procedures.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

#### *Competency 6: Engage with Organizations and Communities*

SCL social workers recognize the importance of relationships in all forms of macro practice. They build broad collaborative relationships that reflect human worth and dignity while simultaneously challenging injustice, discrimination, and oppression. SCL social workers seek to engage diverse stakeholders in macro change efforts. They use empirically validated leadership and communication skills to facilitate engagement in change efforts.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Utilize social work communication skills, including active listening, empathy, and interpersonal skills, to engage diverse stakeholders in macro change efforts.
- Develop and implement multiple engagement strategies that reflect an understanding of structural, environmental, and power dynamics; policymakers' characteristics and objectives; and the strengths, priorities, and interests of stakeholder groups.
- Develop their own leadership skills to initiate and facilitate dialogue that mobilizes and sustains action.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

#### *Competency 7: Assess Organizations and Communities*

SCL social work practitioners use appropriate theories, frameworks, models, and strategies to examine and assess communities, organizations, and policies using a strength-based, anti-oppressive, and antiracist lens. They ground their change efforts in thorough, multidimensional assessments that lead to specific change targets. SCL social workers synthesize data-driven approaches to assessment with the lived experience of diverse stakeholder groups.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Assess and analyze assets, needs, benefits, gaps in services, rights, and the inequitable distribution of resources and power to identify appropriate macro interventions.

- Use power analyses to identify appropriate individual, organizational, community, and political decision-makers to target for intervention.
- Develop, select, and conduct assessments using appropriate metrics, analytical methods, frameworks, and tools, including primary data sources (e.g., surveys, interviews), secondary data sources (e.g., census, polling, precinct data), and the lived experience of affected individuals, families, groups within organizations, communities, and policy arenas.
- Collaborate with community members, professional colleagues, and political stakeholders throughout the assessment process.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

#### *Competency 8: Intervene with Organizations and Communities*

SCL social workers use empirically supported intervention methods to elicit system-level change. They have an understanding of techniques and processes involved in program development, budgeting, fundraising, strategic planning, human resources, lobbying, policy formulation, and policy implementation. SCL social workers utilize intervention methods that are anti-racist and that promote equity and justice in both outcomes as well as processes. They work in solidarity with those directly affected to create system change.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Differentially apply evidenced-based, culturally relevant intervention strategies in work with communities, organizations, and policy-making bodies.
- Elicit engagement in intervention strategies from diverse stakeholder groups.
- Use macro intervention strategies to challenge social, racial, and environmental injustice.

### *Social Change and Leadership*

#### *Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Organizations and Communities*

SCL social workers engage in evaluation to assess the impact and effectiveness of programs, organizations, communities, and policies. SCL social workers evaluate both the processes and outcomes of change efforts and use evaluation findings to promote social, environmental, and economic justice. SCL social workers ensure that evaluation design, measurement, implementation, and use of findings are customized to the target population and diverse settings and that they are culturally responsive, accurate, and timely.

Practitioners in social change and leadership:

- Select appropriate evaluative questions to facilitate documenting, improving, or changing organizational programs, policies, and community performance processes and outcomes.

- Develop collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders to engage them in the evaluation process.
- Integrate theoretical and conceptual frameworks into evaluation strategies that facilitate an understanding of community, organizational, and policy dynamics and outcomes.
- Develop evaluation plans that include clear goals, outputs, and outcomes, and operationalize all aspects of a planned evaluation, including partners, measures, data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

### **Student Enrichment & Governance**

Students have the right to organize to voice and defend their interests in academic as well as student affairs. Recognizing students' rights to voice their disagreements and to defend their interests, the Salisbury University and School of Social Work has established procedures for students to make their voice heard. University procedures are detailed in the university's [Graduate Student Handbook](#).

At the University level, the Salisbury University Graduate School sponsors the Graduate Student Council (GSC), which provides MSW students the opportunity to have a voice at the table for larger University decisions and policies affecting graduate students. Meetings and elected positions are open to any full or part-time graduate student currently enrolled at Salisbury University. The stated goal of the Graduate Student Council is to provide avenues for intellectual, professional, personal, and social development through grants, advocacy, and public presentation of research, graduate community events, and campus service support. Social Work graduate students have been elected to leadership positions on GSC in previous academic years.

Salisbury University's School of Social Work has a variety of clubs and organizations students can join. The clubs allow members to meet fellow students, interact with staff, sign up for volunteer opportunities, network, and make the most out of the educational experiences at SU. A list of organizations and clubs can be found at [School of Social Work Organizations and Clubs](#).

The Chi Eta Chapter of the Phi Alpha Honor Society Chapter was established at Salisbury University in April 1991 to promote high academic achievement and strong ethical standards among social work program students. Membership is open to undergraduate and graduate social work students who meet the established scholarship qualifications. The chapter invites those who have attained high academic performance to apply. Applicants must have completed 37.5% of the required coursework towards their degree and be in the top 35% of the program.

The program also supports the activities of Phi Alpha by providing a faculty member to serve as an advisor.

### **MSW Student Engagement Policy**

To reflect students' rights and opportunities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs in the School of Social Work, a Student

Advisory Committee (SAC) was established in 2022. The SAC is tasked with identifying student priorities and issues relevant to social work students. The committee also completes the following tasks:

- Provide content and feedback for the student hub.
- Coordinate the process for the nomination and selection of student awardees each spring.
- Review and approve applications for student professional development funds.

The SAC consists of one or more faculty facilitator(s) as well as a group of students nominated and selected for the role, to serve a term of at least one year. The student members consist of representatives from the School of Social Work's program options.

To participate on the SAC, students must be in good standing within the Social Work program, without violations of Technical Standards.

### *Support for Student Professional Development Policy*

The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) oversees available professional development funds for current BASW and MSW students at all program options. Applications for funds fall into one of two categories:

- Conference Participation
- IRB-Approved Research Study

For the 2025-2026 academic year, there are ten available awards worth up to \$300 each. SAC anticipates the approval of five awards during the fall semester and five awards during the spring semester. All current BASW or MSW students who are in good academic standing are eligible to apply.

Interested applicants will complete the following steps:

- Complete "Application for Student Professional Development Funding"
- Complete a "Spending Authorization Form"
- For research support, provide a short letter of support from the PI for the research project and/or faculty mentor.
- Allow a minimum of one month for the disbursement of funds.

*Conference Participation Details:* Students can request funds to support travel- related expenses (e.g., conference registration, airfare, meal stipend, etc.) for conference participation. Priority is given to conference presentations. Students can also submit requests to attend a conference without doing a presentation but may be eligible for less than the full award amount.

*IRB-Approved Research Study Details:* Students can request funds for activities related to an IRB-approved study. Students will be asked to provide proof of IRB approval and will need a general budget outline prepared at the time of application.

Some expenses can be pre-paid as part of an award but others may require students to make approved purchases and request reimbursement.

As a condition of funding, all award recipients will be asked to submit a brief written reflection (approximately 250 words) related to their conference or research experience. These reflections will be included in the School of Social Work's media.

### **International Funding Requests**

Funds are available to support international education and study abroad experiences. Eligibility criteria include:

- All current BASW and pre-BASW (completed or currently enrolled 200 and 300) and MSW students at all program options.
- Students should be accepted to a Salisbury University study abroad program.
- 3.0 Social Work GPA; Submit unofficial transcript from GullNet.
- Complete an essay (UNDER 400 words) on topic provided related to study abroad experience.
- Students can request up to \$500 to support education related expenses.

Students should complete the application form by October 1 for a winter study abroad course and February 15 for a summer study abroad course. An individual spending authorization form and an unofficial transcript should also be completed and submitted along with the application.

The School of Social Work International Committee will review applications and make recommendations for funding. The Director of the School of Social Work will then make the final determinations. Priority will be given to the following types of requests:

- Students participating in School of Social Work global seminar.
- Students who have not received additional funding through the School of Social Work.
- Students who have not traveled abroad before.
- Students who have not traveled on another SU sponsored international education trip.
- Students who demonstrate need.

## **ADMISSION TO THE MSW PROGRAM**

### **Program Admission**

Students seeking admission to the MSW program must demonstrate that they:

- Hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
- Have completed a broad liberal arts background with a minimum of 24 hours including introductory course content psychology, sociology and statistics. These undergraduate requirements may be taken at any accredited college or university, including community colleges. All prerequisites for admission must be completed by the end of the first semester in the program. All offers of admission are conditional upon the successful completion of the undergraduate coursework.
- Have earned a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average on the last 120 graded credits that appear on their bachelor's degree transcript, as well as a 3.0 grade point average on the last 60 graded upper-division credits.
- Have submitted transcripts of any completed graduate courses.
- Have submitted professional letters of recommendation persons such as professors, employers, supervisors, professional colleagues and community associates. Applicants who have been employed in a social service agency should request a recommendation from a recent employer or supervisor. Student applicants should provide a recommendation from a faculty advisor or instructor. Traditional applicants submit three letters, and advanced standing applicants submit four.

Students admitted to the MSW program as part of standard admittance are simultaneously admitted to Salisbury University. The above listed criteria apply to all students seeking standard admittance to the MSW program.

Applicants to our Salisbury University location, our four regional locations in Maryland, and our MSW Online option seeking standard admittance are typically admitted for a fall term start. They are assigned an academic advisor at the time of admission and participate in fall and (when applicable) summer program planning shortly after admission. Students in our UMGC partnership program seeking standard admittance are admitted for either a spring term start (for traditional students) or a summer term start (for advanced standing students).

### *Advanced Standing*

Salisbury University's School of Social offers an alternative program option for Advanced Standing students. In this program option, all students with a bachelor's degree from an accredited social work program effectively bypass the generalist curriculum and complete only the 32 credits in our MSW program's specialized curriculum. They start with this curriculum following enrollment to the program. Our school offers both full-time and part-time plans of study for Advanced Standing students.

For students to be eligible for admission under advanced standing status, they must additionally demonstrate:

- They have completed a qualifying baccalaureate degree in Social Work within the last three years. Qualifying degrees include CSWE accredited baccalaureate social work degrees; Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) accredited baccalaureate social work degrees; and an internationally earned International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service (ISWDRES) evaluated degree comparable to a baccalaureate social work.
- Applicants that graduated within the last five years who have worked in human services for at least two of those years will be considered.
- Applicants for advanced standing must have earned a minimum 3.0 grade point average on the last 120 credits that appear on their bachelor's degree transcript, as well as a 3.2 on the last 60 graded upper-division credits (including all social work courses).
- A recommendation from the field liaison who taught your most recent field education class is required in addition to three other letters of recommendation.
- Three letters of recommendation are required from the following: one from a field placement supervisor, one from a college or university academic source, and one from either an employer, professional colleague or community associate.

Assessment is made based on the applicant's academic performance and background, social work and related work experience, personal qualifications, references, and indications of a commitment to the profession. All applicants are informed about their acceptance status by an electronic letter to their Salisbury University email from the Director of the MSW Program followed by a letter sent in the US mail.

### *Writing Prompts*

Applicants prepare and submit a detailed statement covering two questions. Applicants should not omit any questions. Applicants' personal statements should be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-point font. Applicants should use the number and its associated topic area (in bold and underlined) as headings when completing personal statement. Details regarding the writing prompts can be found on the [MSW Admission Website](#).

*Statement of Limits to Confidentiality:* Mandated reporters are persons who in the course of their work may be privy to information that they are required to report to an appropriate enforcement agency. Social workers in the state of Maryland are mandated reporters and must report any disclosure of suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse. Salisbury University social work faculty and staff are required to report any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, whether the suspected incident was previously reported. Therefore, any disclosure (written or verbal) by students or prospective students of suspected incidents of child abuse and/or neglect will be immediately reported to the appropriate authorities.

Applicants may track the status of the online recommendations submitted through their Slate application portal after their applications are submitted to Salisbury University.

### **Repeated Content Policy**

Students who have completed generalist social work content but who do not have a CSWE accredited baccalaureate social work degree occasionally apply for admission. These students do not qualify for Advanced Standing. However, their prior generalist social work credits are identified during the application process and, following admission and matriculation, the relevant courses are waived from their program requirements by the MSW Program Director.

### **Transfer of Graduate Credits**

To be considered for transfer credit, coursework must meet the following criteria:

- completed within five years prior to the student's application to Salisbury University,
- earned at a CSWE-accredited graduate social work program, and
- received a minimum grade of "B."

Courses—whether completed at another institution or at Salisbury—will not be applied toward degree requirements if taken more than seven calendar years before the expected graduation date.

Students entering the traditional MSW program may transfer up to 18 semester credit hours. Students admitted to the advanced standing MSW program may transfer up to 9 semester credit hours.

Students currently or previously enrolled in another CSWE-accredited Master of Social Work degree program who are seeking admission as a transfer student are required to submit the following materials:

- A brief written statement describing the reasons why they are requesting the transfer;
- A copy of Field Education/Practicum evaluations, if applicable; and
- At least one recommendation from a faculty member or Field Supervisor affiliated with the program from which the student is transferring.

Students from graduate programs that are not in social work or that are not CSWE-accredited may receive a maximum of six transfer credits for courses for which they earned a grade of "A" or "B". Each course will be assessed for program equivalency.

Official determinations of allowable credit for coursework completed elsewhere will be made at the time of admission.

The Salisbury University School of Social Work MSW program does not grant credit for life experience or previous work experience.

Students currently or previously enrolled in another CSWE accredited Master of Social Work degree program who are seeking admission as a transfer student are required to submit the following materials in addition to the above listed criteria:

- A brief written statement describing the reasons for requesting the transfer;
- A copy of Field Education evaluations, if applicable; and
- One of the three recommendations must be from a faculty member or Field Supervisor affiliated with the program.

Students from non-MSW graduate programs may receive a maximum of six transfer credits for courses for which s/he has earned a grade of "A" or "B". Each course will be assessed for program equivalency. Typically, the only course that can transfer is a course to count as an elective or a prerequisite. Official determinations of allowable credit for coursework completed elsewhere will be made at the time of admission.

Transfer applicants at all program options are considered on a rolling basis, i.e., they may apply for a start in any of our four academic terms. Their transcripts are reviewed during the application process and the offered credit transfers are outlined in their admission offer. If students accept, they are assigned an academic advisor and participate in program planning promptly after admission.

### *Advanced Standing Applicants*

Applicants for advanced standing must submit the following material in addition to the usual application requirements:

- Transcripts documenting eligibility for advanced standing.
- Recommendation from the field liaison and agency field instructor.
- Applicants will be required to submit the evaluation of field performance completed at the end of their undergraduate placement.

### **Provisional Admission**

MSW Traditional Program applicants with a cumulative GPA of 2.50 to 2.99 leading to the bachelor's degree (and a 3.0 on the 60 credit GPA), but an otherwise strong application, may be admitted provisionally to the program. Both GPA calculations (60 credit and cumulative) are considered for admission. Graduate credits, if applicable, will be factored into the GPA calculations.

Applicants to the Advanced Standing option with a cumulative GPA of 2.8 to 3.0 GPA leading to the bachelor's degree, but an otherwise strong application (and a 3.2 on the 60 credit GPA), may be considered for provisional admission. Graduate credits will be considered in assessing an applicant's qualifications.

Students admitted provisionally based on the GPA may take up to nine hours their first semester and are required to earn a "B" or better in all classes in the first semester in the program. Students on provisional status are ineligible to participate in Field

Education, which may extend their master's academic career. Students are expected to verify their schedule with their advisor. Provisional status will be reviewed after the posting of first semester grades, and once requirements are met, the student may begin to pursue Field Education and be fully admitted to the program.

### **Conditional Admission**

Applicants who have not successfully completed the required liberal arts background may be admitted conditionally. Students may take the prerequisite classes at any accredited university or community college. The MSW Admission and Academic Review Committee reserves the right to request that students retake a liberal arts course in which a grade below a "C" was earned. Students must submit proof of successful completion of the course to be fully admitted to the program.

### **Spring Admission**

Only students currently enrolled in non-degree seeking courses for the fall semester, transfer students, and applicants to the SU/UMGC option are eligible for spring admission to the MSW program. All other applications will be reviewed for fall admission.

### **Non-Degree Students**

Eligible applicants who wish to enroll as non-degree graduate students (not formally admitted to a graduate degree program) are not required to complete a formal application for admission to the School of Social Work but rather must complete a Guest/Non-Degree Registration form to the university. Prospective non-degree students are directed to first correspond with the MSW Program Director regarding any non-degree seeking course enrollment. Approval is contingent upon factors such as the prospective student's prior education, course prerequisites, and future degree-seeking plans, amongst other factors. MSW courses taken as non-degree seeking but later used toward a graduate degree in the school are subject to all university and departmental policies including the School of Social Work's course repeat policy and Salisbury University's 7-year time limitation for the completion of graduate coursework.

### **Course Credit by Examination**

Students who can demonstrate prior mastery of four specific graduate generalist practice courses may take an examination to earn course credit. Those courses are: SOWK 607: Social Welfare Policy and Practice; SOWK 610: Theoretical Analysis of Behavior I; SOWK 616: Social Work Research; and SOWK 630: Theoretical Analysis of Behavior II. Students must contact the MSW Program Director for authorization to apply to take the exam(s). A Challenge Exam Authorization Form is completed and signed by the MSW Program Director, and then the student goes to the Cashier's Office to pay an examination fee. After paying for the exam, the MSW Program Director coordinates the exam process for the student.

The university fee for taking the exam is \$75.00 per exam; upon successful completion of the exam, the university charges 50% of the in-state tuition rate to have the course appear on a student's transcript.

# **CURRICULUM**

## **Curriculum Overview**

The MSW curriculum is divided into the generalist practice curriculum and the specialized practice curriculum.

The generalist curriculum comprises the first portion of the traditional program and consists of 30 hours of coursework and field education. Building on a liberal arts base, generalist practice courses address the knowledge and skills associated with generalist social work practice. We also examine the core values, ethics, and philosophy of social work in preparation for advanced social work practice.

The specialized practice curriculum comprises the second portion of the traditional program and is the curriculum for the advanced standing option. The specialized practice curriculum consists of 32 hours of advanced coursework and field education. The specialized curriculum contains two specializations: Clinical Social Work and Advocacy, and Social Change and Leadership. Both specializations are grounded in the values of the profession and share a strong foundation in advocacy on behalf of underserved, historically oppressed and/or marginalized populations.

Students are directed to Salisbury University's Course Catalog for additional details related to MSW curriculum. Published annually, SU's catalog details the university's academic programs, courses and the policies that govern them. The following program outlines are available on SU's course catalog:

- [Advanced Standing – Clinical Social Work and Advocacy Specialization](#)
- [Advanced Standing – Social Change and Leadership Specialization](#)
- [Traditional – Clinical Social Work and Advocacy Specialization](#)
- [Traditional – Social Change and Leadership Specialization](#)

## **Course Evaluations**

As part of the educational process, students are to complete course evaluations at the end of their courses, but before final exams. The feedback collected from the course evaluation is used by academic departments in the improvement of the curriculum and used in the promotion and tenure process of faculty.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Academic & Professional Advising of MSW Students**

Advising is an essential part of the educational process. Academic advisors provide students with pertinent information about the MSW Program and assist them in planning their program of study. Professional and academic social work advisement is conducted by full-time faculty whose educational credentials include a master's degree in social work.

Advisors are thoroughly trained in university and program policies and procedures and have comprehensive knowledge of the program. Advisors offer a range of opportunities for student advising including scheduled office hours when students may meet with them, scheduled virtual hours and chat sessions, and advising through email or Zoom.

Students correspond with their advisors at least twice per academic year to plan their upcoming courses, but students are encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor at any time when questions arise about the educational program or career decisions. During the two advising periods for course planning, students are required to communicate with their faculty advisor to develop their academic program for the following semester. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct courses have been completed to achieve progression into the advanced year and on to graduation.

Students preparing to graduate are required to contact their advisor to review their academic progress and confirm that all graduation requirements are fulfilled.

Faculty members see advising as a key to academic success, and to model professional behavior. Faculty attempt to establish an advising environment that is accessible, accepting, validating, strengths-focused, and empowering to the student. Thus, advising becomes about the development of a solid academic plan, career planning, and the exposure of the student to an effective positive relationship where they can see basic social work skills applied in an everyday setting.

### **Faculty Availability**

Faculty are available to meet face-to-face, virtually, and/or by phone. Students are encouraged to contact faculty via Salisbury University email, the official form of communication at the University, to set up a time to meet.

### **University Academic Standards & Dismissal for Academic Performance**

The School of Social Work adheres to the university's academic standards for graduate students as outlined in the [Graduate Student Handbook](#). As noted in that document, to remain in good academic standing, graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 for all graduate courses. Students whose cumulative average falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation for a maximum of one calendar year and allowed nine graded semester hours, which includes a repeated

course, to return their grade point average to 3.0. During probation, students are dismissed if they do not improve their grade point average following each term, if they do not complete a class during probation, or it is determined they cannot return their grade point average to at least 3.0 by the conclusion of the nine graded semester hours or one calendar year, whichever comes first.

All students who return their grade point average to at least 3.0 during the probationary period will be returned to good academic standing. Students in graduate degree programs will be informed of probationary status or dismissal by the MSW Program Director. Non-degree students will be informed of probationary status or dismissal by the Provost. MSW students on academic probation may not enter field education or placement.

Students in the 62-credit MSW program may graduate with no more than two courses in which they earn a grade lower than a “B”. Students in the 62-credit MSW program are allowed to repeat two courses, one time, during their program to improve their grade. Students who have begun the specialized practice curriculum may be restricted from repeating a generalist practice course.

Students in the 32-credit Advanced Standing MSW program may graduate with no more than one course in which they earn a grade lower than a “B”. Advanced Standing students may repeat one course, one time, in which they earned a grade lower than a “B”. Students who have exceeded their allowable credits below a “B”, and who have utilized their allowable course repeat option, will be dismissed from the program regardless of their GPA.

No student, at any time, will be able to graduate from the MSW program with a “D” or “F” grade, and a GPA of 3.0 or better is required for degree conferral.

### **Course Progression**

All students in the Traditional 62-credit MSW program are expected to complete the generalist practice curriculum before entering the specialized practice curriculum.

### **Grading**

A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on all graduate work taken at the University is required for graduation. Grades will indicate academic achievement as follows:

| <i>Grade</i> | <i>Quality Points</i> | <i>Points Distribution</i> | <i>Evaluation</i> |
|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| A            | 4.0                   | 92-100%                    | Excellent         |
| B+           | 3.5                   | 87-91.9%                   | Very Good         |
| B            | 3.0                   | 82-86.9%                   | Good              |
| C+           | 2.5                   | 77-81.9%                   | Below Standard    |
| C            | 2.0                   | 71-76.9%                   | Unsatisfactory    |
| D            | 1.0                   | 65-70.9%                   | Poor              |
| F            | 0                     | Below 65%                  | Failure           |

A grade of “D” or “F” does not provide credit toward the MSW degree. Incomplete grades are given only under exceptional circumstances to students whose work in a course has earned a C or better but who, because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, have been unable to complete all the course requirements.

The “I” automatically becomes an “F” if coursework is not completed prior to the end of the next full semester for which the student is enrolled or at the end of one calendar year, whichever is earlier.

### **Policy on Academic Standing and Program Readmission**

In exceptional circumstances, students dismissed for academic deficiency may be considered for readmission to their graduate degree program or to another master’s degree program. In no case will such readmission for graduate study be granted prior to one calendar year following the term of dismissal. These students must submit a Readmission Application to the Registrar’s Office at least 90 days prior to the term for which readmission is desired.

Typically, a student may apply for readmission one year following the dismissal. However, if the student is dismissed as a result of technical standards violation, they may be considered for readmission three years following dismissal. A student will only be considered for readmission one time.

The steps for readmission are:

1. Applicant must submit both a Program Application and a current resume. If the applicant was dismissed due to falling below the GPA requirement of the Program, then the applicant should confirm their GPA meets the standard before reapplying to the Program.
2. Applicant must submit a letter to the MSW Program Director requesting readmission. The letter must address:
  - a. Reasons for dismissal;
  - b. Steps taken to address the area(s) of concern; and
  - c. Applicant’s plan for continued academic success.
3. The applicant should supply one professional reference to the MSW Program Director. If the applicant was dismissed for falling below the GPA requirement for the Program, then the reference must be a social work academic reference
4. The MSW Program Director will review all materials. After review, the MSW Program Director will make a decision regarding readmission or refer the materials to the Admissions Committee for further consideration. The student will be notified of this decision within five (5) business days of receipt of the materials.
5. If the materials are sent on to the Admissions Committee, the information will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee within ten (10) business days of submission. After review of the materials, the Admissions Committee make a decision regarding readmission or request a personal interview with the applicant.

6. If an interview is requested by the Admissions Committee, the interview will take place within fifteen (15) business days of submission.
7. Based upon that interview and the submitted materials the MSW Program Director will notify the student of the Admissions Committee's decision in writing within five (5) business days of the interview.

If readmitted, the student will be placed on program level academic probation for the first semester after readmission; will be required to develop a probationary contract with the student's social work advisor which will stipulate terms of the academic probation and consequences for non-compliance; must maintain good academic standing; and will abide by any other conditions set by the Admissions Committee.

### **Appeal and Grievance Process**

Graduate students may appeal decisions under the academic policies and regulations set forth in the university's [Student Accountability & Community Standards](#). Prior to initiating the appeal and/or grievance process, students should confer with their faculty Advisor/MSW Program Director. A direct link to the Student Grievance Policy, and the required steps and timeline, is here: [Student Academic Grievance Policy](#).

### **Drop or Withdrawal from a Class**

Students receiving financial aid should contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) before dropping or withdrawing from courses to fully understand the impact on their current and future aid. Students can officially drop or withdraw from a course in GullNet.

Classes are dropped via GullNet. For more information, visit the [Registrar's Website](#) and access [Academic Policies and Procedures](#). Only classes that are dropped during the specific add/drop period for any term/session can be done so without penalty, and the course will not appear on a transcript. After the specific add/drop period ends, students can withdraw from a course through the published timeframe. For specific dates, please review the Semester Date Highlights on the Registrar's website.

To withdraw from a class, drop the class on GullNet the same way a student would in the first week of classes. For more information, access Academic Policies and Procedures. Withdraws that occur after the specific add/drop period or the first week of classes until midsemester will appear on a student's transcript with a grade of "W." This grade shows that a student attempted the class but withdrew from it. It will not affect the student's GPA. After midsemester, students can withdraw from the entire semester on GullNet, but not from an individual course. Students will receive a "WP" (withdraw while passing) or a "WF" (withdraw while failing) grade for each course. Grades of "WP" and "WF" do not affect your GPA. For specific dates, please review the Semester Date Highlights on the Registrar's website.

Students are responsible for dropping or withdrawing themselves. Failure to drop or withdraw in the required manner may have adverse impacts on tuition owed, financial aid, and/or the academic grade for the course(s).

Stopping payment on checks for registration fees or not paying tuition and fees does not constitute a drop or withdrawal, nor does it relieve a student from their financial obligation to SU. Not attending or ceasing to attend classes does not constitute a drop or withdrawal. Contact the Financial Aid Office for questions or additional information.

### **Time Limitations**

All work applied to a master's degree, including transfer credits, must be completed within seven calendar years after the date on which the first course/meeting/degree requirements were completed. Any course completed more than seven years prior to the final completion date of all graduation requirements cannot be used toward graduation. All grades earned, however, will be used in figuring grade point averages regardless of when the work was completed. The grades from all transfer courses will be included in the GPA calculated for admission or readmission, and the grades from all SU courses will be included in the GPA calculated toward graduation.

### **Life Experience**

Credit will not be granted for life experience or previous work experience.

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation at Salisbury University. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance.

If you have already been approved for reasonable accommodations through the [Office of Access and Accommodations](#) (OAA), please complete the following next steps as soon as possible: (1) send your OAA Accommodations Letter(s) through the AIM portal, and (2) initiate a conversation and/or meet with your faculty members to discuss the implementation of your approved accommodations in each of your courses.

If you have not yet established accommodations with the OAA, but have or think you may have a disability/condition that requires accommodations (conditions include but are not limited to: mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical, or chronic health), you may request reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and services, and/or modifications to University policies, through the OAA by following the DRC's procedures for Requesting Academic Accommodations. For questions or more information, please refer to the Office of Access & Accommodations website or contact the OAA at (410) 543-6087 or [accommodations@salisbury.edu](mailto:accommodations@salisbury.edu). The OAA is located on the 2nd floor of the Guerrieri Student Union (GSU), Room 229.

Students in the SU/UMGC option will follow UMGC's accommodations for disabilities policies.

### **Class Attendance**

As a professional preparatory program the School of Social Work has a common attendance policy which balances the necessity of class attendance with the reality of

illness and unexpected events. Absences beyond the allowable limit may, without extenuating circumstances, result in a reduction in the course grade for each absence. Students should review their class syllabi for specific information regarding the nature of the grade reduction related to this policy.

Classes that meet once a week allow one absence per term. Chronic tardiness or leaving early will be counted as an absence.

### **Online Course Attendance**

Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses. Online courses are no different in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Active participation includes logging in at least twice a week at a minimum and completing all course activities.

### **Inclement Weather and Emergency Response**

Should inclement weather result in classes being canceled information will be given to all local radio and television stations. Students can receive information concerning cancellations by listening to local stations or visiting the SU website. Please refer to the entire Inclement Weather Policy for additional information.

You can sign up for the [Emergency Alert System](#) for updates on inclement weather.

### **Professional Writing / Writing Across the Curriculum**

Writing is an essential social work skill. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) stipulates that students demonstrate effective communication skills, both written and oral, and the NASW Code of Ethics has standards relating to the importance of accurate documentation. Further information regarding writing requirements can be found on the [School of Social Work's Resources & Policies](#) webpage.

As part of the "Writing Across the Curriculum" emphasis at Salisbury University, all written assignments will be graded on form as well as content. This is also a school policy. This includes all written homework assignments and essay questions on exams.

The University Writing Center (UWC), with trained peer consultants, are available to work with students at any stage of the writing process. Located on the second floor of the Guerrieri Academic Commons, the UWC offers a place where students can meet to talk about their papers and projects. In addition to the important writing instruction that occurs in the classroom and during office hours, students are also encouraged to make use of this important service. For more information and to make appointments, visit the UWC's webpage.

Please remember that writing centers are not designed to work as editing services or "fix-it shops." Writing centers are built around a mission of collaborative learning so the student, as the writer, will play a central role in every consulting session.

Although long-distance consultations will differ in some ways from our on-site consultations, the fundamentals will remain the same.

The UWC also offers online sessions to students enrolled at regional sites and in online programs who do not come to the Salisbury campus on a regular basis. The UWC conducts all online sessions using WOnline, the same software used to make all appointments. This feature in WOnline allows students and peer consultants to see and hear one another (like Zoom). It also allows students and peer consultants to jointly review drafts together using an upload feature.

### **Artificial Intelligence Syllabus Statement**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a larger part of our work and educational experiences. With that in mind, the School of Social Work has developed the following guidelines:

- Faculty are responsible for stating and enforcing their AI policy for their course
- As a student you are responsible for checking the syllabus for your courses and abiding by the AI policy of your instructors
- The policy for one course may be different from another course, please ask your instructor for guidance
- If your instructor allows for the use of AI in their course, here are some resources that may be helpful:
  - [Salisbury University Library Guide](#)
  - [Salisbury University Library Guide: Citing AI & Academic Integrity](#)

### **Campus Email Communication**

Salisbury University email is the University's official form of communication. Failure to check campus email, errors in forwarding email, and returned email (from "full mailbox or unknown user" errors, for example), will not excuse a student from missing announcements or deadlines. Students should read their campus e-mail daily. If personal email accounts are checked more regularly, students can set up SU email to be forwarded to that account.

### **Social Media and Digital Technology**

The School of Social Work has developed the [Social Media and Digital Technology Policy](#) to help guide students' usage of social media in professional ways. This policy incorporates guidance from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, the NASW Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice, and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) EPAS competencies.

### **Prejudicial Treatment or Discrimination**

If a student believes that they are the victim of prejudicial treatment or discrimination as provided in [Salisbury University's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#) policy, the student may file a grievance through the [Office of Institutional Equity](#).

Additionally, Salisbury University's [Code of Community Standards Policy](#) sets out the standards of behavior for all students that promote the safety and welfare of the SU community. This document is "guided by the belief that a community exists on the basis of shared values and principles. We aim to foster a community, at the University

and beyond, where diversity, equity, accessibility, inclusivity, integrity and respect are the established norm.”

Additionally, the School of Social Work adheres to Salisbury University’s Title IX Policy Statement.

### **Mandated Reporters**

Throughout coursework and field placements, and every day as a Social Work Professional, there will be an emphasis on mandated reporting and mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are persons who, in the course of their work, may be privy to information that they are required to report to the appropriate enforcement agency. Social workers in the state of Maryland are mandated reporters and must report any disclosure of suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, even if information was disclosed indirectly through a classmate, colleague, or friend/family member.

This includes adults who disclose that they were sexually assaulted as a child, commonly referred to as an Adults Molested as Children (AMAC). Salisbury University social work faculty and staff are required to report any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, whether the suspected incident was previously reported. Therefore, any disclosure (written or verbal) by students or prospective students of suspected incidents of child abuse and/or neglect will be immediately reported to the appropriate authorities.

### **Student Academic Misconduct Policy**

Integrity is a principle that permeates all the activities of the University and guides the behavior of faculty, students and staff. The spirit of academic integrity denotes adherence to the precept that “one’s work is one’s own.” The process by which integrity is upheld assumes clear communication of University expectations, standards and policies and clear communication of students’ and faculty’s rights and responsibilities. This policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate students.

We urge students to review Salisbury University’s [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#) for additional information.

## **TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

### **Technical Standards for Admission, Academic Matriculation, and Graduation**

Professionalism is a cornerstone of a successful academic program, just as it is a cornerstone of the responsible conduct of research, maintaining integrity and compassion in the delivery of social work services, and building a collegial and conscientious interdisciplinary professional team. Circumstances may arise during a student's course of study that call into question the capacity or commitment of the student to maintain this academic standard. Salisbury University, the College of Health and Human Services, and the School of Social Work have the responsibility and authority to determine a student's fitness to continue in this undergraduate and graduate program of study.

Salisbury University's School of Social Work has established a [Program Policy for Technical Standards](#). The policy and procedures identify student responsibilities and rights in conjunction with standards of fairness, privacy, and due process. They are derived, in part, from the standards of conduct adopted by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the National Association of Social Work (NASW) at both the national and state levels, and Maryland's Board of Social Work Examiners.

In addition to the academic requirements of each program, this Policy and its related procedures shall govern academic and professional behavior of social work students.

### **Professional Performance Policy and Guidelines**

In preparing students for professional practice, the social work faculty takes responsibility for promoting the standards of the social work profession by continuously monitoring student academic and professional performance and addressing concerns with the student.

In addition to academic performance, students are required to demonstrate professional performance skills necessary for work with clients and professional practice. Professional performance is evaluated in both the explicit curriculum (e.g., courses) and implicit curriculum (implicit curriculum includes but is not limited to interactions with peers, field agencies and personnel, community members and University faculty and staff).

### **Policies and Procedures for Review of Professional Performance**

Students who fail to present themselves in a professional manner in the classroom or when interacting with peers, faculty, agency personnel, clients, and others are required to participate in a review of professional performance.

Any of the following circumstances may result in a student review. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list:

- Failure to meet any of the Policy and Procedures Concerning Technical Standards for Admission, Academic Matriculation, and Graduation in the Salisbury University Social Work Program.
- Incurring a charge and/or conviction of a criminal act during the course of study or prior to admission.
- Failing to report a charge and/or conviction of a criminal act during the course of study or prior to admission.
- Demonstrating a consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior, such as issues related to communication or attendance.
- Being reviewed and/or sanctioned by University Student Affairs. For complete University policy and procedures, see Student Accountability & Community Standards.
- Professional performance concerns in field placement and/or dismissal from field placement.
- Failure to demonstrate adequate progression toward the Competencies of Social Work Practice as articulated by CSWE (2022).

### **The Three Types of Review**

Three types of review can occur in the School of Social Work to address a student's professional performance. The type of review is determined by the nature and seriousness of the behavior and does not necessarily require or include progression through each type of review.

Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, the MSW Program Director, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty and/or program directors will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow University procedures related to student performance issues.

#### *Informal Student Consultation Meeting*

The first type of review is an Informal Student Consultation Meeting. An Informal Student Consultation Meeting involves a student and a faculty member (advisor, site coordinator, instructor, field liaison) who initiates a meeting to discuss concerns related to professional performance. The initiating staff or faculty member will:

- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and identify presenting issues and strategies that the student will implement to address the concerns; and
- Prepare a short summary to include the date and content of the meeting, to be sent by email to the student. The MSW Program Director and appropriate administrative support staff person will also be copied on the email.

In many instances, issues identified by the faculty member/staff are resolved following the Informal Student Consultation Meeting and do not necessarily lead to further

meetings, pursuant to this section. Failure to resolve the identified issues may lead to the need for more formal meetings.

### *Formal Student Support Meeting*

The second type of review is a Formal Student Support Meeting. A Formal Student Support Meeting can be initiated when the student fails to address the concerns related to their professional behaviors that were initially discussed in the informal meeting or when the behaviors rise to the level that necessitate the development of a Student Support Plan (SSP). A Technical Standards Violation (Appendix 7) Form may be submitted to the student and the MSW Program Director that outlines the behaviors.

During this formal meeting, the initiating faculty member/staff and student will develop a Student Support Plan (SSP) (Appendix 8) for Academic and Professional Performance that identifies presenting issues and strategies that the student will implement to address the concerns.

There are some occasions when others will be asked to join the meeting; for example, a Site Coordinator/Associate Academic Director (if applicable), Field Liaison, Dual Degree Coordinator (if applicable), and/or MSW Program Director. The MSW Program Director will review the student's file for any documented behavior concerns that are relevant to the problem.

The SSP is to strengthen student professional practice. It will be written by the student with oversight from the initiating faculty/staff member. The SSP will include:

- Professional Behaviors from the Technical Standards that need to be improved upon to build professional competency;
- How the progress will be monitored and evaluated with a follow-up meeting scheduled to review progress;
- The date(s) by which the objectives identified must be accomplished;
- Other information as needed; and
- Signatures of the participating parties.

Additional documents may also be completed as part of the SSP, such as a Professional Performance Review. Not following through with the goals of the SSP could result in a remediation meeting. A summary of the meeting, including the SSP and other documentation, will be emailed to the MSW Program Director and appropriate administrative support staff person. If a problem arises in a field program, the agency-based field supervisor, field liaison, and Director of Field Education may also participate in a review meeting with the student.

### **Formal Student Remediation Meeting**

The third type of review is a Formal Student Remediation Meeting. Generally, a Formal Student Remediation Meeting is called when there are persistent and/or egregious

problems that are identified with a student, and these require formal consultation with the MSW Program Director; or, when a student is dismissed from a field placement due to concerns with a student's performance.

A formal student remediation meeting may also be conducted when concerns have not been resolved in prior informal or formal meetings; when issues relate to a student not meeting the criteria for professional performance; when a student does not follow through on goals identified in the SSP; or, when the student is at risk for suspension or dismissal from the program and it is not related to academic performance. A Technical Standards Violation Form will be required for a Formal Remediation Meeting. In that case, the Technical Standards Violation Form will be submitted to both the student and the MSW Program Director prior to the meeting by the initiating faculty member. The MSW Program Director will review the student's file for any documented behavioral concerns that are relevant to the problem.

### *Parties in Attendance*

A Formal Student Remediation Meeting involves the student, initiating faculty member, and the MSW Program Director. The following individuals may also be asked to participate if applicable: Field Supervisor, Site Coordinators/Associate Academic Director, Dual Degree Coordinator, Field Liaison, and Field Director.

The student may have a support person attend the meeting. A support person could include- but is not limited to- a friend, family member, and/or student peer; however, the student must notify the MSW Program Director of the attending support person at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. The student must give the name of the support person and the student's relationship to that person. The role of the support person is to assist the student with understanding the remediation process and to provide the student with emotional support before, during and after the meeting. At no time is the support person permitted to address others in the Formal Student Remediation Meeting. If this occurs, the MSW Program Director has the sole discretion to require the support person to leave the meeting.

### *Notification of Meeting*

The student will be notified via Salisbury University email of the presenting concerns. In addition, the Technical Standards Violation Form(s) submitted related to this situation; the form(s) will also be sent to the student. The date of the Formal Remediation Meeting will be set in no less than three (3) university business days and no more than ten (10) university business days from the date of the initial report to allow the student to prepare for and attend the meeting. In some cases, a student may be instructed not to attend their field placement or classes until a meeting can be held.

### *The Formal Student Remediation Meeting*

The MSW Program Director will convene the Formal Student Remediation Meeting, during which they will gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist), review the SSP, if one is in place, and identify alternatives for

remediation. Following introductions, the MSW Program Director will explain the nature of the meeting and possible outcomes. The process begins with defining the problem and any previous attempts at remedying the problem, including the SSP, if one is in place. All parties, including the student, are involved in gathering the information necessary to arrive at a reasonable conclusion. Once a comprehensive understanding has been reached, the student and any non-Social Work School faculty are excused from the meeting. The School of Social Work representatives will then confer and arrive at a recommended plan of action.

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs may be consulted by the MSW Program Director as a part of the information gathering process.

### *Outcome of the Formal Student Remediation Meeting*

Following the Formal Student Remediation Meeting, the MSW Program Director will inform the student of the decision(s) via university email within five (5) University business days following the Formal Remediation Meeting as documented on the Decision Form (Appendix 9). The recommendations could include one or more of the following actions:

- Continue the student in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
- Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be set for the student to remain in the program. Action may include establishing goals, planning a timeline, and appropriate monitoring; providing mentoring and support; placing the student on probation and monitoring the student during the probationary period; suspending the student for a stated period of time with criteria to return to active status to be defined; referring the student to counseling and/or advising services; allowing the student to follow a reduced course load or delaying entry to the field practicum; or other conditions appropriate to the situation. A SSP will be created with the student and relevant faculty member(s) following the Formal Student Remediation Meeting if one is not currently in place, or the SSP will be updated based on information garnered during the Formal Student Remediation meeting.
- Recommendation to dismiss the student from the program. In some situations, the information and discussion gleaned from the Formal Student Remediation Meeting will result in the MSW Program Director making a recommendation to dismiss the student from the Master of Social Work Program. The student will be provided with the documentation regarding the specific reasons for this recommendation. The MSW Program Director's recommendation to dismiss the student will be sent to the School of Social Work Dispositions Panel ("The Panel"). The student can submit a 1-2-page double spaced written response to The Panel that addresses concerns noted in the Formal Remediation Meeting Documentation at least two business days prior to the panel meeting. The Panel will review all information and

documentation related to the student's situation and make a formal decision regarding dismissal.

### **Dismissal from the Master of Social Work Program—The School of Social Work Dispositions Panel**

If dismissal from the Master of Social Work Program is recommended following the Formal Student Remediation Meeting, the School of Social Work Dispositions Panel ("The Panel") will be formed and will be responsible for reviewing all supporting information and documentation regarding a student's situation and making a formal decision regarding dismissal or retention in the Program.

The Panel will be comprised of two (2) faculty from the School of Social Work and one non-social work faculty member. All Panel members will be appointed by the School of Social Work Director within five (5) University business days and can have no prior involvement or knowledge of the issues necessitating the original Formal Student Remediation Meeting. The Panel Chairperson will be one of the social work faculty Panel Members and is responsible for gathering the related information and disbursing that to all Panel members. There must be adequate documentation of the initiating concerns related to the student's professional performance provided via the Formal Student Remediation Decision Form and the Technical Standards Violation form, if completed. If applicable, any documentation that verifies the concerns have been previously discussed with the student and attempts to resolve the concerns have been made should be included.

Once all information is obtained, the Panel Chairperson will contact the student via university email to schedule a Panel meeting. The Panel meeting with the student should occur in no less than five (5) business days from the Panel Chairperson's receipt of the recommendation for dismissal following the Formal Student Remediation Meeting.

#### *During the Panel Meeting*

During the Panel Meeting, the Remediation Meeting Decision Form and the related Technical Standards violation will be reviewed by the Panel Chairperson. The student will then be given a maximum of ten (10) minutes to respond to the Remediation Meeting Decision Form and the recommendation for dismissal from the Master of Social Work Program.

#### *Notification of the Panel Decision*

The Panel Chairperson will communicate the decision to the student, the MSW Program Director, and the School of Social Work Director. Students will be notified of the resulting decision from the Panel in writing via university email generally within five (5) university calendar days of the panel meeting.

## Processes for Appeal of Decisions

A student has the right to appeal the establishment of formal conditions for continuation in the Program and/or dismissal from the Program. These are two different processes as noted below.

### *Appeal Process from Formal Conditions*

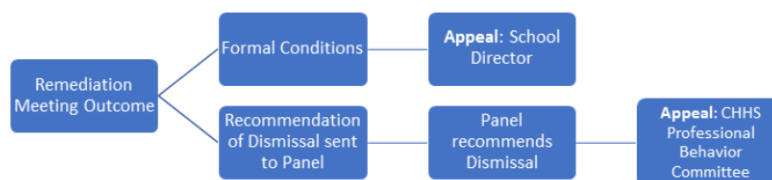
If a student would like to submit an appeal following a recommendation of formal conditions:

- An appeal letter must be submitted within five (5) university business days from the date of the decision letter; and
- The appeal letter should address at least one of the following conditions that applies as the grounds for the appeal:
- New and significant information became available that could not have been discovered and/or provided before or during the original hearing; and/or
- The student requests an evaluation of assigned condition(s) because of extraordinary circumstances.

### *Appeal Process After Dismissal from the Program*

If a student would like to appeal a decision of program dismissal rendered by the Panel, the student will follow the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) Policy and Procedure for Professional Behavior Violations, which includes:

- Submit a CHHS Professional Behavior Violation Appeal Request within five (5) university business days from the date of the dismissal decision letter from the Panel.
- The appeal request must address at least one of the following conditions that applies as the grounds for the appeal:
  - Procedural errors related to the Program's established policies; and/or
  - New and significant information became available that could not have been discovered during the review at the School of Social Work level.



## **MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Field Education is an integral component of the social work curriculum, engaging the student in supervised social work practice and providing opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting. The primary goals of the agency-based field practicum are to:

- Provide knowledge, values, and skills for intervention with individuals, families, groups, and communities.
- Help the student develop a professional identity consistent with social work values.
- Facilitate the development of skills in the evaluation of one's social work practice.
- Provide an experience with various client populations including diverse racial and ethnic groups, and at-risk populations.
- Evolve a practice style consistent with the student's personal strengths and capacities.
- Develop the ability to work within a human service agency or organization.
- Demonstrate core competencies of social work practice.

Salisbury University's MSW Field Education experience is reflective of the school's mission statement and the program's goals and objectives. The curriculum is designed with the expectation that students will develop professional and ethical judgments and actions based on an integration of knowledge, theory, and practice.

### **The Field Education Experience: Generalist Practice**

During the generalist practice curriculum, students enroll in SOWK 640: Field Education I and SOWK 645: Field Instruction II, which consist of the field experience and field seminars. In the field seminars, students are challenged to explore their personal values and beliefs and to use critical thinking to prepare for actual practice. Customarily, students in the field education practicum are enrolled simultaneously in a social work practice course.

Generalist practice field students stay in the same placement through both semesters/terms. During these two semesters/terms students are expected to move from beginning ability to identify, understand, and evaluate policies and processes to increasingly sophisticated evaluation, application, and intervention. The student is expected to apply knowledge and theory acquired in the classroom setting related to planned change, including relationship building, problem identification, assessment, goal setting, contracting, intervention, evaluation, and termination.

Students are expected to apply the ecosystems framework and strengths paradigm in a manner which will cultivate culturally competent practice integrated with social work values.

By the end of the generalist practice curriculum the student will have developed a generalist framework which includes the skills necessary in interviewing and

assessment, and in interventions at the individual, family, and group level. In addition, students will be able to address issues at the level of organizations and communities related to the promotion of justice and the reduction of patterns of injustice.

### *Generalist Field Courses Overview*

The purpose of the generalist practice practicum is for the student to apply foundation knowledge, skills, values, and ethics to practice and in a way aligned with the social work mission and informed by critical thinking. The focus is on micro-level learning, with introductions to mezzo and macro-level learning. Within the generalist practice experience students will become aware of self in the process of intervention, use oral and written professional communications that are consistent with the language of the practicum setting and profession and develop the use of professional supervision to enhance learning. The student will participate in a supervised field education experience in the application of knowledge, values and ethics, and practice skills to enhance the well-being of people and work toward the amelioration of environmental conditions that affect people adversely. Furthermore, the student will have the opportunity to use critical assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

The learning experiences and content are operationalized in the student's learning contract. Most students participate in agency-based Field Education instruction for 16 hours a week (216 hours in the first semester/term and 224 hours in the second semester/term) under the supervision of an agency designated Field Supervisor. To enrich the Field Education experience, students will participate in a field seminar in a face to face or online format. Related written assignments will be included.

The instructor of the seminar serves as the liaison from the social work program to the student's agency Field Supervisor. The Field Liaison will meet with the field supervisor and student at least once per semester. Faculty is always available when there are issues of concern between individual students and their agency Field Supervisors. The liaison needs to be involved promptly if these concerns might indicate that a student is not fulfilling expected responsibilities or is not progressing adequately.

### **The Field Education Experience: Specialized Practice**

During the specialized practice curriculum, students enroll in either SOWK 668: Clinical Practice Field Placement I and SOWK 669: Clinical Practice Field Placement II (students who have chosen the Clinical Social Work & Advocacy Specialization OR SOWK 678: Community Practice Field Placement I and SOWK 679: Community Practice Field Placement II (students who have chosen the Social Change & Leadership Specialization), which consists of the field experience and field seminars. During specialized practice, most students intern three days per week (24 hours/week – 328 hours in the first semester/term and 344 hours in the second semester/term for a total of 672 hours) in a Field Education setting which offers the opportunity to develop advanced level practice in either delivery of clinical services or community and policy social services, depending on the student's chosen specialization. Every effort is made to match a student's field placement with their interests based on the selected

specialization. Students' work with varied client systems will enable them to build significantly upon the knowledge and skills developed in the generalist practice year practicum. Students will demonstrate skills at an advanced level in relationship building, problem identification, assessment, goal setting and treatment planning, intervention, termination, and evaluation with various client systems, again depending on the selected specialization.

As students move through the program, they are expected to function responsibly and with increasing autonomy in all areas of practice. The supervisory process continues to promote exploration, clarify options, and support reflection. Students are expected to assume increasing responsibility for their own learning and to demonstrate a commitment to continued professional development as they enter the social work profession.

### *Specialized Field Courses Overview*

Clinical Practice Field Placement I and II are the specialized practice learning experiences for students in the Clinical Social Work and Advocacy Specialization. Students are required to participate in agency-based field practicum, typically for 24 hours a week under the supervision of an agency-designated Field Supervisor. During the specialized practice placement, students may elect to work 16 hours/week and extend their field placement into the next term.

Students will participate in discussions, written assignments and activities concurrently to integrate and apply skills, theory, and interventions to practice experiences. Successful completion of the two-course sequence requires a student to fulfill a minimum of 672 hours of field instruction within the same social welfare agency accumulated across the fall and spring semesters. The learning experiences and content are operationalized in the student's learning contract.

The field liaison will meet with the field supervisor and student at least once a semester/term. Faculty is always available when there are issues of concern between individual students and their agency supervisors. The liaison needs to be involved promptly if these concerns might indicate that a student is not fulfilling expected responsibilities or is not progressing adequately.

Community Practice Field Placement I and II are the specialized practice learning experiences for students in the Social Change and Leadership Specialization. Students are required to participate in agency-based field practicum, typically for 24 hours a week under the supervision of an agency-designated Field Supervisor. During the specialized practice placement, students may elect to work 16 hours/week and extend their field placement into the next term. Students will participate in discussions, written assignments and activities concurrently to integrate and apply skills, theory, and interventions to practice experiences. Successful completion of the two-course sequence requires a student to fulfill a minimum of 672 hours of field instruction within the same social welfare agency accumulated across the fall and spring semesters. The learning experiences and content are operationalized in the student's learning contract.

The field liaison will meet with the field supervisor and student at least once a semester/term. Faculty is always available when there are issues of concern between individual students and their agency supervisors. The liaison needs to be involved promptly if these concerns might indicate that a student is not fulfilling expected responsibilities or is not progressing adequately.

### **Grading**

All Field Education courses are graded courses. The grade is based on the following factors:

- The student's timely and satisfactory completion of all related assignments, including seminar participation and required field placement hours.
- The Field Supervisor's evaluation of the student's performance.

Based upon the above, the Field Liaison assigns the final grade. If, because of poor performance, either the school or the agency asks a student to leave their field placement before the semester is over, the Field Liaison may recommend another placement or may assign the student a FAIL grade for the semester, depending on the circumstances. Dismissal from a field placement will generally result in a Formal Student/School Remediation Meeting.

### **Selection of Field Education Agencies and Supervisors**

Students will be offered placement opportunities at a variety of community human service agencies. Students are required to accept any field placement within a fifty-mile radius of their residence. Students are expected to have reliable transportation.

The Field Education Staff will carry the responsibility for determining an agency's suitability as a Field Education site. The following criteria will be used in the selection of agencies:

- It must have social work as a function or service of the agency.
- It must be consistent with the program's mission, goals, and objectives; the appropriateness for specific learning experiences; their ability to provide educationally directed Field Education; and its clear articulation of student learning in tasks assigned.
- The ethics and values of social work must be demonstrated through the policies, program design, and delivery of services of the agency.
- Qualified agency supervision must be available to provide effective weekly supervision.
- There must be a willingness to have the student become an active member of the agency team with meaningful contact with agency staff (i.e., in-service training, workshops, and team meetings).
- There are opportunities for students to have contact with other community providers, to provide a comprehensive overview of services within the area.

- There will be a range of assignments available for the students, which are sufficient to meet the student's needs and course objectives.
- The student's assignments will reflect an opportunity for involvement in varying modalities of service, as well as exposure to a diversity of people and problems.
- Students will be exposed to individual, family, group, and community client systems (based on selected specialization for advanced students).
- There will be support of the student's interest in collecting and analyzing data, evaluating agency service delivery, and evaluating the student's own practice.

A formal assessment will be made based upon the criteria. It is the responsibility of the Field Education Staff to inform the potential placement agency of the educational objectives of Field Education and to provide a general overview of the social work curriculum.

The Field Supervisor's qualifications must include a Master of Social Work, two years of experience beyond the master's degree, and preferably be licensed at least at the graduate level. In a few unique situations, contracts may be made with other social workers outside of the field agency to provide supervision. The School of Social Work has on-staff External MSW Field Supervisors who can also provide weekly supervision to a limited number of students who have been placed in qualified agencies that do not employ MSWs. In these cases, someone at the agency must be designated as the task supervisor and willing to complete requirements of the field supervisor, with the exception of meeting with the student for weekly supervision.

The Field Supervisor must function within an agency willing to provide adjustments of the staff member's work assignment to permit adequate time to develop and implement the student's internship.

Candidates interested in becoming Field Supervisors should contact the Director of Graduate Field Education directly. The Field Supervisor must have a willingness and flexibility to provide regular supervision for the purpose of instruction, review and discussion of the student's feelings and needs. In addition, there must be the ability and willingness to participate in a minimum of one required conference with the student and Field Liaison each semester/term. The Field Supervisor will participate in School of Social Work hosted training/orientation specific to Field Education, conducted in person and via synchronous technology depending on the location of the supervisor, such as:

- Field Education competencies
- Ethics and values
- Helping the student best incorporate academic information with actual practice
- Emphasizing research and policy issues within their individual agency settings.

Approved Field Supervisors are provided with the Field Education Course Syllabi and all relevant field forms via Sonia Online, the field tracking software. Once appropriate

supervision has been identified and the agency has been approved as a Field Education site, the agency supervisor completes the My Details section in Sonia to provide their education, work history and licensing information as well as the Agency Details section to provide a summary of the field placement description for students placed within that agency. New field agencies may be sent the agency application for completion in Sonia Online and to initiate the affiliation agreement process.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the School of Social Work to maintain a social work program, which includes a Field Education component that meets the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education.

The Director of Graduate Field Education is responsible to the Director of School of Social Work for the administration of the Field Education program, including to identify and contract with community agencies to provide student placements, to assign students to those placements and to participate in ongoing evaluation of the field education program. The Director of Graduate Field Education is responsible to:

- Ensure adequate number of quality field education placements for the MSW program for all program sites.
- Identify and implement social work competencies for the field content area in collaboration with the executive administrative team.
- Disseminate information regarding field competencies to relevant field agencies.
- Coordinate and implement the placement process for the MSW program for all program sites.
- Revise and update all forms of information in matters pertaining to field education for the MSW program for all program sites.
- Develop and implement orientation and training for field supervisors, field liaisons, and students in the MSW program for all program sites.
- Effective communication between field agencies, supervisors, field liaisons and students in the MSW program for all program sites.
- Mentor field office staff, field supervisors, and field liaisons.
- Process and resolve field problems in the MSW program for all program sites when difficulties arise in field placements that cannot be resolved by the field liaisons, field supervisors and students as specified in the field manual.
- Monitor delivery of the MSW field seminar curriculum to ensure consistency with curriculum design.

Regional and online field placement coordinators are responsible to:

- Make arrangements for field placements for social work students at distance locations.
- Recruit potential field sites.
- Supervise MSW students placed at agencies without an MSW on staff.

- Manage correspondence with all stakeholders.
- Maintain field placement database in SONIA. The field liaison is responsible to:
- Act as the communication link between the agency Field Supervisor and the University's MSW Program, once a student is assigned to an agency, regarding pertinent issues related to the student and the Field Education curriculum.
- Help Field Supervisors plan learning experiences for students which will best help them meet the course objectives.
- Attend Field Liaison orientation.
- Meet with the Field Supervisor at least once a semester/term in person
- Be available as a resource for the student.
- Have individual conferences with students who are having difficulties in Field Education and/or need clarification of Field Education related matters.
- Intervene when difficulties arise in field placements which cannot be resolved by the student and the Field Supervisor.
- Assign final grade to the student after careful review of the student field evaluation by the agency.
- Conduct field seminars for students in field education.

The field supervisor is responsible to:

- Attend orientation for Field Supervisors.
- Participate in annual programs provided by the field faculty.
- Provide the student with a suitable workspace and orientation to the agency, program, and services.
- Develop and assign tasks and experiences which meet the Field Education course objectives, maximizing the student's exposure to policies, experiences, and cases where issues such as diversity, populations at-risk, values, ethics, policy, human behavior, and research are relevant.
- Structure assignments to help the student learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice (including practice with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities).
- Create with the student a learning contract that reflects individualized learning activities to reflect the practice behaviors.
- Provide on-going evaluation of the student's progress in meeting his/her learning contract practice behaviors and core competencies.
- Provide a minimum of one hour per week of supervision to the student to provide feedback, evaluate skills, and act as a role model.
- Help the student integrate the Field Education experience with academic learning.
- Notify the Field Liaison when there are problems or questions regarding the student's performance.
- Coordinate the involvement of other agency staff with the student's learning experience.

- Sign the student's time sheets, process recordings, learning contract, etc.
- Evaluate the student's performance in a Field Education setting at appropriate intervals.

Students will be expected to take an active role in planning and implementing their learning experiences while in a Field Education setting. In accepting placement at an agency, students will agree to actively participate in their learning and to complete all assigned tasks in a professional manner. Participation in Field Education carries with it certain responsibilities and commitments to the agency, the Field Supervisor, the clients/consumers, and the Field Liaison.

The student is responsible to:

- Follow the program's procedures for selecting and securing an agency placement.
- Conform to the regular hours of the agency completing required hours per week documented by a weekly time sheet.
- Become familiar with and abide by agency policies and procedures, establishing good working relationships with co-workers and clients/consumers.
- Take the initiative in seeking advice and consultation, demonstrating the ability and willingness to accept supervision.
- Complete work assigned by the Field Supervisor and to be accountable for completing documents within the specified deadlines.
- Demonstrate interviewing and assessment skills in a manner consistent with the practice model and core competencies.
- Demonstrate acceptance and use of social work values, especially as applied to cultural, racial and gender factors.
- Integrate theory and practice by applying principles of social work learned in the classroom to the field and striving to improve skills through periodic self-evaluation.
- Develop, in consultation with the Field Supervisor and Field Liaison, the learning contract.
- Participate in all required three-way conferences with the Field Supervisor and Field Liaison.
- Discuss with the Field Supervisor and/or Field Liaison areas of disagreement, dissatisfaction, or confusion in respect to any part of Field Education.
- Complete all course requirements within the specified deadlines.
- Understand the core competencies of Social Work practice.
- Follow all University and School of Social Work policies and procedures.
- Obtain malpractice insurance if in the UMGC/Europe program.

### **Learning Contract**

Although every social work student will take Field Education courses, the process is developed so that each student will have flexibility in structuring the experience (under

the direction of their Field Supervisor and Field Liaison) to maximize their specific learning experience. While the broad overall objectives for the Field Education Content Area provide a common framework, each student will develop strategies for meeting and evaluating those goals based on his or her personal goals and the opportunities provided by each specific placement agency. Students will develop a learning contract which establishes individualized learning activities for the student that is feasible in the agency and attainable within the generalist practice/specialized practice placement. This is a tool to identify what the student will learn and the specific activities that will be a part of the practicum experience.

While the student will assume the ultimate responsibility for the completion of the learning contract, its preparation will be a collaborative effort of the student, Field Supervisor, and Field Liaison. The learning contract acts as a guide to help the student and Field Supervisor define what the student will learn, and the specific experiences that will be part of the placement. Both the Field Supervisor and the student will refer to this document throughout the internship to determine whether the field placement is meeting the expectations necessary to accommodate the core competencies and practice behaviors. The learning contract will be evaluated as part of the final evaluation of the student.

### **Outcome Assessment/Program Evaluation**

Performance evaluation is an ongoing process that starts with the student's first day of field placement and culminates in a final written evaluation at the end of each semester/term. On-going evaluation of the student's progress and assessment will be a built-in aspect of the Field Supervisor's weekly supervision. Students are required to submit logs for Field Liaison review which allows for assessment of the individual student's skills, competence, judgment, and values. Because the student is free to write in a confidential manner, the Field Liaison will be able to spot areas of concern related to social work practice or in interaction with field placement agency personnel.

At least once during the first semester/term the Field Liaison will meet with both the Field Supervisor and the student to discuss possible problems, identify strengths and weaknesses, and to ensure that the student's educational objectives are being met. The latter will be done through informal conversation and by monitoring progress as outlined in the learning contract. During the second semester/term, the field visit may be conducted as a check-in via email. The field liaison should inquire if the field supervisor and student wish to have a meeting and a meeting should be held whenever any concerns have been raised previously, the student has changed placements, or other situations which may warrant a second semester/term meeting.

In the middle of the first semester/term and again at the end of each semester/term, the agency Field Supervisor is asked to complete required formal written evaluations. Students will read their completed evaluations and have an oral evaluative conference with the Field Supervisor before the evaluation is sent to the University.

Feedback received from the student and Field Liaison over the two semester/term field placement will help guide the and Field Liaison's feedback decision regarding the continuance of the agency as a field placement for the Social Work program.

### **Confidentiality and Duty to Report**

Social workers (and all professionals) are legally bound by the state law in which they are practicing to report any situations of suspected child maltreatment to the Child Protective Services Department of the local Department of Social Services for further investigation. Licensed social workers who fail to report known maltreatment face fines and penalties (such as having one's license revoked and risking malpractice claims).

There are no set legal guidelines for reporting other illegal activity (such as drug use or fraud), but students should be aware that witnessing such activity could put them at risk for being considered in collusion or acting as an accessory to a crime. Student should educate themselves about their agency's written or unwritten policies on these matters and discuss such situations immediately with their supervisor (or another person of authority if the supervisor is not immediately available) when such situations occur. Students can view the Field: Statement of Confidentiality policy in Appendix 6.

### **Miscellaneous Policies**

This section includes policies on employment-based field education, academic standing, exemptions from fieldwork, holidays, attendance-related policies, extended placements, problems within the agency, requests to change field placements, sexual harassment at field, and others.

#### *Field Hours*

To ensure that students gain meaningful and consistent learning experience during their internship, all internships must be completed in a minimum block duration of 4 hours. This requirement helps ensure students maximize their learning, contribute meaningfully to their placement agency, and gain a comprehensive understanding of their assigned tasks and responsibilities. Interning in blocks of at least 4 hours allows students to engage fully with the work, develop a consistent routine, and have sufficient time to understand and contribute to their assigned tasks. Shorter shifts may limit the depth of the learning experience. Students should develop a weekly schedule with their field supervisor. The schedule should be mutually agreed upon to ensure both academic requirements and the needs of the agency are met.

Students must not record overlapping or duplicate time entries on their timesheets. Each hour worked must be accounted for only once, even if multiple tasks or duties are performed during that time.

Students are expected to enter a timesheet in Sonia at the end of each completed day of field hours. Field supervisors should approve the hours weekly.

## *Employment-Based Field Education*

An Employment-Based Field Education option has been developed for those students who would like to have their field placement at the agency where they are employed. The curriculum and objectives of the students completing employment-based field education are identical to those students completing field education in agencies in which they are not employed. This pattern of Field Education, however, provides the student with the opportunity to continue employment while completing an educationally appropriate field practicum. A student who wants to pursue this option must submit a proposal form along with their application for a field placement, both in Sonia Online.

When completing the Employment Based Field Proposal Form, the student must consider how the proposed field experience will provide learning opportunities that connect to the nine Council on Social Work Education competencies as well as the level of student (BASW/Generalist or Specialist- Clinical Social Work and Advocacy or Social Change and Leadership). Proposals will be considered for students wishing to use their current employment position (new or existing employment) if the aforementioned criteria are met. While these types of placements are allowable, students are strongly encouraged to seek out new learning opportunities within their employment agency for educational and professional growth. Students must also speak to their current employment duties, proposed field experience, field placement and supervision schedule, proposed field supervisor and a description of the experience if the student is requesting to complete a second employment-based placement at the same agency on the proposal form. Signatures from the student and agency representatives will attest their understanding of this policy as well as the risks associated with employment-based placements and the required paperwork including agency application and affiliation agreement. All proposals will be reviewed by the student's field coordinator for approval. In some cases, it may be necessary to meet with the student and agency representatives to further clarify roles and expectations of the student, employment supervisor and proposed field supervisor (or task supervisor, if applicable).

Supervision- Field Supervisor requirements remain the same for all students, regardless of completing an employment-based placement. BASW students must be supervised by an individual with a minimum of a bachelor's degree, social work preferred. MSW students must be supervised by an individual with a Master of Social Work degree and at least two years of post-degree experience. If an MSW is not available or employed within the agency, the student may be assigned an external MSW supervisor from the school. A task supervisor must be identified from the agency and agreeable to fulfilling the role. As a reminder, space is limited for external supervision and provided first come, first served. While it is preferred that the employment supervisor be different from the proposed field supervisor, we recognize that there are cases in which this is not possible. In these situations, the employment supervisor will be permitted to be the field supervisor, provided there is a distinct and different time allotted for the weekly required one hour of field supervision. Additionally, the employment supervisor must agree that during internship hours, the employee should be treated as a student and can complete the academic requirements

of the field placement. Such requirements may involve completing activities that might not be part of the job description. Doing these activities may necessitate things like lighter caseloads, varied assignments for educational purposes and additional hours above the normal work week to achieve the internship requirements. The same is true for students who have a different field supervisor than their employment supervisor.

Situations may arise when a student becomes unemployed by the agency in which they are completing their employment-based field placement. Should this occur, the Field Education Office will consider the circumstances leading to the unemployment and follow existing policies to determine the feasibility of continuing in field education at that time. If the student is terminated from the employment and subsequently the field placement or vice versa, the formal remediation process will be conducted. If the student elects to leave the agency, they must follow the change in field placement policy and seek approval for this change from their field coordinator. A final scenario is if the student is terminated to no fault of their own (layoff, grant funding ending, job eliminated, etc.). In either situation, if it is determined that the student will be replaced at a new agency, the Field Education Office will make every effort to facilitate the replacement during the same academic year, however this is not guaranteed and factors such as timing of the replacement and field placement availability may affect this process.

### *International Field Placements*

BASW and MSW Generalist students have the option to complete an international field placement. Social Work placements can be secured in Spain; San Jose, Costa Rica; Dublin, Ireland and London, England. In Spanish speaking countries, students may be required to take a Spanish language course prior to studying abroad. Students who are interested in this placement option should note this on their field application and discuss it during their meeting with their field coordinator. Following that meeting, the student will complete and submit the SU study abroad application form. Once approved, the student works with Global Experiences/AIFS to complete the placement process and secure their international field placement.

The course requirements before and during the semester abroad include the following:

MSW Generalist students commit to a 3-year program, going abroad in the fall semester of their second year. The semester they are abroad is 9 credits and includes the following courses:

SOWK 640 Field Instruction I (3 credits)

SOWK 645 Field Instruction II (3 credits)

SOWK 616 Research I (3 credits)

Each of these courses are 3 credits each and are 7 weeks in duration, fully online. Only students in the traditional MSW program are eligible for the global internship as they

complete a total of two field placements in the program. Advanced standing students complete one field placement and therefore are not eligible.

For more information, please review the [School of Social Work Study Abroad Internship Website](#).

### *Academic Standing*

Students must be in good academic standing to enter field. This requires the student to have successfully satisfied provisional and academic requirements as well as not be on university academic probation or school probation. If a student is placed on academic probation while in their field practicum, the student will not continue their field placement.

### *Exemptions from Fieldwork*

There are no exemptions from Field Education based on prior experience. The Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education specifically state that academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practice. If a transfer student took field courses at another institution, field courses do not transfer at any time.

### *Holidays*

Students are not required to attend field placements during school or agency holidays. However, students do have a responsibility to the management of their agency responsibilities (especially to clients) during these periods. Students are responsible for informing their fieldwork supervisor of their schedules and to plan accordingly.

### *Scheduling, Absences, Emergencies, and Illness*

Students are expected to perform fieldwork responsibilities with the same degree of accountability as in a paid position which includes the observation of all personnel practices established by the agency. Students are expected to be present at the agency as scheduled.

Changes to schedules should be negotiated ahead of time. In the case of emergencies or illness, agency Field Supervisors should be notified directly as early as possible. Because successful fieldwork relies on students becoming an integral part of the agency and assuming meaningful responsibilities, students must realize that their absences can have effects on quality of service to the agency's clients.

Repeated absences will affect the student's field performance and evaluations. Students are expected to work the required hours per week in the agency. Any time off for sick days, emergencies, weather related events, etc. must be made up by the student.

## *Jury Duty*

The School of Social Work at Salisbury University requires all students to complete field hours during a given semester. Field hours must be completed before a student can be assessed a final field grade. In the case of a student being called for jury duty, field hours will not be waived. Any hours missed must be made up by the student to meet degree requirements. Field hours missed must be discussed and agreed upon by the student, field supervisor, and field liaison. Students are encouraged to request an excuse or postponement from jury duty, when possible. By request, the Field Office can provide a letter to the court confirming a student's full time or part time enrollment in the BASW or MSW program and information regarding their field education requirement impacting their ability to perform jury duty at that time. Students should request the letter, at minimum, one month prior to jury duty, to allow processing time.

## *Extended Placement (Specialized Students Only)*

Specialized practice placement students have the option to complete their field placement in an extended format, 16 hours per week, instead of 24 hours per week which will carry over into the following summer. Students begin their field placement during the first week of the fall semester and are expected to complete the required fall hours (328) before the start of the spring semester. Students should plan on continuing their hours through the winter break with no interruption following the conclusion of the fall semester. These students are not restricted to the 48 hours limitation during winter break but should complete a winter hours approval form in Sonia (refer to winter hours policy for form access). At the end of each semester, the student's field liaison will complete a plan for incomplete field hours in Sonia outlining the course requirements completed and those remaining including a date of completion. The student is expected to review and electronically sign the plan. Failure to complete the requirements by the date stated in the plan may result in receiving a non-passing grade for the course. Students will be able to communicate with the Director of Graduate Field Education during the time their field liaison is not on contract regarding field concerns and finalizing their grade.

Completing an extended placement may change the student's graduation date from May to August. Students can complete a form with the Registrar's office to request permission to participate in the May commencement ceremony.

## *Problems within the Agency*

It is often possible to resolve problems or issues, especially if attending to them in a timely manner. Should a student have serious concerns regarding an agency policy, the workload, work responsibilities, or any other significant problem, the student should take the following steps:

- Discuss the problem(s) with the Field Supervisor and attempt to find solutions.
- If this is not successful, then ask the Field Liaison to assist in problem resolution.

- If the problem cannot be resolved, the student will submit the Change of Field Placement Request Form as noted in the Requests to Change Field Placements Policy to be reviewed by the student's field coordinator.

### *Requests to Change Field Placements*

Once a student's field placement is confirmed in Sonia prior to the first semester/term of field and the student signs the Placement Confirmation Contract, this serves as a contractual agreement between the student, agency and School of Social Work requiring the student to remain in the same placement for the entire two course sequential sequence. It is important to not only learn certain tasks within an agency, but to also perform these tasks until they can be mastered. In general, students spend much of the first semester/term learning about the functioning of an agency and practice the social work skills during the second semester/term.

Therefore, changes in field placements during the year can pose problems for the student and the agency. In some instances, students may also request to change placements prior to the start of the first semester/term.

In either case, formal processes must be followed to determine if a change in field placement will be approved. The student must complete the Change of Field Placement Request Form located in Sonia, which outlines the reasons for which the change is being requested. If the placement has not yet begun, the student must provide valid reasons to why they are requesting to breach the contract with the confirmed field placement. For those students who have begun their field placement and are requesting a change, they must provide a description of the concerns, including process taken to address the concerns (this may include meeting with the field supervisor and/or field liaison to resolve the concerns) and submitting any applicable documentation to the field coordinator.

The Change of Field Placement Request Form and any supporting documentation will be reviewed by the members of the Field Education Office, absent the student's field coordinator to determine if the request will be approved or denied. The Field Education Office decision will be communicated to the student and the field coordinator within five business days and if approved, the field coordinator will sign the form. Ultimately, all field placements must be approved and vetted by the field coordinator. If the request to change placements is approved by the Field Education Office, the student will be required to complete the total number of hours for their respective program level in the new placement.

If an agency cannot fulfill its obligation to the University, the field coordinator may offer the student another placement without the need to repeat time already spent in the previous placement. Students should be advised that the replacement could delay graduation and that they may need to add hours to meet orientation/training needs or other hours requirements at a new field placement.

## *Policy Regarding Sexual Harassment in Field Placement*

Sexual harassment may be physical and/or psychological in nature. An incident may properly be considered sexual harassment whether it occurs on or off the field placement site, during working or non-working hours. Sexual harassment can include:

- An offer for an “outstanding” evaluation for sexual favors;
- Constant efforts to change a professional relationship into a personal, social one;
- Persistent and offensive sexually oriented jokes and comments;
- Comments demeaning to a particular gender; and,
- Unwanted physical contact such as patting, pinching, or touching.

If a student believes that he/she has been subject to sexual harassment by anyone in their field placement agency, they should take direct action by making it clear to the offender that the behavior is unacceptable to them and by reporting the incident to their Field Liaison or Director of Graduate Field Education as soon as possible.

Document the incident by making a written record of the date, time and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses. Any student believing that they have been subjected to sexual harassment should refer to the policy found in the MSW Program Student Handbook and Field Manual and to the Office of Institutional Equity’s webpage.

## *Element of Safety and Risk*

When students have a concern for their safety or the safety of others in relation to particular clients or circumstances, they should discuss these concerns with their Field Supervisor to determine the best course of action. If concern for safety persists, students should discuss the situation with the Field Liaison or Director of Undergraduate Field Education. Students should not take extraordinary or unnecessary risks while performing their duties at their field placement site.

Students with a field placement in an agency working with incarcerated or emotionally disturbed clients should be aware that there is an element of risk related to violent behavior and other problems.

## *Requirements for Certain Field Placements*

Some field agencies require students to show documentation of PPD, COVID-19 vaccination, current immunizations, a current physical exam, Hepatitis B vaccine (or documentation of the decline of the vaccine) and CPR certification to the Field Office before beginning a field placement.

Some agencies have additional requirements that must be met before a student may commence their field experience since they may provide services for diverse groups

and thus may have special requirements for staff and interns. Requirements required in the past include driving records and criminal background checks.

Students seeking placements at such facilities will need to complete all requirements before the beginning of the field placement.

### *Insurance*

All stateside students in Field Education are provided Professional Liability coverage under a Student Professional Liability Policy through the Allied Health Students of the State of Maryland. Under this policy, students are covered up to \$1,000,000 per incident and an annual aggregate of \$3,000,000. For additional coverage, students can also provide their own policy for a reduced rate through NASW.

Students in the SU-UMGC program are required to purchase and show proof of malpractice liability insurance prior to entering field practicum. The SU-UMGC Social Work Academic Manager will provide instructions to students on how to secure liability insurance for placements on military installations. If students choose to do internships in the local community, they will be responsible for researching, purchasing, and providing the documentation of coverage to the SU-UMGC Social Work Field Manager PRIOR to the beginning of the internship. The Director of Graduate Field Education must be notified of any student choosing to complete a field internship in the local community. The Director of Graduate Field Education must work with the University Legal Counsel to obtain permission for local community field placements in Europe.

### *Winter Semester Hours*

During the winter semester MSW Generalist students may work up to 32 hours and MSW Specialist students may work up to 48 hours in their field placement if the following conditions are met prior to the end of the fall semester. Students may complete more than the noted hours, however they cannot end their placement prior to two weeks before the spring semester ends.

- There must be a written agreement between the student and the field supervisor outlining the intent to work over the Winter Break and that this modifies the ending date for the spring semester. Students should submit a request to their field liaison for the Winter Hours Approval form to be added in Sonia. This form is signed electronically by the student, field supervisor and external supervisor (if applicable). Specialized year students completing an extended field placement should also complete this form, however these students are not limited to only completing 48 hours over the winter break. They should plan to continue field hours upon the completion of the fall semester, through the winter break and finish the fall hours requirement prior to the start of the spring semester.
- Students are aware that they are still mandated to attend the weekly seminar sessions through the end of the semester and fully participate in the field course (hybrid and online).

- The winter break officially begins after fall commencement. No hours can begin to be accrued for the spring semester until after the last day of finals for the fall semester/term
- Only students who complete winter hours are eligible for ending field two weeks early at the end of the spring semester (this does not apply to specialized students completing the extended field placement who will continue hours into the summer).

### *MSW Supervision*

In accordance with Council on Social Work Education standards, all MSW students must be supervised by an MSW with at least two years of post-degree experience. In some cases, a student may be assigned to both a task supervisor and an MSW supervisor within the agency. In other cases, if the agency does not employ an MSW but meets qualifying criteria, the School of Social Work will provide an external MSW supervisor for the student. Space is limited for external supervision and provided on a first come, first serve basis during the field placement process.

Students are required to meet with their MSW supervisor for one hour of weekly supervision and document this hour in Sonia as a separate timesheet. Students enter into a contractual agreement with the external supervisor and must adhere to the weekly meeting schedule. Failure to regularly attend supervision may result in a technical standards violation and professional performance review meeting. Below is the process for missed supervision meetings.

The Learning Contract and Process Recording assignments must be reviewed, given feedback, and signed by both the task supervisor and the MSW supervisor. In addition, both the mid-term evaluation and final evaluation should be reviewed, given feedback, and signed by both the task supervisor and the MSW supervisor. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate this with both supervisors and turn in the assignments/evaluations by the assigned due date.

- First missed supervision: A verbal warning will be issued, outlining the concern and a reminder of the expectations outlined in the contract as well as a reference to the technical standards.
- Second missed supervision: A written warning to the student's SU email will be issued, clearly describing the concern. The warning will include a reminder of the expectations outlined in the contract as well as a reference to the technical standards.
- Third missed supervision: The Director of Graduate Field Education will be notified and will call a formal student support meeting. The external MSW supervisor will file a technical standards violation form. During the meeting, a professional performance support plan (PPSP) will be developed. The student is expected to establish SMART goals that include strategies to prevent them missing future supervision meetings. Guidance from the external supervisor and field director should be provided to assist the student with goal development. For UMGC

students, the field manager may sit in on these meetings in place of the field director.

- More than three missed supervision meetings: The Director of Graduate Field Education will be notified, who will in turn notify the MSW program chair. A new technical standards violation form may need to be completed. The MSW program chair will send this to the student and call a Formal Student Remediation Meeting. A consequence of this meeting may be that the student is dismissed from external supervision and as a result, their field placement.

Other major concerns regarding the student's performance in external supervision may warrant a professional performance review meeting.

# **MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION PROCESS**

## **Application to Field Education and Selection of Placement**

Once a student is admitted to the MSW program he/she must complete the application for Social Work Field Education. As a part of the application students identify three field placements/areas of interest as a first step in indicating their areas of preference and comfort. These preferences will be considered by the Field Education Staff when making placement decisions.

Applications for Field Education are processed by the Field Education Staff. The student may make an individual appointment with the Field Education Staff to discuss his/her needs, interests, and preferences. These appointments can be in person or via phone or videoconference depending on the location of the student. Based on the student's Field Education application and, if relevant, the meeting with the Field Education Staff, the student is given a Field Education placement assignment. The staff is responsible for conveying specific information to the student regarding an agency's expectations, university's expectations, manner of supervision, and style of practice.

After the Field Education Staff contacts the agency to discuss the placement and determines the agency meets the criteria, the student contacts the agency Field Supervisor to arrange for an on- site interview. The student is responsible for scheduling the interview. Refusal to do so will be interpreted as the student deciding not to enter field placement at this time. Most agencies require a face-to-face interview with the student before confirming the placement.

The student will receive confirmation of the Field Education placement from the Field Education Staff. Most students will interview at one agency and find a comfortable fit with the Field Supervisor and agency practice. Others require an additional interview. The Field Education Staff will refer students to a maximum of three (3) agencies. If a student does not find a fit after three interviews or three agencies turn the student down because they decided the student will not be a fit, a hearing may be conducted to assess the situation and create a plan of action.

Students will not be sent on multiple interviews at one time. They must select their first choice, complete an interview and make a decision if it is a good fit. If they don't feel that it is a good fit, they must decline that placement if accepted and may interview at another agency, pending availability of placement options.

A placement confirmation approved by all parties is based on the mutual agreement that the student will remain in that placement for the two-course sequence. If, during the time before the Field Education placement is scheduled to begin, the student or agency experiences a change that will affect the placement, they must immediately contact the Field Education staff (students refer to Requests to Change Placements Policy).

The deadline to secure a field placement before the fall semester is August 1st. Students who fail to secure a placement by this date may need to defer completing field until the following academic year.

### **Orientation to Agency**

The first few days of the Field Education experience can be anxiety producing for both the student and the Field Supervisor. Adjusting to this new role can be overwhelming, exciting, and exhausting. A planned orientation process can help reduce the student's stress and provides an easier entry phase for both the student and the Field Supervisor. The following information is recommended as part of this orientation:

Information specific to the agency:

- How it is structured, goals and objectives, philosophy, client demographics, agency community, etc.
- Information on history of agency, organizational structure, funding sources, policies, and programs, etc.
- Organizational chart.
- A list of abbreviations, symbols, and technical terminology peculiar to the agency.
- Opportunity for student observation of staff working with clients, staff meetings, groups, conferences, etc.
- Tour of the agency including an introduction of the student to all staff including clerical and receptionist staff.
- Specify to the student agency expectations on rules of behavior and appropriate dress.
- Specific job description detailing job functions and responsibilities.
- A set of personnel policies.
- Determine the supervision process and schedule weekly supervision times.

During this initial period sufficient time should be allowed for supervisory meetings between the student and the Field Supervisor to allow for questions, comments, and reactions. It is important at this early stage for the student and instructor to get to know each other and begin building a working relationship. The learning contract is to be completed during the first few days/weeks of the placement. This orientation time together will set the stage for preparation of the learning contract.

### **Introduction to Client Systems**

Once the student has completed orientation it is time to receive their first assignments. It is natural for a student to feel lost at this point. When the student is to receive a client caseload or project, it is helpful to have the student initially observe the Field Supervisor or other staff member(s). When working specifically with clients the student should be clear about their role as an intern within the agency. Regardless of the size or type of client system these guidelines will help the student get started:

- Decide in advance what to do when asked a question you do not know the answer to; it is okay to say, “I don’t know, but I’ll try to find out and get back to you”.
- Do not expect to learn all the agency’s policies, procedures, and forms before having to use them. To be effective and responsible you do not have to know every agency step of a procedure. It is okay to learn in a step-by-step way as needed to perform a specific task.
- It is normal to worry about not having enough professional or life experience to be effective when working with a client. Remember that this is a learning experience.
- As preparation for a new experience (regardless of the size or type of client system) ask the Field Supervisor or another agency staff person to role play the experience with you. This will give you an opportunity to practice an opening statement, plan appropriate responses, and learn to anticipate questions. This will also give you the chance to discuss your feelings about both the role play and upcoming event. The Field Supervisor can also suggest readings or identify case records for you to review.
- After a new encounter or experience discuss the details with your Field Supervisor or another staff person. Another helpful tool is to write up notes describing the interview or event. Remember that a process recording can be a helpful teaching device.
- It is normal to feel overwhelmed in the initial stages of your placement. This anxiety helps you empathize with the client and feelings they may have when first using an agency’s services.

To provide the best educational experience for the student, the Field Supervisor can do the following:

- Resist the temptation to fill time with clerical tasks instead of professional tasks.
- Begin by assigning one or two simple activities as part of a more complex case being served by another staff member.
- Make the student’s assignments typical of tasks performed by staff that have a social work degree.
- Keep in mind that the student is not being trained to work for the specific field agency alone but is there to learn generic social work skills that could be applied to various kinds of settings.

Model skills of tuning in and responding directly to the feelings of the student as an effective way of teaching the student to engage with clients.

### **Supervision**

A formal time each week must be scheduled for a Field Supervisor-student conference. Even when agency staff can observe and work with the student daily, regularly scheduled meetings are necessary. Supervision, which is regular, planned, and prepared, allows the Supervisor and student to focus attention on areas of personal

growth, long-term learning goals, review core competencies, and to develop the mentoring relationship. One hour of supervision each week is required.

As the student works with client systems and takes on other tasks and assignments, supervision is a time to discuss the specific progress that the student is making and to help the student deal with concerns and blocks to that progress. An effective tool for supervision is to keep a special notebook for recording information regarding the student's experiences. Both the student and Field Supervisor will be using supervision as a time to discuss the student's progress in relation to the evaluation criteria. As a guide and preparation for supervision the student may think about the following questions:

- I was satisfied with the way I interacted with clients this week because...
- I was least satisfied with the following experiences, and why.
- The most difficult aspect of field practice for me this week was...
- My strongest skills and abilities this week were...
- Skills which I feel I need to improve the most are...
- The topics I found most difficult to discuss with clients this week were...
- I had to cope with the following value dilemma(s) this week...
- Specific goals I have set for myself for the coming week include: (Try to think in terms of your knowledge, skills, and values rather than in relation to specific clients with whom you are working).
- I have discovered in working with someone different from myself this week that...
- What other observations and concerns I want to discuss this week with my Field Supervisor?

This material was adapted from the Social Work Program at Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, Indiana.

Field Supervisors need to remember that students need direct and honest feedback regarding their performance. Remember that the student is a learner, and that feedback is essential to their learning process. It is often helpful for the Field Supervisor to share their personal experiences in Field Education. This helps the student realize the Field Supervisors are not infallible, that they were beginners once, and that the learning process is lifelong.

## **Evaluation**

Performance evaluation is an on-going process that starts with the student's first day of field placement and culminates in a final written evaluation at the end of each semester/term. On-going evaluation of the student's progress and self-assessment are a built-in aspect of the Field Supervisor's responsibility.

In the middle of the first semester/term and again at the end of each semester or term, the agency Field Supervisor is asked by the SU School of Social Work to summarize

his/her thinking by completing the required evaluations forms. Students must read their completed evaluations and have an oral evaluation conference with the Field Supervisor before the evaluation is sent to the University. If any student disagrees with portions(s) of the evaluation made by the Field Supervisor, he/she has the right to Submit in writing an addendum to the evaluation which describes any points of disagreement.

If there has been continuous sharing throughout the placement, the student will know what the Field Supervisor is going to say before it is written. The evaluation conference can be used in part to determine whether the student's self-perceptions are in general agreement with those of the Field Supervisor and whether the Field Supervisor's skills in giving ongoing feedback have been effective.

Both students and fieldwork supervisors experience anxiety about evaluations. It is important to recognize this anxiety and work through it, discussing it together as a normal problem that commonly accompanies the evaluation process. The most effective way to deal with evaluations is to have a frank discussion together at the beginning of the field placement about the fieldwork supervisor's approach to performance evaluation. Some guidelines for formal evaluations are:

- Schedule time to review the evaluations, answer questions, and deal with the reactions to the evaluations together.
- The evaluation conference must be held in a place where privacy and quiet are assured. Interruptions are to be avoided.
- Try to avoid scheduling the conference at the end of the day and allow a full hour or more.
- Discuss the implications of the evaluation for the future: planning for the second half of the placement if the evaluation is for the first semester/term or for the student's future career plans if the evaluation is at the end of the placement.
- Be open to making changes in the evaluations based on the discussion when there is mutual agreement to make change.

### **Evaluation of Field Agency**

At the end of the two-course field sequence field students are given the opportunity to evaluate the ability of the field agency to meet their educational goals. Using the student's evaluation and that which is made by the Field Liaison, a decision is made regarding the continuance of the agency as a field placement for the Social Work program. This evaluation also gives the student the opportunity to make recommendations to the School of Social Work regarding the Field Education component of their education.

### **Ending the Placement**

Students may start to experience increased anxiety before the ending of their placement experience. Concerns often begin to be felt about whether they will accomplish everything in the time that is left. It is important to begin identifying with

the student the important ending dates. It is also important to respond directly to indirect cues indicating anxiety or concerns as the termination of the placement becomes more of a reality.

The dynamics of the ending of the Field Supervisor-student relationship are quite like those of terminating with clients. The parallel nature of these processes provides the Field Supervisor with an opportunity to demonstrate the same skills the student needs to use with clients.

Common themes that occur in facing ending are: a denial of the feelings associated with the student's leaving; lack of discussion of the ending event; a reluctance to say goodbye; a sense of urgency about unfinished business.

The Field Supervisor should devote careful attention to the student's termination experiences to help the student learn the skills needed to end with clients. Calling attention to the dynamics of termination as they emerge is important. If apathy is noticed in conferences for example, a direct question can be used to examine whether it has something to do with the student's ending experiences.

It is very important for the Field Supervisor to level with the student about their own feelings about the student's departure. Since it is hard to express ending feelings, the Field Supervisor should take the first step in doing so.

An ending evaluation conference that focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the relationship between the Field Supervisor and the student is very important. The experience can be used to help the student focus on the specific skills of dealing with client endings as well. By identifying what is happening in the supervisory relationship and discussing the parallel process that occurs with clients, the student is assisted in developing the ability to deal with the often-neglected termination phase of practice.

The following is based on the writing from William A. Danowski (2012) "In the Field: A guide for the social work practicum." He suggests that termination is a time students become reflective on their social work internship.

Students may ask themselves:

- What have I learned this year?
- What skills do I have?
- What are my strengths and areas yet to be developed?
- As a social worker, am I good enough?
- Do I like what I am doing?
- Is there a place for me in the field? What is my niche?
- What are my social work interests currently (setting and population)?

Students may ask their supervisor:

- What is the agency's policy on termination?
- What time frame does your supervisor suggest?
- Does your supervisor know that you are discussing termination in class/seminar?
- Have you and your supervisor set a date to start the termination process?
- What warnings or pitfalls has your supervisor mentioned?
- Have you discussed with your supervisor when to start the termination process or has it already begun?

## **Appendix 1. Helpful Links**

### *Welcome and Introduction*

- [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan](#)
- [NASW Code of Ethics](#)

### *The Social Work Profession*

- [Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners](#)
- [NASW Find a Chapter](#)
- [Licensure from the School of Social Work](#)

### *The Graduate Program*

- [Council on Social Work Education 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#)
- [Graduate Student Handbook](#)
- [School of Social Work Organizations and Clubs](#)

### *Admission to the MSW Program*

- [MSW Admission Website](#)

### *Curriculum*

- [Course Catalog: Advanced Standing – Clinical Social Work and Advocacy Specialization](#)
- [Course Catalog: Advanced Standing – Social Change and Leadership Specialization](#)
- [Course Catalog: Traditional – Clinical Social Work and Advocacy Specialization](#)
- [Course Catalog: Traditional – Social Change and Leadership Specialization](#)

### *Policies and Procedures*

- [Student Accountability & Community Standards](#)
- [Student Academic Grievance Policy](#)
- [Financial Aid Office](#)
- [Registrar's Website](#)
- [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Office of Access and Accommodations](#)
- [Emergency Alert System](#)
- [School of Social Work's Resources & Policies](#)
- [Salisbury University Library Guide](#)
- [Salisbury University Library Guide: Citing AI & Academic Integrity](#)
- [Office of Institutional Equity](#)
- [Code of Community Standards Policy](#)
- [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

### *Technical and Professional Standards*

- [Program Policy for Technical Standards](#)

### *Master of Social Work Field Education Process*

- [School of Social Work Study Abroad Internship Website](#)

## Appendix 2. Technical Standards Violation Form



### Technical Standard Violation Form Salisbury University – School of Social Work

|                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Student Name:</b>                      |
| <b>Name of Reporting Individual:</b>      |
| <b>Date of Report:</b>                    |
| <b>Signature of Reporting Individual:</b> |

This report is prepared when a student exhibits behavior not consistent with the School of Social Work Technical Standards and is intended to assist the student in meeting professionalism expectations in academic, professional or administrative settings. Improvement in the area(s) noted below is needed in order to meet the standards of professionalism inherent in being a social worker.

Check the appropriate categories. Comments are required.

#### **Physical Skills:**

- ☐ Exhibit motor and sensory abilities necessary to attend and actively engage in class and practicum placement.

Comments: (Describe the specifics)

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

#### **Cognitive Skills:**

- ☐ Demonstrate accurate knowledge of social work as a profession.
- ☐ Demonstrate clarity of thinking to process information and appropriately apply it to situations in the classroom and field.
- ☐ Demonstrate grounding in relevant social, behavior and biological science knowledge and research – including knowledge and skills in effective relationship building.
- ☐ Exhibit the ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and appropriately apply that knowledge to professional practice.

Comments: (Describe the specifics)

**Emotional and Mental Skills:**

- ☐ Use sound judgement.
- ☐ Exercise effective stress management.
- ☐ Work well, collegially and collaboratively with others, including colleagues and clients.
- ☐ Conduct oneself professionally consistent with NASW Code of Ethics and professional responsibility.

Comments: (Describe the specifics)

**Communication Skills:**

- ☐ Comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings, and to communicate effectively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals.
- ☐ Use oral and written skills to communicate in ways that are safe and protect privacy of the students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals.

**Written Skills:**

- ☐ Write clearly, use correct grammar and spelling.
- ☐ Apply appropriate writing style, including current American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation.
- ☐ Demonstrate sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by faculty or field supervisors.

**Oral Skills:**

- ☐ Communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals.
- ☐ Express ideas and feelings clearly.
- ☐ Communicate in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by the faculty or field supervisors.
- ☐ Exhibit willingness and ability to listen to others.

Comments: (Describe the specifics)

**Interpersonal/Behavioral Skills:**

- ☐ Demonstrate interpersonal skills to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include but are not limited to:
  - ☐ Compassion

- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Altruism
- ☐ Integrity
- ☐ Demonstration of respect for consideration of others, including those different from oneself.
- ☐ Professional boundaries
- ☐ Maintaining and safeguarding the confidentiality of client information, records, and communication.
- ☐ Take appropriate responsibility for own actions and consider the impact of these actions on others.
- ☐ Make appropriate effort toward self-improvement and adaptability.
- ☐ Conduct oneself in a way that characterizes honesty, integrity, and non-discrimination.
- ☐ Be able to develop a mature, sensitive, and effective therapeutic relationship with clients.
- ☐ Be adaptable to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many clients.
- ☐ Demonstrate ethical behavior, including a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession, as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics for Social Work Board of Examiners in relevant jurisdictions.
- ☐ Commit to the essential values of social work that include the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her right to a just share of society's resources (social justice).
- ☐ Work effectively with others, regardless of level of authority.
- ☐ Be receptive to feedback and supervision in a constructive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance Professional development/performance.
- ☐ Comply with program policies, agency policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classrooms, fields, and communities.
- ☐ Reflect a professional manner in appearance, dress, and demeanor in the classroom and field setting.
- ☐ Demonstrate responsible and accountable behavior evidenced, for example, by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, actively engaged in class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and keeping appointments or making timely appropriate alternative arrangements.

Comments: (Describe the specifics)

Additional Comments: (e.g., recommendations, requirements, relevant actions, next steps):

Student comments can be attached separately but must be submitted by:

I have read this evaluation and discussed it with the relevant Faculty Member/ Program Chairs / Director of the School of Social Work.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature indicates that you have read the report, and it has been discussed with you. It does not represent your agreement or disagreement with the proposed violation. If you disagree or want to comment, you are encouraged to attach your comments as stated above.

### Appendix 3. Student Remediation Outcome Decision Form

Student Name:

Student ID:

Date informed of the Meeting:

Date of the Meeting:

| Attendees |      |
|-----------|------|
| Name      | Role |
|           |      |
|           |      |
|           |      |

**Initiating Concerns with Dates:**

**Technical Standards Violations as indicated from the Technical Standards Violations Form:**

Recommendations:

- ☐ No Conditions
- ☐ Formal Conditions
- ☐ Dismissal

## **Appendix 4: Developing the Learning Contract**

### *Purpose of the Contract*

A learning contract establishes individualized student learning activities for the student that are feasible in the agency and attainable within the school year. It is a tool to identify what the student will learn and the specific activities that will be a part of the placement experience.

While the student assumes the ultimate responsibility for the completion of the form, its preparation is a collaborative effort of the student, Field Supervisor and Field Liaison. The learning contract acts as a guide to help the student and Field Supervisor define what the student will learn, and the specific experiences that will be part of the placement. The learning contract provides the overall structure for the field placement. It will assist students and Field Supervisors in defining what activities in the agency setting will best prepare the student for social work practice based on the competencies. It is considered a working document and therefore to be used as a guide for supervision throughout the year and the basis for both midterm and end of the semester evaluations. While the competencies and behaviors provide a common framework, each student develops learning activities based on opportunities provided by each specific placement agency.

### *The Learning Contract Conferences*

Drafting the learning contract should begin as the student is oriented to the agency during the first two weeks of the placement. With support from the agency Field Supervisor the student will identify their learning activities. A formal conference should take place at the agency with the Field Supervisor and the student during the second or third week of the placement. In preparation for this conference the student must have written a draft of their learning contract based on previous discussions with the Field Supervisor and the Field Liaison. A copy of this draft should be made available to the Field Supervisor prior to the scheduled conference. The purpose of this time together is to provide an opportunity to discuss what the student wants to get out of the placement and what the Field Supervisor hopes the student will accomplish.

Discussion topics such as the students' goals, experience level, learning style, learning from previous employment, or volunteering, strengths and limitations, motivation, and interests may prove to be a helpful guide for discussion. The Field Supervisor may also use this time as an opportunity to learn more about the specifics of any fieldwork assignments.

This conference may result in the need for clarification, revisions, additions, or deletions to the students draft contract. The student can finalize the learning contract by making any necessary changes.

## Appendix 5. Field: Prepare for an Interview

### *To Prepare for an Interview*

- Do your homework: find out what the agency does and why it might be a good place to work. (Chances are they are going to ask you why you are interested in this particular agency, so it helps to have an idea of what they do before you get there.) It is helpful to have your own list of questions about the agency, so you can ask for clarification if you need it. It is okay to bring a notebook in with you – it shows you are organized and prepared.
- Make sure you have good directions to get there so you can be on time. First impressions are very important: better early than late. Remember, the agency is volunteering their time to work with students, so you don't want to waste their time.
- They will probably ask you why they should give you a field placement, so be ready with a list of your positive attributes and past experiences or classes that are relevant to the population served by that agency. Agencies are looking for people who want to learn and have a strong interest or curiosity about the population they serve.
- Get a good night's sleep so you can think sharply. Often interviewers ask you to comment on case scenarios or ask how you would handle a certain situation or bias. Sometimes they will ask you to describe yourself or to identify your strengths and weaknesses – this isn't therapy! Turn a negative into a positive: for example, I do not have a lot of experience, but I am very eager to learn. They may also ask what you are learning in school.
- Choose a conservative outfit – not too flashy; not too casual.
- Give a confident handshake – at the beginning and end.
- Remember to use your SOLER skills!!

## **Appendix 6. Field: Statement of Confidentiality**

Students undertaking field placements or other activities involving direct contact with clients assume professional responsibilities. These include the closest adherence to the principles of confidentiality, so that the privacy of the privileged information to which students are exposed is totally safeguarded. The following statements embody social work policies designed to achieve this confidentiality:

- Student must take initiative and responsibility for knowing and abiding by the confidentiality policies of agencies in which they are placed.
- Outside of the agency, Field Instruction Seminar and Social Work Practice class, no information regarding specific clients, their families and other significant persons is to be revealed. This includes background information by which clients might be identified as well as their names.
- Within a class, names of specific clients, families or other persons should not be stated. A pseudonym or third person reference should be substituted.
- The classroom is to be considered an area of confidentiality. Client information and reactions of classmates is not to be discussed with anyone other than the student's faculty field liaison.
- No piece of written work (term papers, logs, case studies, etc.) should contain actual names of clients. Correct identifying information can be added to copies intended for agency use at the time the student, inside the agency, is submitting the material to the agency.
- For community or professional presentation or for written material distributed outside of a class for which it was prepared, case material must be altered so that there is no possibility that the persons involved can be identified. This alteration includes specific details and circumstances, as well as names.
- Students are personally responsible for the safety and protection of any professional information or records they may have in their possession. Such information must never be removed from the agency or placed anywhere that unauthorized persons might view it.
- Students are expected to use tact and discretion in representing agencies, which provide them with training experiences. Agencies provide participation in their programs as a service to students and the School of Social Work. Professional practice assumes that issues, rather than personalities or specific programs, be the focus of discussions with colleagues, fellow students, and other professionally appropriate contacts.
- When in doubt the integrity of any confidentiality issue or practice, students should feel free to seek consultation and advice from social work faculty.

Salisbury University – School of Social Work Policy adopted September 1986 – Revised 1996 Based on material from the University of Pittsburgh Molloy College, New York

## Appendix 7. Personal Safety Information

In a 2000 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report, 48% of all non-fatal injuries from assaults and violent acts in an occupational setting took place in health care and social services settings. Between 2013 and 2017, that number decreased from 74% to 73%.

Salisbury University believes in promoting safety of all students in field placements and is committed to promoting a climate of safety in our program.

### *NASW Standards on Workplace Safety*

- Office Safety: Safe work and meeting spaces; restricted client access to sharp or potentially dangerous objects; well-lit hallways and outdoor areas; secure entrances; keep belongings secure
- Technology Safety: Panic buttons; GPS, audio/video recording devices (be aware of confidentiality and informed consent risks!); Cell phones (be mindful of risks of personal cell phone use and don't allow this to foster a false sense of security)
- Home Visit Safety: Knowledge and assessment of client's demeanor and history; Environmental/neighborhood factors; travelling alone; accessibility to exits; awareness of others in the home including pets and of possible health concerns or pests
- Client Transport Safety: Initial assessment of the client's demeanor; assessment of the vehicle; knowledge of other risks associated with transporting children

### *Things to Consider for Field Supervisors*

- What are my agency policies related to safety?
- How do I make my student aware of the policies?
- How can I make safety policies a part of the orientation process?
- What is the procedure for reporting incidents and how would you know if a student experienced a safety incident?
- Reassess agency safety policies on a regular basis
- Provide post-incident debriefing as part of the learning process
- Trainings should include ways to prevent or diffuse volatile situations or aggressive behavior, an action plan for violent situations, ways to protect oneself, risk factors, and all agency safety policies and procedures including policies regarding obtaining medical care, counseling, or other assistance post-incident

### *Tips for Students*

- Practice Universal Safety Precautions- Violence is not isolated to one economic, social, gender or racial group; Be Prepared!
- Know the risk factors of your clients when meeting with clients - history of mental illness, substance abuse, violence including possession of a weapon
- When meeting with clients, learn to appreciate realistic limitations. Be reasonable about what is and is not possible. Know when to stay and when to leave.
- Act calmly. An emotional or aggressive response to a distraught individual is likely to reinforce and escalate the aggression. Remember, clients and others who are violent

are often reacting to feelings of helplessness and/or loss of control. Therefore, you need to be in control of the situation.

- Notify the agency of important details when conducting home visits: who, where, when?
- Learn to anticipate the need for forms and gather information prior to the visit
- Carry a small amount of cash, including change
- Don't appear timid, vulnerable, lost or confused
- Be mindful of your attire and appearance- dangling earrings, valuable jewelry, high-heeled shoes, etc.
- Walk with a sense of purpose. Be aware of your body language
- Be alert! Don't walk "in a daze."
- Do not walk on the side of the street where you see a group of people loitering
- Be aware of safe places where you are walking or visiting, such as stores, a library, schools, and community centers which you might use as a refuge
- Assess multistory building for safety. If you need to take an elevator, check-out the interior before entering. If it appears unsafe, do not enter. If you can't exit, stand next to the control panel and press all the buttons if an emergency.
- If you need to take stairs in a multistory building, be aware of who is in the stairwell and how far apart the exits are.
- Be mindful of the types of personal information made available through social media
- If an incident occurs, notify the field supervisor immediately, follow agency protocol, and inform the Field Office

For complete NASW Guidelines for Safety in the Workplace please review this website.

## **Appendix 8. Duty to Report**

Social workers (and all professionals) are legally bound by the state law in which they are practicing to report any situations of suspected child maltreatment to the Child Protective Services Department of the local Department of Social Services for further investigation. Licensed social workers who fail to report known maltreatment face fines and penalties (such as having one's license revoked and risking malpractice claims).

There are no set legal guidelines for reporting other illegal activity (such as drug use or fraud) but students should be aware that witnessing such activity could put them at risk for being considered in collusion or acting as an accessory to a crime. Student should educate themselves about their agency's written or unwritten policies on these matters and discuss such situations immediately with their supervisor (or another person of authority if the supervisor is not immediately available) when such situations occur.

## Appendix 9. Weekly One Hour Supervision: Not Just a CSWE Requirement

Why it's important and what are the benefits:

- Serves as an opportunity for students to clarify your expectations
- Provides guidance and feedback essential to the student's growth
- Fosters a supportive supervisor-supervisee relationship
- Opportunities to integrate classroom learning and field activities
- A time for you to learn from your student's experiences and perspectives
- Assessment of the student's personal and professional strengths and challenges

Helpful Tips:

- Designate a specific time each week and a quiet location where you will be uninterrupted
- Encourage students to share their course syllabi from all of their courses (not just field education) with you
- Don't let students think this time is optional
- If you have more than one student, provide group supervision some of the time (there are many benefits for you and the students!)
- Collaborate with your student to develop a weekly supervision agenda and provide this to them in advance; this can serve as a helpful documentation tool if there are performance concerns
- Review the learning contract weekly and discuss student's progress
- Supervision can include, but is not limited to the following methods: role playing, review of student's client documentation/written professional communication, discussions of policy and theory application to field experiences, field supervisor stories/anecdotes, discussion of assigned readings, case screening and selection, case consultation

Three Important components:

- Supportive- Opportunities for feedback, advisement, attention to growth, self-awareness
- Educational- Development of knowledge and skills and opportunities for reflection, linkage of tasks to classroom knowledge
- Administrative- Discussion of policies, procedures, resources, tasks,, accountability

Sample Weekly Supervision Agenda:

- Questions I Have (Supportive; Educational; Administrative):
- Resources I May Need (Supportive; Educational; Administrative):
- Particular Cases or Projects (Consider bringing relevant materials):
- Integration of Course Materials:
- Learning Contract Items/ Social Work Competencies:

(Sample Agenda Source: University at Buffalo School of Social Work, 2012)

## Appendix 10. Orienting Your Student to the Agency

- Verify the start date and arrival time of the student. Students begin their field placement the first week of the semester/term. The start date may be different depending on the program level of the student and their geographic location.
- Develop a plan for the student's first day.
  - Identify where they should park
  - Inform them where to go upon arrival at your agency
  - Show them the workspace they will use and that the area is cleared
  - Arrange a tour of the agency and include bathrooms and what the lunch routine is
  - Let other staff know of the student's arrival and introduce student to others in the agency
  - Confirm the student's field placement schedule for the semester
  - Discuss orientation plan and schedule
  - Establish a schedule for regular supervisory time
- Considerations for the first week or two at your agency
  - Arrange for name badges, and computer access for the student
  - Review telephone procedures with the student
  - Inform staff how to direct calls or visitors to the student
  - Discuss the student's role in the agency and how the student is to be identified
  - Explain what the agency service delivery system does and does not do
  - Discuss and formulate a plan to develop the Student Learning Contract
  - Provide opportunities for observing the work of the agency and time to process the observations
  - Provide and review reference and reading material
    - Policy and procedure manual
    - Brochures
    - Information about the client population, intervention models and the community
    - Glossary or key to commonly used terms
    - Examples of forms, reports, other recordings
    - Information about community resources
    - List of staff, phone numbers, position and role in the agency
- Important Considerations
  - Discuss confidentiality policies and procedures
  - Review paperwork and documentation requirements
  - Provide training related to safety issues
  - Discuss ethical issues that arise in the agency and the procedure for resolving ethical dilemmas
  - Arrange opportunities to visit community agencies
  - Use supervision to guide, direct, and provide feedback to improve student's skill set.

## **Appendix 11. Supervisors' List of Do's and Don'ts for a Positive Field Experience**

- Don't assume the new intern will be like your last intern or that the experience will be identical. Each internship is a unique experience and brings both excitement and challenges for the supervisor and student.
- Do spend time getting to know your intern so they become comfortable with you and understand the boundaries of your relationship. Ask them about other commitments they may have such as class schedule, being a student athlete, a job, or caregiving responsibilities.
- Do be clear and specific about communication expectations. Find out the quickest way to reach the intern on short notice. Be clear on how they should communicate an illness or emergency to you.
- Do be clear about the intern's personal use of a cell phone during internship hours and explain the limitations regarding the use of the agency's phone, email, and internet for personal and work-related use. Clearly state unprofessional and unacceptable behaviors related to these issues.
- Don't expect students to use their personal phone or email account with clients or other agencies.
- Don't assume the intern understands confidentiality—be clear about what interns may share and with whom.
- Do discuss safety considerations with your student.
- Do schedule weekly supervision with your students and teach students to prepare for supervision with questions and topics to focus on. The learning contract can guide developing a supervision agenda.
- Do encourage students to provide assignments in advance of supervision so that the supervision time can be used for assignment discussion.
- Don't allow interns to take comments by clients or staff members personally. Do encourage interns to express empathy with all clients and staff members.
- Do support the strengths-based perspective which values the experiences of all persons.
- Don't allow students to complete schoolwork during downtime. Provide students with suggestions of meaningful activities, including ongoing projects that may be helpful to the agency.
- Don't fail to see the strengths the student brings to the internship.
- Do enjoy the satisfaction that comes from mentoring and professionalizing your student intern.

## **Appendix 12. Mission Statements**

### *Salisbury University Mission Statement*

Salisbury University is a premier comprehensive Maryland public university offering excellent, affordable education in undergraduate liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing, health sciences, social work, and education and applied master's and doctoral programs. Our highest purpose is to empower our students with the knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to active citizenship, gainful employment, and life-long learning in a democratic society and interdependent world.

Salisbury University cultivates and sustains a superior learning community where students, faculty, and staff are viewed as learners, teachers/scholars, and facilitators, and where a commitment to excellence and openness to a broad array of ideas and perspectives are central to all aspects of university life. Our learning community is student-centered. Students learn from professional educators in small classroom settings, faculty and professional staff serve as academic advisors, and virtually every student has an opportunity to undertake research or experiential learning with a faculty mentor. Through our privately endowed Schools and Honors College, and the College of Health and Human Services, we foster an environment where individuals prepare for career and life, including their social, physical, occupational, emotional, and intellectual well-being.

The University recruits exceptional and diverse faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students from across Maryland and the United States and from around the world, supporting all members of the University community as they work together to achieve institutional goals and vision. Believing that learning and service are vital components of civic life, Salisbury University actively contributes to the local Eastern Shore community and the educational, economic, cultural, and social needs of our State and nation.

### *The School of Social Work Mission Statement*

The School of Social Work's Mission is to be student-centered and dedicated to excellence in the education of professional social workers at the baccalaureate and master's level. The school is committed to the pursuit of social and economic justice and will provide leadership through professional development, service, consultation, and research to strengthen society while contributing to the expansion of social work knowledge.

### *Master of Social Work (MSW) Program Mission*

Grounded in the ethics and values of the social work profession, the mission of Salisbury University's Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) program is to inspire and educate competent and culturally responsive social work professionals to be prepared for advanced direct practice with individuals, families, groups and organizations in local, regional, national and global arenas.