



**NORTHERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY**

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

**MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW)  
PROGRAM**

**FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL**

**Northern Michigan University  
MSW Program  
Field Education Faculty and Staff**

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## **Section I - Overview and Placement Process**

### **Field Instruction Overview**

Northern Michigan University’s Social Work program was one of the first programs in Michigan accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 1974 as a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program. We have since expanded our mission and as of 2019 are providing a Master of Social Work (MSW) program in order to educate advanced social work practitioners. NMU’s social work program has played an integral role in helping the university achieve its mission by giving students the knowledge and experience to become productive citizens in the regional and global community.

As a member of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Northern Michigan University’s MSW Program provides a field education program that meets professional and accreditation standards. These standards require a minimum of 900 clock hours of field instruction for a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. NMU requires fourteen credit hours of field instruction for regular standing MSW students and eight credit hours for advanced standing students. In addition to the total field hour requirement, fifteen hours per semester will be spent in field placement seminar. Seminar will assist students in connecting the theoretical and conceptual knowledge developed in the classroom to the practical setting provided in a field agency. Satisfactory completion of all 900 hours is required in order to complete the MSW program. For advanced standing students, up to 400 hours of field work from the student’s BSW program will be counted toward the total 900 MSW field placement hours.

Only students admitted to the MSW program are eligible for placement. Each student prepares a Learning Agreement with support from the Field Instructor; this Learning Agreement operationalizes how the student will address CSWE competencies during field placement. The Learning Agreement is reviewed each semester and revised as necessary. Students maintain a weekly log of activities, monitored by their Field Instructor and the Faculty Liaison to document hours and indicate specific activities in which they have engaged and made progress toward their learning agreement. Students also complete a self-evaluation each term of their competency development.

Regular standing students will complete 900 hours of field placement over two years, with 400 hours in the first year, and 500 hours in the second year. Advanced standing students will complete 500 hours over two semesters. During each of the four semesters, students will also complete 15 hours of seminar instruction. The first year for regular standing students is intended to provide generalist practice opportunities for students to demonstrate social work competencies with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This will be accomplished through the development, implementation, and completion of a learning agreement created between the student, field agency, and social work program.

The second or concentration year of field education provides specialized practice opportunities for students to demonstrate social work competencies within an area of specialized practice. Students will select from one of two concentration areas: **Clinical** or **Advanced Generalist**. Students are placed in a field setting which enables them to engage in this type of advanced level practice. Students will create and complete an approved Learning Agreement that outlines how they will demonstrate social work competencies in the specialized practice area. Students in either program option (Clinical or Advanced Generalist) will learn to demonstrate social work competencies through contact with clients and constituencies, appropriate to their concentration. Clinical placements will place particular emphasis on developing competency with individuals, families and groups. Advanced Generalist placements will emphasize competency with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

For the Traditional Campus option, the MSW Field Director arranges placements by determining potential matches and arranging meetings between the student and social service agency. Students in the Global Campus program option will identify specific agencies in their community and initiate outreach requesting a placement. Global Campus students who are located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan may receive additional support from the Field Director, as there may already be identified placement options in that area. If an agency is interested in hosting a student, the Field Director will discuss with an agency representative whether the location would be appropriate for a generalist, Clinical, or Advanced Generalist field placement. For both program options, representative(s) from the agencies interview their prospective student and determine whether they are willing to accept the field student for the following fall. One professional working at the agency agrees to serve as a Field Instructor. Field Instructors should have a Master of Social Work degree from a CSWE accredited program with two years of post-master's social work experience. Exceptions can be made with additional supervision provided by an external, assigned field instructor or NMU Social Work faculty member holding an MSW from a CSWE accredited university and two years of post-master's social work practice experience. The field instructor completes an evaluation form each semester that assesses the student's competency development. The NMU Faculty Liaison is ultimately responsible for assigning the semester grade, with input from the Field Instructor.

Both Traditional and Global campus students will be matched with an in-person field placement agency, meaning they will have opportunities to engage in in-person social work practice with clients and constituencies. Simulated contact will not be considered face-to-face, however, virtual contact is considered face-to-face. Virtual contact can be defined as synchronous contact that is face-to-face with clients. The Field Director will work with agencies within a preferred distance from where the student is studying, whether near the NMU campus, or remotely as part of the Global campus option. Students can complete their hours in virtual settings, but will not be allowed to complete their field placement agency hours through simulation.

## Student-Placement Matching Process

For the Traditional Campus option, the Field Director is primarily responsible for locating, screening, matching, and confirming student placements. Global Campus students are responsible for locating and confirming interest from potential placement sites, and the NMU Field Director is responsible for screening the field site and confirming student placements. The Field Director may provide additional assistance to Global Campus students, depending on where the student is located and if NMU already has established relationships with respective local placements. For all program options, the placement process begins following acceptance into the MSW program, and is repeated before the second year for Regular Standing students. During the winter semester prior to the start of a fall semester field placement, students complete an "Application for Field Education" that includes their background information and interests. The Field Director will be available to students via email, phone, video conferencing and/or in-person meetings to assist in facilitating the field application process if needed. The formal process for student admission and matching are as follows:

- I. The student submits an Application for Field Education via email or USPS. This includes:
  - A. Application and Preference Form for Field Education
  - B. Resume
  - C. Cover letter summarizing application materials and intention for placement
- II. Following submission of materials, the Field Director will notify the student via email if they have been accepted for the matching process or if more materials are needed. Once they are accepted, the student and Field Instructor will schedule an in-person or video-conference pre-placement interview to discuss career goals, student interests, and identify any specific placement needs (e.g. location, conflicts of interest, disability accommodations).
- III. *Traditional Campus:* Following the interview, the Field Director will identify potential placement options. The Field Director will contact agencies to discuss their interest and ability to host a field student. If the agency is receptive, the agency will identify a Field Instructor or another contact person who will conduct a personal interview.
- IV. *Global Campus:* During the interview, the Field Director will provide parameters and possible suggestions for acceptable placement sites. Students will then identify agencies within their local preferred area and contact agency representatives to determine interest in hosting a student. If the agency is receptive, the student will refer the agency representative to the Field Director, who will screen the agency for its capacity to host an MSW student within their specific area of study. If determined to be appropriate, the Field Director will identify a Field Instructor or other contact who will conduct a personal interview.
- V. Prior to the interview, the Field Director will instruct the student to contact the agency representative with an updated resume and cover letter specific to the placement and request an interview. The agency will review the student information, and if the agency decides to move forward, they will schedule an interview with the student. The student will be responsible for keeping the Field Director abreast of communication with the agency.
- VI. During the agency interview, the student and Field Instructor discuss the agency's mission and goals, its function and populations served, the general nature of field assignments available to the student, scheduling expectations, any factors that might prohibit placement, necessary accommodations, and other matters relevant to the acceptance of the student for placement.

This would include discussing the necessity for background checks, drug screens, and other preliminary procedures prior to placement if required by the agency.

- VII. Following the interview, the agency representative will contact the Field Director and discuss any questions or concerns and will either accept or decline the student placement. If the agency is willing to accept the student for placement, a formal placement assignment will be made, and the Field Director will contact the student via email confirming their placement assignment. If the agency declines placement, the Field Director will contact the student and begin the placement process from step III or IV above.
- VIII. If a student engages in three failed interview attempts, the student may be removed from candidacy for field placement and would then be unable to complete the MSW program.

## Agency Selection Process

Field settings are selected primarily on the basis of capacity to prepare students for advanced social work practice by providing opportunities for students to demonstrate competencies outlined by the CSWE. The criteria for agency selection as a field site are:

- I. The capacity of the agency to provide learning experiences consistent with the CSWE competencies in specified area of practice (Generalist, Clinical, or Advanced Generalist).
- II. Adequate supervision must be available. Field agencies should provide a Field Instructor who holds an MSW from a CSWE accredited program and has a minimum of two years post-master's social work experience. Supervision may also be provided by an experienced human service supervisor with a closely related degree who agrees to consultation with an MSW qualified individual approved by the Field Director in order to reinforce a social work perspective. The consultant may be an NMU faculty member or an individual identified in the community. The Field Director will establish a plan for consistent consultation with the Instructor and student prior to confirming placement in the agency. In some circumstances, the Field Director may be able to identify a qualified Field Instructor from outside the agency who is able to provide supervision duties, if the agency cannot provide a Field Instructor but meets all other qualifications.
- III. Adequate facilities such as office space and technology for students to perform field related tasks.
- IV. The agency has demonstrated effectiveness in supervision of previous students. If the agency has not hosted a student in the past, the Field Director may still consider this placement option based on the agency being able to describe a plan for an effective placement.
- V. A safe working environment determined by evaluation of the field instructor, including personnel policies addressing safety and commitment to hosting the student as a learner, not independent employee.
- VI. The agency's Field Instructor has or agrees to participate in Field Instructor development activities.

Prior to placement of a student with an organization, the following documentation should be completed:

- I. **Agency Affiliation Agreement.** This document outlines the responsibilities of the agency and the university. Once executed, the agreement remains in effect until canceled by either party. It does not need to be renewed with each student each year.
- II. **Agency Data Form** which provides information about the activities and services provided by

the agency. This information is stored in the NMU field database to aid in matching field settings with prospective students. Updates will be requested by the Field Instructor if necessary during yearly reviews of the data forms.

- III. **Field Instructor Data Form** is completed on each agency staff person who will serve as a Field Instructor. The information requested documents the Field Instructor's academic and professional experience for compliance with CSWE requirements. Updates will be requested by the Field Director if necessary during yearly reviews of the data forms.
- IV. **Employment-Based MOU** is completed with an agency for each student it provides placement to if the student is also an employee of that agency. The purpose of this document is to ensure that agencies are clear in their understanding of policies regarding employment-based field placements.



## Section II - Guiding Principles

### **Northern Michigan University Vision Statement**

Northern Michigan University promotes an active environment to foster strong minds and bodies, inspires innovation and inclusion through community engagement, and develops leaders capable of local and global impact.

### **Northern Michigan University Mission Statement**

Northern Michigan University's distinctive academic mission and career programs are nurtured by exceptional teaching and extensive opportunities for scholarship, creativity, and engagement. Our supportive, connected community empowers students, graduates, faculty and staff to contribute to a diverse and sustainable world.

### **NMU Department of Social Work Mission Statement**

To prepare competent professionals committed to advancing social justice of diverse clients and constituencies through social work practice.

### **NMU Department of Social Work Vision Statement**

The Social Work Department will be recognized as an integral, mission-driven asset to Northern Michigan University, our community (broadly-defined) and the social work profession because we deliver programs that are highly responsive to human services workforce trends and needs; and, we (students, alumni, faculty and administrators) are proactive representatives of social work values in action

### **NMU MSW Program Mission Statement**

To prepare advanced practitioners of social work by extending the department and profession's commitment to higher learning that promotes service, social justice, human rights and dignity and worth of individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities through specialized clinical and macro practice.

### **Purpose of the NMU Master of Social Work Program**

To further our program mission by educating social work professionals prepared for advanced practice. NMU's MSW Program aims to develop graduates with progressive competence by:

1. promoting the standards and values of the profession in the classroom
2. providing special concentration content for clinical and advanced generalist practitioners
3. drawing on social work's signature pedagogy, field education, and allowing students hands-on opportunities to practice specialized skills

## **Goals of the NMU Master of Social Work Program**

1. To develop graduates with progressive and specialized social work practice competence
2. To promote service and social justice in our community as students and faculty engage with client groups locally, regionally, nationally and globally
3. To add meaning and relevance to the scientific knowledge base through more faculty-led, student involved scholarship honoring the core values of the profession
4. To provide a comprehensive curriculum to allow students to seek, upon graduation, state licensure in their chosen area of specialized practice.

## **Purpose of Field Education**

Field Education is the signature pedagogy of social work education. It provides the student the opportunity to begin practicing and developing social work knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes, as well as theories and concepts learned in the classroom setting and to carry out assignments from courses taken concurrently with placement. The field experience also enables students to expand their professional knowledge base and test out theories and principles under the supervision of an experienced social worker. Through field experience, students are provided an opportunity to develop professional identities and responsibilities. Field Education provides students an opportunity to achieve skilled mastery by practice. Field Education is required for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education.

## **Council on Social Work Education 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) Competency Areas and Practice Behaviors**

The curriculum for the Social Work major is guided by competency areas that reflect standards of the Council on Social Work Education and the Department's mission and goals. The curriculum prepares students for generalist social work practice through mastery of these core competencies. The Generalist Competencies are specified by the CSWE and guide students in their foundation year. The program has further identified specific competencies for the Clinical and Advanced Generalist concentrations.

Each competency area has performance outcomes - practice behaviors of knowledge, values, and skills needed for generalist practice. The MSW curriculum is designed so that students, upon completion of the major, will be able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, with further specialized competency in either Clinical or Advanced Generalist practice.

### **Generalist Competencies:**

#### **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;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

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

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

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

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

- demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-

regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

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

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

- apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- 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; and
- 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; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

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

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

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

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and

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

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- 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; and
- critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

## **Clinical Concentration Competencies:**

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

Practitioners of clinical social work maintain knowledge of and apply the standards from the NASW Code of Ethics within clinical practice and in professional interactions and demonstrate behaviors in clinical and professional interactions indicated by the code. Clinical social workers practice the values of the social work profession, including honoring the dignity and worth of clients and systems, maintaining a sense of ethical integrity, and developing professional competence. Clinical social workers adhere to ethical guidelines and principles within their agency setting, evidence-based practice and each stage of the generalist intervention model in clinical practice. Clinical social workers are able to effectively evaluate ethical dilemmas and make the best possible ethical decisions with

clients, professionals and organizations. Practitioners of clinical social work consistently use self-reflection and awareness through cognitive and affective processing, to maintain ethical and professional behaviors with clients and multidisciplinary professional teams. Clinical social workers apply self-awareness to professional performance and presentation and maintain ethical decision-making as a top priority in clinical practice and professional interactions. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Access the NASW Code of Ethics and select values, ethical standards and ethical principles to guide practice and navigate ethical dilemmas related to clinical practice and interactions with other professionals;
- Research and adhere to local, state and federal laws pertaining to practice, including mandated reporting, confidentiality, and ethical billing standards;
- Engage in consistent self-awareness and access supervision and appropriate social supports to process emotional and ethical barriers in practice, in order to maintain professionalism and ethical practice;
- Assess professional and social context of work and engage in professional behavior within this context, including appropriate dress, language, documentation and clinical practice standards.

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

Clinical social workers engage in practice that continues to advance advocacy skills used in generalist practice, for the rights of individual and families, as well as clients as part of broader systems. Clinical social workers seek and maintain knowledge of oppression and racism, including their own biases, as well as informed responses to the clinical needs of the clients grounded in racism and oppression. Clinical social workers seek to reduce oppression and racism through clinical practice and advancement of social justice. Clinical social workers provide evidence-based practice and the generalist intervention model with contextual understanding of the social, racial, economic and environmental factors that affect clients, and intervene with necessary systems levels. Clinical social workers seek to empower and partner with clients to advocate for themselves and others in their social, economic and environmental systems and support clients in advancing social, racial, economic and environmental justice in their own lives. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Advocate for human rights at the individual, family and group system levels;
- Incorporate anti-oppressive theories and clinical intervention strategies;
- Select and apply empirically supported and promising practices that empower clients;
- Engage and intervene with necessary systems with the goal of advancing social, racial, economic and environmental justice and human rights of individuals, families and groups.

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



Clinical social workers prioritize the social work value of acknowledging and honoring the diversity and differences in individuals and seek to apply this knowledge to clinical practice. Clinical social workers do not act as experts in the diverse identities of clients, but act as humble learners and engage clients' own expertise and sense of meaning in diversity and difference within clinical practice. Clinical social workers maintain awareness of biases, including affective reactions and potential judgments, by practicing skills in self-reflection, and engage in clinical practice with awareness of their own value system as different from clients' values. Clinical social workers maintain awareness of ongoing racial inequities and oppression, and advocate for racial justice, as well as apply frameworks, including internalized oppression and racial trauma to clinical practice. Clinical social workers employ advocacy skills in order to develop more equitable and inclusive environments for individuals, families and groups. Clinical social workers apply the generalist intervention model and evidence-based practice with the understanding that diversity and intersectionality affect clients' perceptions, needs and abilities to engage and benefit from interventions, and adjust practice as needed to meet client needs. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, and group levels;
- Advocate for the diverse needs of clients receiving clinical services;
- Behave as humble learners, seeking knowledge about diverse individuals and groups, and acknowledging clients as experts in their unique experiences and perspectives;
- Consistently practice skills in self-awareness and critical reflection to assess and regulate affective and cognitive responses to diversity in practice;
- Access supervision as needed to process and manage cognitive and affective responses to working with diverse clients.

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

Clinical social workers remain aware of current research in clinical practice and apply research to clinical practice in order to develop and maintain competence in the profession. Clinical social workers inform practice through research, use of the evidence-based practice process, and application of empirically supported and promising practices. Clinical social workers evaluate research with knowledge of diversity in client populations, and awareness of research disparities for underrepresented groups, and seek knowledge from diverse sources. Clinical social workers continuously improve skills through research informed training and practice. Clinical social workers evaluate own use of evidence-based practice, including skill development, conceptual understanding, and internal processes, through supervision and self-reflection. Clinical social workers build on self-reflection and supervision by seeking to improve clinical outcomes through further training and advancement in evidence-based clinical practice. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Remain aware of current research supporting clinical practice, using qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills;

- Assess individuals, families, and groups, and using the evidence-based practice process, selecting empirically-supported treatments, promising practices, or specific skills informed by research and uniquely suited to clients' diverse identities;
- Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.

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

Clinical social workers seek knowledge and understanding of federal, state, local and organizational policies that affect service delivery and the well-being of clients. Clinical social workers provide assessments and interventions with knowledge of the policy context in which services are delivered, and seek to maximize the clinical impact for clients within this context. Clinical social workers seek to understand and influence policies in order to best serve clients in the clinical environment, emphasizing effective service delivery and dignity and worth of the individual. Clinical social workers evaluate their own affective and cognitive responses to policy at multiple levels and use this awareness to inform practice and engagement in policy change. Clinical social workers reference the NASW Code of Ethics in adhering to policy and use self-reflection and supervision to evaluate ethical dilemmas in delivery of services regarding implementation of policies within practice. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Seek to understand policies at varying levels that affect direct practice and clients' well-being;
- Assess the impact of policy on clinical practice and their clients';
- Use critical thinking and advocacy skills to influence policy that impacts delivery of clinical services at the individual, family, and group levels.

### **Competency 6 – Engagement with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social workers actively engage with individuals, families and groups in the clinical context using empathy, reflection, interpersonal skills, awareness of diversity, and strong use of self. Clinical social workers are aware that engagement is an ongoing process throughout the clinical relationship. Clinical social workers apply human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and other relevant perspectives to effectively engaging with individuals, families and groups. Clinical social workers engage in self-awareness to understand their own values and biases and how they affect engagement with clients. Clinical social workers evaluate effectiveness of engagement skills through self-reflection and supervision and continuously seek to improve skills. Clinical social workers use engagement in evidence-based practices, applying generalist, clinical and intervention-specific skills in interactions with individuals, families and groups. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Effectively engage in relationships with individuals, families and groups through the use of empathy, self-awareness, and interpersonal relationship skills;
- Apply perspectives including person-in-environment, human behavior and the social environment, and anti-oppressive frameworks to engage with clients in clinical settings;
- Use supervision and self-reflection to evaluate and improve on engagement skills;

- When appropriate, practice evidence-based engagement strategies, including those specific to empirically supported models.

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

Clinical social workers effectively use formal and informal assessment tools to gather comprehensive information in determining the needs, desires, clinical presentation and treatment implications for individuals, families and groups. Clinical social workers continuously engage assessment strategies throughout the duration of the client relationship to inform the clinical process. Clinical social workers use evidence-based assessment methods as well as research and knowledge of clinical concerns, person-in-environment context, agency roles, and stated or implied needs of clients in formulating comprehensive assessments. Clinical social workers remain aware of and prioritize client values, differences, preferences and perceptions in formulation of assessments. Clinical social workers are effectively able to organize information to provide timely case conceptualization, including diagnoses, recommendations and understanding of personal, familial and group needs. Clinical social workers clearly communicate assessment outcomes to clients and other appropriate constituencies in a timely fashion, using necessary accommodations for clients with diverse communication needs. Clinical social workers effectively apply assessments in order to formulate collaborative treatment plans with individuals, families and groups. Clinical social workers select evidence-based practice and empirically-supported treatments appropriate for specific client needs, diagnoses, diverse identities, and agency context, and work collaboratively with clients to determine treatment plans that are designed to meet the goals of individuals and families. Clinical social workers are able to create measurable objectives from client goals and monitor progress toward goals and objectives in practice. As anti-racist practitioners, clinical social workers remain aware of personal biases and context that may affect assessment outcome and use self-reflection and supervision to appropriately mitigate affective and cognitive responses. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Create comprehensive biopsychosocial spiritual assessments through interaction with clients and collateral sources, empowering clients in the assessment process;
- Apply appropriate theoretical perspectives to the assessment process;
- Use critical thinking and organizational skills to organize assessments and disseminate to clients and appropriate constituencies, including organizing clinical formulations for case consultations and supervision;
- Evaluate and provide clinical diagnoses using the DSM-V;
- Collaboratively develop goals and objectives for clinical services, prioritizing the needs and desires of the clients as well as the clinical knowledge of the social worker;
- Evaluate, select and effectively recommend the most appropriate, available, evidence-based and empirically-supported interventions.

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

Clinical social workers are aware of diverse, culturally sensitive and evidence-based treatment options provided in individual, family and group context and can provide or refer to the most appropriate and available treatment option. Clinical social workers honor the

dignity and worth of individuals by collaborating with clients and other constituencies to maximize desired treatment outcomes. Clinical social workers effectively provide evidence-based, empirically-supported and promising practices appropriate to clients' unique needs, desires and differences, and consider oppression, racism and injustices experienced by clients. Clinical social workers remain aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and seek training and supervision to improve ability to effectively intervene with clients. Clinical social workers use self-reflection to assess potential barriers to treatment, such as clinician-specific countertransference, secondary traumatic stress, and implicit biases, and seek supervision and other supports to reduce their impact. Clinical social workers form effective transition and termination plans and transition or end services in collaboration with clients, particularly considering clients' achievement of personal goals. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Apply critical thinking skills to select the most effective and available clinical interventions to assist clients in reaching specified goals and objectives;
- Apply evidence-based research and clinically significant theories, as well as knowledge of oppression, racism and other injustices, to inform all interventions, including empirically-supported models;
- Engage in person-centered and effective treatment practices that invoke the change process and enhance clients' ability to achieve personal goals and identified objectives;
- Terminate intervention and assist clients in identifying next steps, which may include linking them to further services or supports.

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

Clinical social workers are able to evaluate outcomes of clinical practice with individuals, families and groups by selecting and using appropriate models of practice evaluation. Clinical social workers use ethical guidelines in practice and program evaluation processes. Clinical social workers apply outcomes of evaluations to inform further effective practice and make measurable and intentional changes to practice in response to evaluation outcomes. Clinical social workers are able to evaluate use of self and the clinician's effectiveness in practice through self-reflection and supervision, and use outcomes of evaluation to inform further practice. Clinical social workers evaluate impact of personal biases on clinical outcomes and clients' wellbeing, and actively engage in practices such as supervision and further training in order to support best possible outcomes. Clinical social workers engage in the following behaviors:

- Select appropriate tools and methods to evaluate clinical practice;
- Use critical thinking skills and knowledge of applicable theoretical perspectives to evaluate effectiveness of interventions;
- Apply outcomes of client and self-evaluations to inform ongoing practice methodologies and perspectives, and make necessary changes to improve effectiveness.

### **Advanced Generalist Concentration Competencies:**

#### **Competency 1 - Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior**

Advanced Generalist social workers are committed to a holistic, ecological approach toward work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Advanced Generalist social workers are ethical leaders and organizers across realms of practice and focus on progress across all client system levels, using a more sophisticated level of generalist, multi-dimensional practice. Advanced Generalist social workers demonstrate the capacity, integrity, and commitment to act in an anti-oppressive and ethical manner that promotes inclusive participation in direct services, decision-making, public policy, and community building. They ensure that practice in complex systems respects every individual's and community's right to human dignity and worth by opposing sources and structures of oppression. Advanced Generalist social workers ensure ethical frameworks and culturally responsiveness in practice, research, and policy arenas. They do so through the use of self-reflection, self-regulation, supervision, consultation, and lifelong learning to address how their attitudes and biases influence their personal and professional identity, values, and behaviors. Advanced Generalist social workers are committed to maintaining awareness of regulations, laws, and procedures to ensure ethical practice.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Consistently engage in self-awareness and self-reflection to critically navigate competing personal and professional values while working with client systems;
- Adopt an ecological systems perspective when working to address multidimensional issues of injustice, such as practice issues, organizational dilemmas, policy inequities, or community structure;
- Consistently apply an anti-oppressive framework, the NASW Code of Ethics, and local, state, and federal laws to decision making, ensuring that practice across systems levels reflects social work values and ensures the basic needs and rights of vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged client systems;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of social work supervision as an accountability mechanism in supporting ethical and professional social work practice;
- Recognize the complexities and dilemmas that may arise in working with multiple client groups and constituencies;

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

Advanced Generalist social workers recognize that human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work and necessary for every human being to live in freedom and with dignity, security, and equality. Informed by theories of justice, human rights, power dynamics, and other frameworks, Advanced Generalist social workers advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice locally and globally, by adopting an anti-oppressive, anti-racist lens to their practice across systems. They use critical thinking to analyze the structural forces that maintain patterns of prejudice, oppression, ethnocentrism, and discrimination by understanding, respecting, valuing, advocating for, and joining with client systems who are or have been marginalized and/or minoritized. Advanced Generalist social workers critically evaluate the roles of power, race, oppression, privilege and colonization as they relate to social, economic, racial, and environmental justice and social workers' role in rectifying inequities. They identify strengths and resources to combat

injustices and inequalities, and advocate for avenues for positive change. Advanced Generalist social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Identify and promote the vision, mission, goals, objectives, and values of the client system, as identified by the client system;
- Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, and policy levels;
- Actively seek information and remain informed on issues of social, racial, economic, and environmental justice;
- Apply advanced knowledge and skill to combat the forces that maintain patterns of oppression, discrimination, historical trauma, and injustice through social services and programs;
- Advocate for, and build capacity for self-advocacy among clients of oppressed groups and communities;
- Analyze and participate in the political process on behalf of all client systems, to promote human rights and social justice; and
- Identify and engage key stakeholders to advocate for access to resources, services, benefits, and opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized clients, constituencies, and communities.

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

Advanced Generalist social workers have a sophisticated conceptualization of how racism and oppression shape human experiences at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. They evaluate how racism and oppression currently and historically have influenced individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, policies, research, and social work practice. Advanced Generalist social workers work to dismantle racist systems, institutions and structures, always advocating for social, racial, economic and environmental justice. They use an intersectional lens and anti-oppressive approach to develop strategies for engaging and collaborating with people and communities who are marginalized. Advanced Generalist social workers are highly skilled at communicating with those holding different perspectives and worldviews, recognizing the complexities and contradictions at times in addressing multiple oppressions and disparities. They educate diverse stakeholders about how programmatic, organizational, community, and policy decisions affect vulnerable communities to craft interventions that advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. These social workers recognize the role that White supremacy culture has played in their own socialization, and work to use their own privileges and experiences to engage in anti-racist practice. Advanced Generalist practitioners are committed to examining how power, implicit and explicit bias, privilege, and oppression are manifested in their own practice. Advanced Generalist social workers understand how intersecting issues of power, privilege, oppression, marginalization and minoritization shape human experiences, and impede progress toward the creation of equitable and inclusive environments. Advanced Generalist social workers recognize the role and complexity of intersectionality as it relates

to self-identity & social work practice. Advanced Generalist social workers actively practice cultural humility when working with all client systems.

Advanced Generalist 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 in working with client systems, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences;
- Engage with all client systems with an understanding of how one's own personal biases, power, and privilege impact all aspects of social work practice;
- 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 all people;
- Formulate inclusive practice strategies based on an intersectional analysis of systems of power, privilege, and oppression amongst client systems, as well as within and outside organizational, community, and policy contexts;
- Engage ADEI in practice by developing culturally responsive and inclusive services, programs, policies, organizations and communities.

**Competency 4** – Engage in research informed-practice and practice-informed research.

Advanced Generalist social workers engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice by using research methods and practice insights to support micro, mezzo & macro approaches and the development of client programs. They understand that many types of evidence, from personal narrative to analysis of large data sets, inform the development, analysis, and critique of social policies and interventions. Advanced Generalist social workers recognize environmental, sociocultural, and historical factors that affect the inclusion of underrepresented populations in research and understand how this research enhances service delivery and contributes to broader knowledge building within social work practice. In collaboration with key program stakeholders and those directly affected by social problems, Advanced Generalist social workers build culturally informed knowledge to promote human rights and social justice for vulnerable and oppressed populations. They communicate research-based arguments to inform policies and programs and translate research findings into actionable planned change efforts and policies.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Engage in critical analysis and ongoing review of research findings, social work practice models, and practice wisdom to inform advanced social work practice;
- Identify, critically evaluate, and use data and scholarship to build new knowledge and inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy and programs;
- Collaborate, mobilize, and organize constituents, stakeholders, and colleagues to engage in research for advocacy, policy making, program design, and evaluation, and the dissemination of research findings to improve direct client services, policies, programs, and interventions; and

- Engage in critical analysis to identify anticipated obstacles and opposition to the conduct and dissemination of research, including ethical, political, and economic dilemmas.

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

Advanced Generalist social workers apply an ecosystems approach to examine how historical, political, social, economic, and cultural factors shape the human environment and use this knowledge to recognize and capitalize on opportunities for reform that advance human rights; racial and gender equity; access to high-quality, comprehensive social welfare services; and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Advanced Generalist social workers advocate within organizations, communities and governments for policies that actively promote justice, human rights, and anti-oppressive practice. They remain informed about how policy impacts many aspects of the lives of humans, and how social workers can inform the decision-making process. Advanced Generalist social workers develop collaborative inter-professional relationships and coalitions with key community members and client systems to develop, implement, and evaluate policies across systems, utilizing the NASW Code of Ethics and social work values as the lens through which ideal outcomes should be perceived. Advanced Generalist social workers challenge, mold, and dismantle policies that support inequity and oppression. They engage and build the capacity of affected constituencies to participate in advocacy and direct and indirect lobbying, including working through coalitions, to advance evidence-informed policies that support well-being.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Analyze organizational, local, state, national, and international policies to determine their interactions as well as their impact on social, racial, economic, and environmental justice at all client system levels;
- Engage, empower, and mobilize constituents to participate in policy and advocacy work;
- Use research and practice evidence, and stories of lived experience to affirm and disseminate information to key constituencies about policy inequities and injustices;
- Use relationship building and community organizing to form and participate in professional organizations, coalitions, and other groups that advocate for justice, equity, and fairness, as well as to leverage political capital; and
- Through policy development, promote an organizational culture recognizing and rewarding diversity, inclusion, high-quality services, and employee engagement and empowerment.

### **Competency 6 – Engagement with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.**

Advanced Generalist social workers utilize advanced engagement and relational skills throughout practice with all client systems. These practitioners recognize and honor the histories of how individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities may have historically benefitted from or been harmed by the programs, organizations, governments, and services within their communities. Advanced Generalist social workers distinguish the



significance and impact of oppression, discrimination, and poverty on individual, family, and community life when determining engagement strategies. They create, nurture, and deepen authentic and strategic relationships, demonstrating empathy, reflection, and strong interpersonal skills. Advanced Generalist social workers further consider power dynamics in selecting, implementing, and modifying engagement strategies. Advanced Generalist social workers recognize how aspects of their own identities can impact their relationships with client systems as well as the effectiveness of the services they provide and attend to these issues that impact practice and continued engagement. Advanced Generalist social workers build collaborative relationships that bring together stakeholders at the grassroots and interorganizational levels for a common purpose to improve social, economic, and environmental well-being.

#### Social Workers in AG Practice:

- Acknowledge and address how aspects of their own identities (e.g., background, status, privilege, biases, beliefs, worldviews, oppression) affect the engagement process;
- Practice empathy and self-awareness, and engagement skills with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations affected by the issue or problem in ways that are culturally informed and value their expertise, knowledge, and culture;
- Apply theoretical perspectives including person-in-environment and human behavior in the social environment to engage with clients in all settings;
- Describe and address multiple aspects of identity and intersectionality (e.g., age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status) that are important to consider in terms of the social work practice will be approached and perceived;
- Use relationship building skills, leadership skills, group facilitation & mediation skills to gain credibility with allies, clients, and constituents at all levels to initiate and facilitate dialogue that mobilizes and sustains action; and

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

Advanced Generalist social workers assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities utilizing a strengths-based and person-in-environment conceptual framework that recognizes the capacities, resources, and challenges at all client systems levels. Advanced Generalist social workers assess across all levels and client systems, paying special attention to understanding the underlying biases that not only maintain individual, structural, and systemic oppression, but also impact the resources available. Advanced Generalist social workers engage in active listening to conducting assessments, and strive for the ability to identify and separate their personal experiences, affective reactions, and biases. Throughout the assessment process, Advanced Generalist social workers approach all client systems with cultural humility, honoring clients as the experts of their own lives. Advanced Generalist social workers utilize a range of tools, skills, and practices to conduct needs and assets assessments in a manner that is responsive and culturally informed, to improve planning, development, and implementation of strengths-based solutions with and on behalf of client

systems. They effectively organize, document, and communicate information to provide clear recommendations on diagnostics, proposed intervention, and the strengths and needs of the client system.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Using a multidimensional approach and various theoretical perspectives, assess and analyze assets, needs, benefits, gaps in services, rights, and the distribution of resources and power to identify appropriate interventions at all levels of client systems;
- 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, biopsychosocialspiritual assessments), secondary data sources (e.g., census, polling, precinct data), and the lived experience of affected individuals, families, groups within organizations, communities, and policy arenas;
- Assess clients and provide clinical diagnoses using the DSM-5;
- Collaboratively develop goals and objectives for interventions, prioritizing the needs and values of clients at all levels;
- Prepare reports that summarize and analyze collected data and frame options for intervention; and
- Design and conduct assessments of the structure, composition, process, and environmental factors that affect organizational performance and community and policy practice activities.

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

Advanced Generalist social workers intervene with client systems emphasizing an approach of cultural humility and collaboration with client systems, providers, governmental agencies, and relevant stakeholders. Advanced Generalist social workers utilize an ecosystems approach to intervention through holistic and multidimensional social work practice and programming. Advanced Generalist social workers recognize that interventions must assist client systems in achieving self-identified goals to honor the dignity and worth of individuals. They remain current regarding the most effective interventions and the evidence base of interventions to help them select the most appropriate intervention strategies possible. Advanced Generalist social workers evaluate interventions and engagement throughout practice and terminate interventions that are not serving the clients' needs, referring them to additional services as necessary.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Select and implement theoretically and empirically informed interventions to assist client systems in achieving self-identified goals;

- Collaborate, negotiate, and advocate with and on behalf of client systems and empower them throughout the intervention process;
- Effectively lead organizations that initiate and sustain positive social change interventions;
- Apply intervention skills to develop and revitalize social, economic, and environmental assets and build community capacity;
- Use interprofessional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes

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

Advanced Generalist social workers recognize that evaluation is an ongoing process to ensure the most successful outcomes for client systems. They evaluate practice with client systems through culturally responsive and client-centered means. They work to measure the effectiveness of interventions, programs and policies to inform practice and research, and do this through the selection of the most appropriate evaluation tools and models for each situation. Advanced Generalist social workers consistently utilize self-reflection and supervision to evaluate the efficacy of their interventions, as well as the impact of services. They integrate theoretical and conceptual frameworks into evaluation strategies to inform their understanding of the client system and context.

Social workers in AG practice:

- Select appropriate tools and methods to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention, program, or policy;
- Integrate theoretical and conceptual frameworks into evaluation strategies that facilitate an understanding of community, organizational, and policy dynamics and outcomes;
- Demonstrate the ability to use and apply quantitative and qualitative data analyses and current technological processes and resources, to inform and enhance evaluation activities;
- Work to improve the effectiveness of services, programs, policies and practice by applying the outcomes of evaluations across client systems; and
- Utilize outcome data to advocate for social, racial, economic and environmental justice for all client systems.

## Section III - Role Descriptions and Responsibilities

### Field Director

The Field Director is primarily responsible for the overall coordination and administration of the Field Education program. It is the responsibility of the Field Director and the MSW Program Director to establish guidelines and procedures for the Field Education program. The Field Director is responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating all aspects of the Field Education experience. The Field Director is responsible for developing field placements, placing students, monitoring student performance in the field as reported by Field Instructors and Faculty Liaisons, evaluating the social work field education program, registering field agencies, and monitoring the effectiveness of the agency's ability to provide quality field education opportunities.

The Field Director works with the Faculty Liaisons who are NMU faculty members assigned as the official instructors of field placement courses. The Field Director supports Faculty Liaisons in developing student Learning Agreements, coordinating the administration of mid-year and end-of-year student evaluations, and providing consultative services to Faculty Liaisons as needed. The Field Director is responsible for updating and maintaining the evaluation instruments, as well as ensuring that the Faculty Liaisons have access to them, in order to share them with Field Instructors and students.

The Field Director is responsible for recruiting and maintaining placement opportunities with Field Instructors and agencies. The Field Director holds annual Field Instructor orientation sessions and periodic training sessions for field instructors. The Field Director maintains continued dialogue with field settings and instructors through regular informational emails, phone calls, video-conferencing and in-person networking and visits.

The Field Director is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the Field Education program and ensuring continued compliance with the educational objectives of the NMU social work program and the Council on Social Work Education. Field Education student evaluations serve as an outcome measure of the overall effectiveness of the MSW social work program. The Field Director organizes the field evaluation data and uses data collection to monitor field placement quality.

### Faculty Liaison

The NMU faculty member assigned to a field placement seminar course (SW 581, SW 582, SW 681, and SW 682), serves in the role of Faculty Liaison. This person has responsibility to monitor and evaluate the student's overall performance, make at least one agency visit per semester (or by video-conference for Global students), participate in field workshops and meetings, and manage problems related to field requirements. The Faculty Liaison will maintain contact with the Field Instructor by email, phone, video-conference or in person visits throughout the student's placement and will make a face-to-face or video-conference visit to the field agency during each placement semester. The goals of the agency visit include reviewing progress toward learning assignments and objectives, reviewing the Learning

Agreement, maintaining a safe learning environment, and discussing other pertinent field education requirements. During agency visits, the Faculty Liaison reviews and evaluates the field experience with the Field Instructor. The Faculty Liaison may make additional visits to the agency during the placement semester when necessary and/or requested by a student or Field Instructor. Near the end of each semester, the Faculty Liaisons will send evaluations of student progress based on the identified competencies to both the Field Instructor and the student.

\*Congruent with CSWE language, “face-to-face” may include digital means, specifically meetings via video conferences. For the Traditional Campus option, the Faculty Liaison will make every possible effort to meet with Field Instructors onsite at the agency. For the Global Campus option, the Faculty Liaison and Field Instructor will meet face-to-face via video-conferencing.

## **Agency**

As a participant in the education of the student, the field placement agency provides a setting in which the students can gain meaningful social work practice experience. The placement experience must be compatible with classroom teaching and enable students the opportunity to integrate theory with practice. The agencies providing field instruction for students reflect the diversity of social welfare problems and the client populations served by social workers. As a participant in the education of the student for social work practice, the field placement agency has the following responsibilities:

- I. NMU will provide a formal Agency Affiliation Agreement to be signed by an agency designated representative. The Agency Affiliation Agreement outlines the general requirements and standards for field education including the roles and responsibilities of the university, agency, and field student. Affiliation Agreements remain in effect until canceled by either the university or field organization.
- II. The agency ensures that they will provide opportunities for in-person contact or synchronous virtual contact with clients and constituencies that will satisfy completion of the competencies specific to the placement concentration (Generalist, Clinical or Advanced Generalist ).
- III. The agency's representative(s) conducts a personal interview with each student being considered for field study to determine if placement in that agency setting is appropriate. The agency will inform the Field Director of the decision regarding the acceptance of the student for field placement. The agency has no obligation to work with students who are initially considered to be, or are later found to be, unsuited to the agency. Therefore, the agency, in consultation with the university, may request that the student be withdrawn from placement in the agency.
- IV. The agency provides the student with an agency orientation to familiarize the student with agency personnel policies and procedures.

- V. The agency informs students of potential work hazards such as exposure to infectious diseases or other health hazards. The agency also will make known any required preventive measures such as hepatitis testing, TB testing, and necessary immunizations. The agency will make students aware of policies and procedures that address their safety in the placement setting.
- VI. The agency ensures that under no circumstances will students prescribe medication or administer physical therapy. If a student's role within the agency requires them to assist in administering medication, this may be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with the Faculty Liaison and Field Director. If it is determined to be appropriate, the agency must train the student under their medication administration policies and practices.
- VII. The agency will allow Field Instructors to participate in trainings or workshops provided by the NMU social work program.
- VIII. The agency will make available physical facilities and other resources needed by the student to complete learning assignments as identified in the Learning Agreement. Ideally, the agency will provide the student with work space comparable to that provided to the regular staff.
- IX. The agency reimburses students' travel expenses that arise in the course of providing agency services customarily given to staff. This does not include reimbursement for daily travel to and from the agency.
- X. The agency will assist in the identification and selection of qualified social work staff to serve as Field Instructors. Field agencies should provide a Field Instructor who holds an MSW from a CSWE accredited program and has at least two years of post-MSW social work practice experience. Supervision may also be provided by an experienced human service supervisor with a closely related degree who agrees to consultation with a qualified social worker approved by the NMU Field Director, in order to reinforce a social work perspective.
- XI. The agency will provide time for weekly supervisory sessions between the Field Instructor and the student. The minimum expectation for supervision is one (1) hour per week. Field Instructors are also expected to be available between supervisory sessions for consultation as needed.

## **Field Instructor**

The social work program and approved field agencies engage jointly in the identification and selection of Field Instructors. Based on the standards of the Council on Social Work Education for field study, the agency staff member designated as a Field Instructor will hold an MSW from a CSWE accredited program with two years post-master's social work experience. Supervision may also be provided by an experienced human services supervisor with a

closely related degree who agrees to consultation with a qualified social worker approved by the NMU Field Director. All Field Instructors should have demonstrated competence in practice, supervision, and a capacity for teaching social work. The Field Instructor has responsibility for providing educational guidance to the student in meeting the learning objectives and other requirements for field study. Specific responsibilities of the Field Instructor during field placement include the following:

- I. Assist and support the student in identifying learning objectives in the development of the Learning Agreement. Signed copies of the Learning Agreement will be forwarded to the Faculty Liaison by established deadlines.
- II. Provide structured learning experiences for the student necessary to meet these learning objectives. These assignments should reflect curriculum goals, outcome objectives and action plans.
- III. Maintain a supportive teaching role to help students integrate knowledge, skills, and values addressed in course work with the demands of practice.
- IV. The Field Instructor is responsible for notifying the field education program in a timely manner through the Faculty Liaison when a student's performance may jeopardize the successful completion of the field placement.
- V. Provide a mid-year and end-of-year (final) evaluation.
- VI. Meet with the student and Faculty Liaison once each semester to review the placement progress and concerns, and discuss the Learning Agreement and any modifications that appear necessary.
- VII. Model professional behavior and maintain a positive attitude toward the social work profession which fosters the student's professional identification and growth.
- VIII. Provide weekly educational-focused meetings with the student.
- IX. Complete Field Instructor Orientation offered by the Field Department, ideally prior to the placement beginning.
- X. Complete and submit the Field Instructor Data Form to the Field Education Office.
- XI. Provide the Field Education Office with feedback regarding their interest, time, and general availability to supervise students.

## Student

The importance of students accepting responsibility for achieving a successful field placement experience cannot be overly emphasized. Along with field faculty and agency personnel, each student is expected to function as an assertive and active partner in planning, carrying out, and evaluating field education activities. Students should take initiative in working with the Field Instructor in developing the Learning Agreement and in the identification of specific educational goals and objectives. Specific student responsibilities are as follows:

- I. Students are expected to read and become familiar with this manual and comply with all policies and procedures contained herein.
- II. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and appropriate manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.
- III. Students are expected to follow the procedures outlined for participating in field education specified elsewhere in this manual. This process includes completion of required courses prior to admission to field education, application for field education, completion of documentation required for participation in field education, and acceptance by an agency for a field practicum.
- IV. Each student is required to assist in the development of a personal Learning Agreement, complete a minimum of 900 field hours in placement, and satisfactorily complete all required assignments.
- V. Students complete a weekly log form including the number of hours completed in placement for the week and a cumulative total. This log must be submitted to both the agency Field Instructor and the NMU Faculty Liaison as requested.
- VI. Students should be receptive to supervision and use it to improve practice skills and knowledge, increase self-awareness, and develop professionally. If there are problems during placement, students are responsible for pursuing resolution using proper channels. All problems or concerns should initially be shared with the Field Instructor. Preventing or resolving problems often requires that the student take initiative to interact with, question, provide feedback, and constructively confront others when it appears that the educational objectives are not being met. (Refer to Grievance Policy)
- VII. Students should expect to meet with the Field Instructor to participate in the mid-year and end-of-year evaluations. Students will meet with the Field Instructor and the Faculty Liaison to discuss progress toward achieving the objectives identified in the Learning Agreement once each semester.



## **Section IV - Northern Michigan University Policies and Guidelines**

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Northern Michigan University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of ancestry, race, color, ethnicity, religion or creed, sex or gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, familial status, handicap/disability, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal or state law in employment or the provision of services. NMU provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities.

This Policy on Non-Discrimination is designed to express the University's intent and commitment to comply with the requirements of State and federal non-discrimination laws. This Policy and all other policies and procedures of Northern Michigan University shall be interpreted and applied co-extensively with such laws. This Policy shall not be interpreted as creating any legally enforceable rights, contractual or otherwise, that are greater than those existing under applicable non-discrimination laws. The prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation does not apply to the University's relationships with outside organizations, including the federal government, the military, ROTC, and private employers. Nothing contained in this Policy shall be construed as prohibiting the University from applying bona fide occupational qualifications.

Limitations are appropriate if they are directly related to a legitimate University purpose, are required by law or rules of associations to which the Board of Trustees has determined the University will belong, are lawfully required by a grant or contract between the University and the state or federal government. Limitations of current facilities are excluded from this policy.

Complaints or inquiries related to this policy shall be directed to the Equal Opportunity Office or Human Resources. In the event of an alleged violation, the University's Discrimination/Complaint Procedures will be followed.

### **Disability Law Compliance Policy**

Northern Michigan University formally affirms its commitment to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities in any aspect of University life including, but not limited to, physical plant access, employment, services, and the academic process. To this end, Northern Michigan University declares its intention to adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all other applicable federal and state disability law.

The University shall offer appropriate and reasonable accommodations and shall establish and make known the procedures for obtaining those accommodations. Furthermore, the

University shall offer consultation, assistance and problem resolution to the University community through the office of the ADA Director and shall provide information regarding other applicable University processes.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Northern Michigan University is committed to its faculty, staff and students. Sexual harassment of any member of the University community is inconsistent with the University's desire to create the best possible living, learning, and work environment, and is therefore absolutely prohibited.

Harassment on the basis of sex is discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and the Michigan Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act. Federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination in employment and in the utilization of educational facilities and services. Sexual harassment is considered to be sex discrimination and is therefore illegal.

## **Retaliation**

It is a violation of University policy to intimidate, discipline, discharge, or harass any individual because she or he has filed a complaint, instituted proceedings, assisted an investigation, or formally or informally objected to sexual harassment and/or discriminatory practices. If retaliation occurs, the incident should be reported either to the Equal Opportunity Office or Human Resources (faculty and staff) or to the Dean of Students Office (students).

## **Confidentiality**

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the respondent, will be respected insofar as it does not interfere with the University's legal obligation or ability to investigate allegations of misconduct when brought to its attention, and to take corrective action when it is found that misconduct has occurred.

## **Cooperation**

All members of the University community are expected to provide full and truthful cooperation to university officials during an investigation.

For additional information, please see the NMU Equal Opportunity Office Website:

<http://www.nmu.edu/equalopportunity/>

## **Reporting Research Involving Human Subjects**

Normally, social work field instruction is not included as part of a research project. However, in the event that research is being conducted in the field placement experience, human

subject regulations may apply. Please contact the Office of Research and Development for details.

Office of Research and Development

401 Cohodas

Phone: 906-227-2300

Fax: 906-227-2315

[http://www.nmu.edu/grad\\_research/ord.htm](http://www.nmu.edu/grad_research/ord.htm)

The College of Graduate Studies is responsible for oversight for all grants and research conducted by employees and students at Northern Michigan University. The Dean serves as the Institutional Research Officer for the University. The Office of Research and Development administers internal grants and oversees external grants awarded to faculty, staff, and students.

Within this context, two committees serve with oversight responsibilities for the protection of human or non-human subjects used in research. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversees all care and use protocols for animals. The Human Subjects Research Review Committee (HSRRC) oversees all protocols involving the use of human subjects in research. External grants which university faculty, staff, or students apply for must be reviewed by this office prior to submission.

## **Section V - Field Placement Program Policies and Guidelines**

### **Placement Eligibility**

Field placement is offered as a sequence of four courses (SW 581, SW 582, SW 681, SW 682) for regular standing students and two courses (SW 681, SW 682) for advanced standing students. In order to insure enrollment in field placement, a student must:

- I. Be admitted to the MSW program.
- II. File a completed application for field placement by the designated deadline.
- III. Have a Social Work Program GPA of at least 3.0 prior to field placement entrance.
- IV. Comply with the requirements of the application process, including interviews with the Field Director and prospective field placement agency staff.

### **Life Experience/Employment**

In keeping with accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education, the MSW Program at Northern Michigan University does not grant academic credit for life experience or previous work experience, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of courses in the professional foundation areas of the social work curriculum.

### **Disclosure**

In order to determine eligibility of MSW students for placement at a field site or eventual social work licensure, students are screened for criminal history or other background issues during the application process. If a student incurs a new allegation or charge of abusive or criminal conduct, the student should inform the social work department immediately. If a student is unable to secure a field placement or is removed from a field placement because of a prior or new charge, or other issue where a student has not displayed behavior representative of a social worker, this may lead to a student becoming ineligible to meet the requirements to complete the MSW program.

### **Learning Agreement**

Learning Agreements serve as the means of transforming the core competencies of the program curriculum into specific, concrete practice behaviors and experiences for the student within the context of the field setting. A Learning Agreement is created by the student in collaboration with the Field Instructor each year of field placement. The Agreement serves as a written contract between the student and the agency describing agreed upon goals and activities for placement designed to meet the competencies specified for the year and focus of placement (Generalist, Clinical or Advanced Generalist).

Although the Field Instructor must give approval of the Learning Agreement content, development of the plan is the principal responsibility of the student who seeks support and guidance from the Field Instructor; the student is responsible for informing the Field Instructor of further instructions and deadlines for the assignment; the student will be expected to submit the completed agreement as an assignment for the field placement seminar. The Field Instructor may also request a copy of the document as a guide and record for the placement.

At the time of the first semester performance evaluation, the initial Learning Agreement should be reviewed to clarify objectives for both the first and second semester of placement.

## **Student Evaluation**

The purpose of student evaluation is to determine achievement of the social work program's educational goals and field instruction objectives, to identify assignments and activities that will address areas requiring future attention, and to assist in determining achievement of learning objectives and competencies. Ideally, performance evaluation will be an ongoing process that occurs between the Field Instructor and the student.

The first formal evaluation occurs mid-year at the end of the Fall Semester. The Faculty Liaison will send the evaluation instrument, directions for completing the evaluation, and other necessary documentation to Field Instructors. The Field Instructor and the student are encouraged to have an evaluation conference to discuss the student's performance and to complete the evaluation instrument. The faculty liaison will review the formal evaluation prior to the assignment of grades. The actual assignment of a grade for field education is the responsibility of the Faculty Liaison. Upon review of the student's performance at mid-year, the Learning Agreement may be modified based on the more complete understanding of student learning needs and a reappraisal of assignments and tasks that will be available within the agency.

The final formal evaluation is due by the end of the last week of classes. The Field Director will notify Field Instructors of the exact date. The Faculty Liaison will send the final evaluation instrument, directions for completing the evaluation, and other necessary documentation to Field Instructors. The final evaluation will be prepared by the Field Instructor, discussed with the student, and submitted to the Faculty Liaison.

Evaluation reports submitted to the social work program are the property of the university and may not be released by the Field Instructor/agency to others for any reason. The social work program may release these reports only with the written permission of the student. In preparing general letters of reference formally requested by the student, school officials may incorporate evaluation materials only if appropriate releases are present.

## **Grading**

The field placement courses are graded on an “A” through “F” scale. A grade of 3.0 (“B”) or better must be achieved for the student to proceed to the next required sequential course.

A grade of “I” (Incomplete) is intended only for situations where circumstances such as illness or emergency prevent the student from completing work within the normal semester time frame. It is not employed for poor or irresponsible performance. A grade of “I” is only entered with the stipulation that the student make up the required, deficit work within a designated time period.

Grading is the responsibility of the Faculty Liaison. The grade is based on the student’s overall demonstration of performance and progress toward preparedness for advanced social work practice. The Faculty Instructor bases the grade on the Field Instructor’s written evaluation, consultations with the Field Instructor and student, student hours and activity log, the Faculty Liaison’s assessment of student’s satisfactory performance in achieving the goals of Field Education, and required course assignments.

Minimum requirements include:

- I. Completion of a satisfactory Learning Agreement assignment approved by the assigned NMU Faculty Liaison/Field Director by the deadline date.
- II. Timely submission of accepted field reports to the Faculty Liaison by the student. (More than 3 unsatisfactory reports is grounds for a grade of Unsatisfactory.)
- III. Approval of the Field Evaluation submitted by the agency Field Instructor.
- IV. Approval of the field hours and activity log submitted by the student to the Faculty Liaison.

Each NMU Faculty Liaison provides a syllabus each term in which the grading rubric is specified.

## **Service Continuity during Academic Calendar Breaks**

It is the policy of NMU’s MSW program that students are permitted, but not *required*, by the university to maintain a presence in the field agency during academic calendar breaks. If students choose to fulfill placement hours over breaks, it must be agreed upon by the student, Faculty Liaison, and the agency. The NMU MSW program expects students to consider client and agency needs when scheduling absences during semester breaks, and to appropriately plan ahead for breaks with the Field Instructor.

## **Professional Behavior**

Becoming a professional social worker demands that students exhibit professional behavior and demeanor. Students should be able to utilize critical thinking and decision-

making skills to discern and respond appropriately to multiple and varied situations. Policies students are expected to follow include, but are not limited to, those of Northern Michigan University, the NMU Social Work Department, and the placement agency. When policies and professional expectations conflict, students should seek guidance from the Field Instructor and NMU faculty in best resolving the issue. Professional expectations may include, but are not limited to:

- I. Compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics
- II. Compliance with policies and procedures established by NMU, the social work department, and the field agency
- III. Professional hygiene, dress and behavior appropriate for the field setting
- IV. Appropriate verbal, written, and electronic communication

Failure to meet these expectations may lead to consequences which could include failure of the Field Education course or in some cases, termination from the social work program.

## **Grievances**

Student issues related to field education are handled within the social work program according to the following steps. Upon the discretion of the Field Director, the steps outlined below will be bypassed and taken directly to the MSW Program Director for resolution. Complaints about grades are handled under the standard Social Work Department grievance procedures.

- I. The student shall discuss the problem or issue directly with the Field Instructor. Efforts to resolve any problem or difficulty should normally be handled within the agency before contacting the Faculty Liaison.
- II. If the issue cannot be resolved, the student should discuss the problem with the Faculty Liaison and if necessary, a meeting between the student, the Field Instructor, and the Faculty Liaison shall be held.
- III. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the matter will be referred to the Field Director.

## **Termination of Field Placement**

When a student fails to maintain satisfactory performance in concurrent, required Social Work courses, or demonstrates unsatisfactory performance at the field education site, termination from Field Education may be necessary. The Field Director should be informed of each step in the following procedure:

- I. Discussion of the situation among the parties involved: the student, the Field Instructor and/or the Faculty Liaison.
- II. The Faculty Liaison will schedule separate conferences with all parties to discuss the circumstances around the consideration of termination.
- III. The Faculty Liaison may schedule a joint conference with the student and the

- Field Instructor to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue(s) and/or arrange for the student's termination from the agency placement.
- IV. The reasons for termination from field placement must be reported in writing by the Field Liaison and communicated to the student. Termination of placement due to unsatisfactory field performance by the student results in a grade of "F."

## **Field Placement Reassignment**

The Field Director makes the final decision regarding the need to reassign a student. This action will involve consultation with the Field Liaison and agency field instructor.

Reassignment, after the semester has begun, will require the following steps:

- I. The Faculty Liaison is contacted by either the student or the Field Instructor.
- II. The Field Director must be informed of the situation, preferably by the Faculty Liaison.
- III. In the event that a student is requesting relocation, a written statement must be submitted to the Field Director before action is taken. This letter should include:
  - A. reasons for the request
  - B. ways in which learning needs are not being met
  - C. attempts that have been made to resolve the problem(s)
  - D. Reassignment is a last resort. Problem resolution and the exploration of other options are considered before approving reassignment.

## **Field Placement in Employment Setting**

The Field Placement experience is intended to provide an opportunity to engage in a structured learning situation for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and skills. Students are not guaranteed to be placed within their employment setting and must request this through the field application process. Employment-based field placements must provide adequate opportunities for learning, support from internal supervision, and experiences that meet their learning objectives. Students may count a maximum of 20 hours per week in an employment-based setting toward their field placement, as long as those hours are explicitly related to their learning objectives toward meeting competency. Students must remain in their field placements for the entirety of the academic year, regardless of whether they finished their hours early.

In order for a student to qualify for placement in an employment-based setting, the following conditions must be met:

- The agency must make a sincere effort to create a learning environment for the student. Students must have sufficient opportunity to complete course assignments and learning objectives associated with the Field Placement experience.
- The Field Director must be permitted to speak with the student's employment supervisor prior to consideration of placement in order to assess the ability and willingness of the agency to provide an environment that prioritizes the placement learning experience. Activities, assignments, and employee tasks can qualify as field



hours so long as they are explicitly connected to their learning agreements, the social work competencies and their level of practice.

- The assigned Field Instructor can also be the student's work supervisor, so long as field education supervision is distinct from employment supervision and supports the student's learning objectives.
- The agency and Field Instructor must meet all other criteria as an appropriate MSW field placement setting.
- The Field Director retains the right and responsibility to decide whether or not a student is to be placed in their employment setting based on the potential for a comprehensive learning experience without the student's job responsibilities overriding their field placement experience. Students are *not* entitled to placement in their placement setting regardless of the above criteria being met. If at any point during the employment-based placement it becomes apparent to the supervising staff and faculty that the agency and/or student are unable to maintain the commitment to the designated learning activities, the Field Director maintains the right to terminate this placement and facilitate placement in another agency.

Occasionally, field students who are *not* employed are hired by the agency in which they are completing field placement prior to the completion of the semester or year. Prior approval should be obtained from the Field Director to assure that learning objectives will be completed under this arrangement. Furthermore, it is important to note that if a student is completing an employment-based field placement, NMU's liability coverage will not cover them, and they must be covered by their respective agency.

## **Paid Field Placements**

Paid field placements are internship opportunities in which students may be paid as part of their placement experience. This is distinct from employment-based field placements in that paid field placements are simply paying students for internship hours, as opposed to hiring them as an official employee. Field placement staff are responsible for interviewing students and making the final decision about which students are selected to complete an internship within each respective agency. While the Field Director can provide students with information about which placement sites may be paid or unpaid, the Field Director is not responsible for making the agency's decision to accept a student or not and does not participate in that process. Under a paid placement arrangement, NMU provides liability coverage for students, so long as they are not hired as official employees of the agency. If providing students a paid field placement, agencies are required to prioritize students' learning objectives to help them obtain competency as a professional social worker.

## **Liability**

The NMU comprehensive liability policies provide coverage for university faculty, staff and employees while acting within the scope of their duties as university employees. Students are also covered while they are engaged in university approved academic programs,

including field instruction administered by the social work program. Field instruction agencies may require students to acquire additional liability insurance at the students' personal expense; however, this step is seldom necessary and the NMU Risk Manager can provide consultation in these cases. Additional questions concerning liability protection for university employees or students engaged in an educational program will be directed to the Office of Risk Management and Insurance, 136 Services Building, Northern Michigan University. Phone: (906) 227-2745. If a student chooses to seek personal liability insurance during their placement, they may find affordable options through the National Association of Social Workers. Additionally, students who complete field placements through their employment setting will not be covered by NMU's liability policy.

## **Transporting Clients**

The social work program prohibits students from transporting clients in their personal vehicles as part of their requirements for Field Education. This is done to ensure the safety of the client and to reduce the liability of the student.

Transportation of clients in agency vehicles may be considered if this is deemed to be an essential part of the placement experience. In this case, the student and agency representative should consult with the Field Director who may consult with the NMU Risk Manager.

If the student is an employee of the agency in which he/she is completing the placement, and would otherwise be required to transport clients as part of their employment, this policy will be superseded by the agency's policy.