Minnesota State University, Mankato
Department of Social Work

Social Work Practicum, SOWK 455
Field Manual for Capstone Completion
for
Bachelor’s of Science in Social Work (BSSW)

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Introduction

Social Work 455, Social Work Practicum, and Social Work 450, Integrative Seminar are the Capstone academic experience of the Social Work Program in the Department of Social Work at Minnesota State University, Mankato, leading to graduation with the Baccalaureate of Science in Social Work (BSSW) degree. This degree allows its holder access to specific opportunities, rights, privileges, and obligations pertaining to the practice of social work in the State of Minnesota, nationally, and internationally. This manual contains information regarding departmental policy, practice standards, and processes to which the student must comply for completion of the Capstone requirement and ultimately, graduation. It also includes the Department’s definition of generalist social work that underpins the Mission Statement, the BSSW Competencies and Practice Behaviors. It is strongly encouraged that students review this entire manual carefully in order to appreciate where this course lies within the social work curriculum, the requirements for successful completion of the field practicum, the Department of Social Work faculty’s expectations, and the transition into professional social work through licensure.

University and College Goals

University: This course meets the goals of Minnesota State University, Mankato (MSU, M) and by promoting exploration, understanding, explanation, and transformation of the social world through undergraduate teaching and learning, research and scholarly activities to local, state, national, and global communities.

College Goals: This course contributes to the achievement of a liberal arts education that provides a broad base of knowledge and skills essential for all college-educated adults in the twenty-first century in three specific areas: 1) development of critical thinking, communication, and problem solving skills; 2) increased students knowledge of how historians and social and behavioral scientists discover, describe, and explain the behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, events and ideas; and 3) ethical and civic responsibility.
Department of Social Work Mission Statement

The Department of Social Work at Minnesota State University, Mankato promotes learning to prepare students to become social workers who practice with competence and integrity at the generalist (BSSW) and advanced generalist (MSW) levels. The Department supports and enhances the work of social service agencies through consultation, scholarship, research, leadership, and other service activities. The Department affirms its commitment to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, with an emphasis on small and rural areas, by enhancing human well-being, promoting social justice, and alleviating poverty and oppression for all members of our diverse society within its global context.

Goals of the BSSW Program

Preamble: The baccalaureate Social Work major prepares students for generalist professional social work practice at all system levels with an emphasis on small communities and rural areas within the global context, and provides a foundation for graduate Social Work education.

The Goals of the baccalaureate Social Work program are to:

1. Promote identification with the social work profession and commitment to the values and ethics of the profession that serve as a guide to professional practice [EPAS 2.1.1 & 2.1.2].
2. Advocate a commitment to affirming diversity and working to advance human rights and social and economic justice with an emphasis on small communities, rural areas and the global context [EPAS 2.1.4 & EPAS 2.1.5].
3. Teach knowledge, values and skills required to engage in planned change and research informed practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities [EPAS 2.1.6, 2.1.7, & 2.1.10a-d].
4. Encourage critical thinking to analyze and respond to contexts that shape policy and practice [EPAS 2.1.3, 2.1.8, & 2.1.9].

[The numbers in parentheses after Goals 1-4 refer to sections of the "Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards" (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).]
Departmental Competencies and Practice Behaviors:

Competency 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers:

PB#1: Advocate for client access to the services of social work;
PB#2: Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
PB#3: Attend to professional roles and boundaries;
PB#4: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication;
PB#5: Engage in career-long learning; and
PB#6: Use supervision and consultation.

Competency 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:

PB#7: Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
PB#8: Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers "Code of Ethics" and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/ International Association of Schools of Social Work "Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles";
PB#9: Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
PB#10: Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
Competency 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:

PB#11: Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom;
PB#12: Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and
PB#13: Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

Competency 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, geographic location, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers:

PB#14: Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
PB#15: Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
PB#16: Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and
PB#17: Review themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

Competency 2.1.5—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:

PB#18: Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination;
PB#19: Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
PB#20: Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

Competency 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:

PB#21: Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and
PB#22: Use research evidence to inform practice.

Competency 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live with an emphasis on rural and small communities; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to
understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:

PB#23: Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and

PB#24: Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

Competency 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers:

PB#25: Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and

PB#26: Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

Competency 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:

PB#27: Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services with an emphasis on rural and small communities; and

PB#28: Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.
Competency 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

Competency 2.1.10(a)—Engagement
Social workers:

PB#29: Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
PB#30: Use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and
PB#31: Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

Competency 2.1.10(b)—Assessment
Social workers:

PB#32: Collect, organize, and interpret client data;
PB#33: Assess client strengths and limitations;
PB#34: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and
PB#35: Select appropriate intervention strategies.

Competency 2.1.10(c)—Intervention
Social workers:

PB#36: Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
PB#37: Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
PB#38: Help clients resolve problems;
PB#39: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and
PB#40: Facilitate transitions and endings.

Competency 2.1.10(d)—Evaluation
Social workers:

PB#41: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

**Generalist Social Work Definition**
MSU, M Department of Social Work

**Preamble:**
Generalist Practice is the delivery of a social work services across systems with all populations, affirming diversity and advocating for human rights and social and economic justice. Generalist practice is built on a liberal arts foundation and incorporates social work knowledge and theories, values and ethics, and skills. Generalist practice is informed by research and responds to the contexts in which services are delivered.

**The baccalaureate generalist social work practitioner:**
1. Identifies with the social work profession and is committed to the values and ethics of the profession that serve as a guide to professional practice (EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2).
2. Affirms diversity and works to advance human rights and social and economic justice with an emphasis on small communities, families, groups, organizations, and communities (EPAS 2.1.6; 2.1.7; 2.1.10, a-d).
3. Applies knowledge, values, and skills to engage in planned change and research informed practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (EPAS 2.1.6; 2.1.7; 2.1.10, a-d).
4. Uses critical thinking to analyze and respond to contexts that shape policy and practice (EPAS 2.1.3; 2.1.8; 2.1.9).
5. Commits to professional competency through life-long learning, scholarship, and service spanning local to global environments (EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.9).
**Place in the Curriculum**

SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, is taken in the final semester of a student’s academic career with the MSU, M Department of Social Work. It is taken in conjunction with SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, with SOWK 447, and with Social Work Practice IV (organizations). These courses provide the final links between students’ academic learning in their general education/liberal arts sequence, and the social work curriculum.
Integration of SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, and SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar

SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, and SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, must be taken in the same semester. SOWK 455 is designed to provide a chance to fully engage in the field of social work, practicing all the knowledge, skills, and values to which the student has learned and demonstrated competence throughout their courses in social work and from the liberal arts foundation. The primary purpose of SOWK 450 is to offer the student the opportunity for support and direction in practice. Second, it affords the student social worker a successful transition to that of generalist social work professional by the end of the semester. The following section will explicate that support by discussing the two course descriptions, purposes, and integration of the outcomes.

Purpose

SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum

The practicum experience is designed to give students agency exposure that permits them to build on coursework by integrating and utilizing knowledge, skills, theories, and values that are applied in generalist social work practice. One of the primary purposes is to allow students contact with individuals, families, groups, organizations or communities involved with the social service delivery (as practitioners and clients) who are distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age, and national origin, in order to learn how to provide services adequately. Students will be able to acknowledge the impact of global social services that affect rural social service delivery.

SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar

The purpose of seminar is to help students clarify and integrate practicum issues and experiences with theoretical knowledge and the values of the profession. Seminar is a place to discuss how and when it is appropriate to intervene at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Seminar is a safe place for students to confront and learn to deal with the social injustices within the social service system. Seminar will explore the ethical considerations of an intervention and non-intervention. Seminar is designed to be collaborative; therefore students will be required to participate by telling their experiences. It is only through this sharing that the value of practicum experiences
is realized. Students’ will be expected to utilize Seminar as an environment to demonstrate the completion of the Departmental Competencies and Practice Behaviors.

**Course Learning Objectives**

*SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum and SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar*

The student will take a more self-directive role during the practicum experience. It is not expected that the student will have all the knowledge and skills to complete the practicum outcomes at the beginning of the semester, but that the student will seek out opportunities as appropriate to access and acquire knowledge and skills. The objectives of SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum are directly related to, and rely on, the successful completion of the field practicum *in addition* to materials and information presented in SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar. The list below of knowledge, skills, and values are a more specific statement of the Department’s Competencies and Practice Behaviors. The faculty believe each student will have accomplished these by the end of their academic career at MSU, M. Students are expected, while in practicum, to learn or to draw on previous learning experiences, regarding the knowledge, skills, and values outlined here. Students will be asked to demonstrate through documentation in the Seminar assignments, as part of the Capstone expectation, and linkage to the Departmental Competencies and Practice Behaviors.

**Objectives of the Course:**

The objectives of this course are directly related to, and rely on, the successful completion of the field practicum in addition to materials and information presented in seminar. Below are the objectives as sub-categories of Knowledge, Skills and Values.

1) Apply information, theory, and concepts from the liberal arts foundation and the social work specific coursework, relying on generalist social work methodology, in the practicum site with clients at the micro, mezzo, and/or macro level. (Program Competency 2.1.1: PB # 1, Program Competency 2.1.3: PB # 11, 12 & 13, and Program Competency 2.1.7: PB # 23 & 24).
2) Develop population specific information and interventions via reading, training, and/or the World Wide Web, regarding clients distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender or sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age and national origin encountered in the practicum site. (Program Competency 2.1.4: PB # 14, 15, 16, & 17).

3) Demonstrate an appreciation for social and economic justice issues at micro, mezzo, and/or macro levels that may be present in the agency and in the lives of clients and the use of advocacy in resolving those issues. (Program Competency 2.1.5: PB # 18, 19, & 20 and Program Competency 2.1.8: PB # 25 & 26).

4) Develop an awareness of agency specific issues and concerns, historical and current, as presented by social work student colleagues, through agency observation, and as part of supervisory consultation. (Program Competency 2.1.1: PB #: 4, 5, & 6).

5) Recognize the different models of organizational structure and the models of service delivery systems of practicum agency and career opportunities. (Program Competency 2.1.9: PB # 27 & 28).

6) Demonstrate an understanding and application of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Board of Social Work Standards of Practice and Ethical Conduct. (Program Competency 2.1.2: PB # 7, 8, 9, & 10).

7) Apply research skills in practicum setting by identifying, researching, and presenting information on a specific issue or concept related to client or practice issues. (Program Competency 2.1.6: PB # 21 & 22).

8) Be able to assess the activities of organizations and the dynamics of organizations. (Program Competency 2.1.9: PB # 27 & 28; Competency 2.1.10b: PB # 32, 33, 34, & 35).
9) Complete 440 hours of practicum experience, practicing generalist social work inclusive of bio-psycho-social assessment, planning strategies for social change, implementation, and evaluation that accurately describe and prioritize the needs of clients, particularly those from groups that are oppressed or are subject to discrimination. (Program Competency 2.1.10 a, b, c & d: PB # 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, & 41).

10) Be able to use practicum and seminar assignments and participation to self-assess and make performance adjustments as necessary. (Program Competency 2.1.1: PB # 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6).

11) Develop awareness of the critical importance of using theoretically and ethically sound social work knowledge, skills, and values in working at the micro, mezzo, and/or macro level with populations at risk and with populations that are distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender or sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age and national origin. (Program Competency 2.1.1 PB # 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6).

12) Understand the ethical requirement and rational for professional guidance (supervision) both in seminar and in the practicum site and the use of reflection to incorporate feedback into corrective action. (Program Competency 2.1.1: PB # 6).

**SOWK 450 and SOWK 455 Assignments Leading to Capstone Completion**

Social Work 450 and Social Work 455 provide the opportunity to demonstrate the accomplishment of the Departmental goals. Successful participation in both, along with the completion of the requisite assignments, is designed to function as the program Capstone as required by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Practicum and seminar assignments will be given to the student by the practicum coordinator, field supervisor, and or designated agency person to achieve the aforementioned departmental competencies and practice behaviors. These may include reading, observation, seminars, training sessions, and or other educational opportunities that arise. Students are required to complete all
assignments in an organized, professional, and timely manner. Incomplete assignments may result in the delay the end of practicum and graduation.

As with any senior level paper or experience, awareness of issues of cultural diversity, populations at risk, ethics, and best practices should be an integral part of the student’s thinking and should be reflected not only in the written work but also in your conduct and participation. Some specific assignments may vary from student to student but the following provides an overall perspective of assignments.

**Classroom and Agency Participation**

Participation is critical for both SOWK 450 and SOWK 455. It includes regular, on time attendance, attentive nonverbal behavior, participation in discussions, small group exercises, practice activities, building on and responding to the comments of others. Participation also includes offering feedback and raising questions in seminar and within the agency. Agency standards for dress should be clarified and followed when at the practicum site and when representing the agency within the community or at other agencies. Although jeans may be allowed, it is suggested that students substitute casual trousers or khakis as they develop professional stature. Casual attire is appropriate for seminar.

Each student will be expected to co-facilitate or facilitate at least one seminar during a specific week of the semester. Students will research additional information for handouts and/or for discussion on departmental competencies and practice behaviors of their topic. Each seminar will be interactive with the facilitators actively engaging their peers in conversation and or debate regarding the topic.

**Learning Plan**

Each student will complete a learning plan (LP), in consultation with the field supervisor and practicum coordinator, which establishes goals and individualized objectives to structure the practicum experience and to assess the student’s accomplishments. The LP (to be discussed in the first class meeting) will be completed during the first two to three weeks of practicum. This document should be specific to the student’s learning opportunities and objectives, be specific
Field Practicum Journals
Each student will be required to submit documentation weekly to the practicum coordinator and the field supervisor. Documentation assignments will be discussed in seminar during the first period of the semester. Students must submit documentation on time, keeping in mind that you are continuing the development of good documentation skills and you do not want to develop “bad habits”. The purpose of the documentation is to allow the student the opportunity to demonstrate their accomplishments of their learning plan goals and objective, to help the practicum coordinator understand the student’s application of their academic coursework, and to assist the field supervisor understand the student’s achievements during their field experiences, including the number of hours accrued. Weekly documentation will provide the opportunity for assessment of the student’s achievement of program objectives to meet the Capstone requirement.

Practice Research Assignment
The purpose of this assignment is to meet the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requirement that students have the opportunity to demonstrate basic research skills in the practicum setting. Students are to meet with their field supervisors within the first two weeks of practicum regarding this assignment and brainstorm an issue, problem, or concern that the agency would like to address. This issue is to be researched in professional journals, books, professional internet sites, or other professional resources. This may also include collecting data from other agencies or organizations or using data already collected (secondary data). Basic analysis (frequencies; counts or percentages) of qualitative or quantitative data from relevant sources is a requirement for this assignment. The practicum coordinator will require documentation of the proposed project and of the final project. Students should be able to
complete this assignment drawing on SOWK 469, Applied Social Work Research, taking into account the time constraints and other requirements of the practicum, and the resources available within the agency for support of the research project.

The students will create some form of research product for the agency and a poster or verbal presentation for conference displays. This documentation will describe and define the issue, analyze the data, and as a final product provide interpretations of the data and or possible solutions for addressing the issue. The agency is the primary user of this product; the practicum coordinator is the secondary reader. The documentation will be submitted to the field supervisor in a format in which “best fits” the agency; for example a detailed report, presentation, a brochure, a training curriculum, etc. The final product is to be written in the agency’s preferred format and is also to be presented to the staff or agency related meeting (i.e. Commissioner’s meeting, School Board, or other intra-agency meeting) in a mutually agreeable time and place (regular staffing, in-service meeting, etc.). A copy should also be prepared for the practicum coordinator for inclusion in the student’s file. Students are to apply for the undergraduate research conference during spring semester. Students who are taking practicum in the fall semester will prepare their research poster for presentation at the Social Work Honors Day.

**Documentation Packet**

Students will prepare a documentation packet for the practicum supervisors to evaluate during the semester. The purpose of this packet is to evaluate the student’s professional writing skills as a partial requirement for the student’s final grade in Social work Practicum (SWOK 455). Students are to remember that this is a pass/fail course and the student’s accumulative grade for this course must be 70% at minimum.

This documentation packet is to be placed in a manila folder and arranged chronically. The student is required to redact all documents. This might mean that the student copy the original, black out any identifying information and then recopy the redacted record to ensure that indentifying information is not decipherable. If the student fails to completely redact the information the student will receive a zero for this assignment. Because this would be a violation of MN State Statues and the NASW Code of Ethics, a Departmental review of the student’s
ability to continue in the program may be conducted by the entire Social Work Department.

**Evaluation Process**

SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar and SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum is on a Pass or No Credit grading scheme. Although the practicum coordinator is responsible for determining the final grade of each student in practicum and seminar, communication with the field supervisor and or other agency personnel is an integral part of determining that grade. A passing grade represents a 70% or higher. The quality of a student's grades will be assessed using the following grading scale:

- A grade of "A" is awarded for superior work 90-100%
- A grade of "B" is awarded for excellent work 80-89%
- A grade of "C" is awarded for average work 70-79%
- A grade of "D" is awarded for less than average work 60-69%
- A grade of "NC" is awarded for failing work below 60%

A failing grade is the equivalent of anything that is less than average work or below 70%.

Grading is based on the following:

- Completion of seminar assignments.
- Completion of practicum assignments.
- Attendance and participation at the practicum site and seminar.
- Well-documented student journals, submitted to the practicum coordinator once a week.
- Mid-placement evaluation, submitted during the 7th – 8th week of the practicum experience (see Appendix 8).
- Final evaluation, submitted during the 15th – 16th week of the practicum (see Appendix 9).
- Completed Evaluation of the Agency, submitted during the 15th – 16th week of the practicum (see Appendix 10).
Practicum Admission and Retention Policies and Procedures

Admitting students to practicum is the responsibility of the faculty of the Department of Social Work. The faculty's responsibility is to assure that the social work student who graduates from Minnesota State University, Mankato has demonstrated the program competencies and practice behaviors as outlined by Council on Social Work Education, Minnesota State University, The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Department of Social Work. SOWK 450, Social Work Practicum, and SOWK 455, Integrative Seminar are never waived for any reason.

Completion of all required general education courses and all required social work courses (with the grade of C or better, or a Passing grade when applicable) is a prerequisite to SW 450 and SW 455. The student must receive an ‘average’ or better in their SOWK 312, Junior Field Experience, evaluation and the narrative evaluation must reflect the student’s appropriateness for the social work profession. In order to enroll in SOWK 450 and SOWK 455, all incompletes, in progresses, or any other unmet social work curriculum requirements must be met. Permission to register is granted only by Departmental consent.

Background Check Policy
Effective 08/25/05 the Department of Social Work requires all students entering SOWK 455, Senior Practicum, to complete a criminal background check by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). If you have questions about this process please speak to the practicum coordinator.

To complete the background check students will complete the following:

1. Use the Letter of Good Standing and Consent Form (Appendix 4) to verify that you are a student in good standing with the Department of Social Work and to give informed consent for the background check to occur. Please note the Letter of Good Standing and Consent Form must be removed from the manual, completed, signed in front of a public notary.

2. Send the following three items to Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, CJIS Section, 1430 Maryland Ave. E., St. Paul, MN 55106
- The signed/notarized Letter of Good Standing and Consent Form, and
- the Minnesota BCA background check fee of $15 payable by personal check, money order, cashier's or certified check (please put Minnesota State University, Mankato on the memo line), and
- one (1) stamped envelope with the following address: Minnesota State University, Mankato, Department of Social Work, Room 358, Trafton Science Center North, Mankato, MN 56001 - ATTN: BCA Document enclosed

Please note the envelope will require additional postage, as there may be 2 – 4 pages being mailed to the Department of Social Work. We advise that you weigh the envelope with 2 - 4 pieces of paper at your post office before mailing so you can affix the appropriate postage. We cannot accept COD’s or “postage due” packets. Failure to submit ALL the documentation or insufficient postage will result in delays as your application will not be processed or supplied to the Department.

**Information Contained in a Criminal Background Check**

Information contained in a criminal background check contains both public and private information. The State of MN defines public information as:

Minnesota criminal history records contain information on all arrests and convictions. State statutes require all law enforcement agencies in the state to report juvenile felony and gross misdemeanor arrests, and adult felony, gross misdemeanor, enhanced gross misdemeanor and targeted misdemeanor arrests to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). They are not required to report other misdemeanor arrests, but they may report them if they choose. The law enforcement agencies send a copy of each arrest fingerprint card to the BCA. The information from each card is recorded in the CCH record. Courts and Corrections report information regarding convictions, court dispositions, probation, and custody actions which are recorded in CCH. Data on criminal convictions is public for 15 years following the completion of the sentence. Public information includes: offense, date of the offense, court of conviction, date of the conviction, sentence, level of conviction, and probation agency or place of confinement. The public information does not include an individual's arrest history.

The State of MN defines private information as: “Private data includes all arrest information, all juvenile records*, all court information and convictions more than 15 years old.”
*Juvenile criminal history information is considered private, and can only be released as described in Minnesota State Statute 299C.095.

**Compliance**
Failure to comply with this policy in the required timelines will result in delayed and/or denied permission to enter into SOWK 455 at the discretion of supervisor.

**Implications**
As social work students you should be aware of the implications of having a criminal record of felonies, gross misdemeanors, misdemeanors and/or arrests. Legal problems may limit employment opportunities. Criminal convictions are reviewed when application is made for social work licensure in Minnesota and a conviction of a felony, gross misdemeanor and some lesser misdemeanors may keep the student/graduate from being licensed and/or employed.

**Confidentiality of Background Check**
All records are kept confidential and secured in a locked file cabinet in the sole possession of the Department of Social Work. The standards, as set forth by the federal government which includes the Confidentiality of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Patient Records; 42 CFR Part 2 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, (HIPPA); 45 CFR Part 160 -164, in this regard, are clear and will be strictly followed.

**Departmental Review**
If the criminal background check is returned with felonies, gross misdemeanors and/or misdemeanors, the Department may request further court documentation, to meet with the student, and/or to submit a written explanation and any other information considered necessary by the department.

When a criminal background check reveals the conviction of a felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor, the Department will inform your placement agency in writing. The agency has final decision-making power as to whether they will accept the student for placement.

The Department holds the right to accept, suspend, or reject a student’s application to SOWK 455 based on a wide variety of reasons, including criminal records. Actions taken by the Department may impact the student’s continued progress in the social work program.
**Beginning Placement**

The purchase of liability insurance, NASW membership and the Criminal Background Check is required prior to beginning SOWK 450 and SOWK 455. The liability insurance can be purchased at the Campus Hub. The NASW membership can be obtained on-line at the NASW website. Please provide the field coordinator with copies of all the requirements prior to beginning placement. If copies of those documents are not received before to the beginning of placement, the student will be asked to complete the necessary paperwork and the field supervisor will be notified that the student will not be starting their practicum until all documentation is completed.

**Transfer Students**

Decisions regarding credit transfer from other social work programs that affect admission to SOWK 455 will be made on a case-by-case basis. These decisions will vary according to the nature of the courses taken, the school attended, prior agreements with other schools, etc. Students are urged to discuss transferring credit with an advisor or the chair of the Department as early as possible after transferring to MSU, M. Additionally, students will be asked to submit relevant documents (cover letter, transcripts, syllabi, examples of work) in a timely manner so that an evaluation of the completed course work can be conducted. SOWK 450, Social Work Practicum, and SOWK 455, Integrative Seminar are never waived for any reason.

**Drop/Add**

Any student has the right to drop SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, and SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, within University policy. Because of the requirement that these courses have to be taken together, a student may not elect to keep one and drop the other. This decision must be discussed with the practicum coordinator, the student's academic advisor, and the field supervisor. It is important to remember the student's withdrawal may affect academic opportunities related to financial aid, graduation, and continuation in the program. Other considerations include the impact, particularly after the semester has begun, on agency services, the consumers, and the Department of Social Work's relationship with the agency for future placements. Therefore a plan for withdrawal must be developed and implemented carefully in order to minimize the impact.
Students who apply to come into SOWK 450 and SOWK 455 after the semester begins may be allowed to do so within the University’s late registration period based on individual mitigating circumstances. However, students should be in communication with the practicum coordinators regarding any ongoing or anticipated situations that may impede their progression into placement. Due to the difficulties in arranging last minute placements, waiting until the beginning of the semester to have these discussions is highly discouraged. The Department reserves the right to deny all students who delay the application or the agency placement process.

**Dismissal or Suspension of Placement**

All practicum students have been exposed to the ethics and values of social work practice throughout their social work courses. The following are considered serious violations of the ethics and values.

- Violation of consumer and/or agency confidentiality.
- Violation of professional relationship boundaries including, but not exclusive to, physical or sexual assault, sexual harassment, social/sexual involvement, or emotional abuse.
- Evidence of current substance abuse.
- Evidence of impairment that, in the judgment of the placement agency, jeopardizes the primacy of the consumer's or agency's interests.
- Criminal charges that reflect personal behaviors incompatible with the expected behaviors and/or ethics of professional social workers.
- Any unethical behaviors that are incompatible with the Social Work Code of Ethics (i.e., falsifying records, misleading consumers, harassment of supervisors, clients, fellow students, and/or faculty) or the MN State Statutes 148D & 148E.
- Failure to meet requirement for attendance, participation, and the accrual of hours.
- Inability to ensure client rights.

Any substantive complaints in any of these areas may result in corrective discipline, suspension, failure in SW 450 & SW 455, and/or reconsideration of the student being retained in the major. It is the obligation of the Department of Social Work to also file a formal complaint with the
Minnesota Board of Social Work that may be used by them upon the students’ application for licensure.

Students have the right to appeal the decision of the instructor(s) or the Department of Social Work. Please see the Student Handbook for the appeal process.

**Practicum Completion**

Students who may have difficulty completing their practicum requirements in one semester should communicate this concern to the practicum coordinator as soon as possible. The coordinator is able to work with the student in order to meet the student’s needs and the Department’s requirements. Under some circumstances, students may be able to start their practicum experience early, extend the practicum beyond the traditional 15 week semester, or establish a practicum schedule that will allow them to respond to their unique situations. Such adjustments are the exception and require prior approval of the practicum coordinator and the field supervisor. Communication and documentation of these arrangements may occur by telephone, letters, in person, fax, or email.

Situations may develop that require a placement change once the semester has started. Changes can be initiated at the request of the field supervisor, practicum coordinator, or the student. Such changes are quite rare and will only be considered under unusual circumstances. It will be the practicum coordinator’s decision whether the student is to receive credit for the time spent in the original placement.

**Attendance**

The students in practicum will be at their placement site 32 hours per week, Monday through Thursday, for 15 weeks (32 x 15 = 480 hours). The students are permitted to use forty (40) hours of the placement time as a buffer for personal or sick days, studying for or taking state licensure exam, merit exam, or other state employment exams, exam review courses, employment interviews, resume writing, or other events. The students must negotiate with their field supervisor and the practicum coordinator the dates and times of absences. The practicum coordinator and supervisor may approve alternate schedules (including Saturday or Sunday). The
students will be at the hours the agency operates or as agreed upon by the student and the supervisor. All students will be attending SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar and SOWK 447, Practice IV, on Fridays during the semester. The students will not be at the placement site during exam week except by special arrangement between the student, the field supervisor, and the field coordinator. Students will notify the field supervisor and the practicum coordinator of any absences either prior to the absence or the same day of the absence. This contact is to be either by telephone or email.

- To preserve the academic intent of the practicum, students and supervisors are asked to flex hours if the students are at the agencies for more than eight (8) hours in a day.
- Time should be allocated for practicum reflection, necessary reading, planning within the regular work day, and during practicum supervision.
- The students are required to maintain documentation of practicum hours.
- Practicum is designed for continuity of services across a full semester. Students are expected to begin the first day of classes and conclude the last class day of the semester (exceptions for this must be approved by the practicum coordinator).

In almost all instances the MSU, M, calendar governs the days the students are at the agency. A few students will find it necessary to negotiate the variance of MSU, M’s and the agency's calendars. An example of this variation is spring break for public/private schools and MSU, M.

**Absences**

**Practicum Site**

If students are absent for reasons beyond their control (illness, family death, etc.) the student must notify the field supervisor and the field coordinator as soon as possible (at a minimum, usual professional practice requires notification within a half-hour of the beginning of the day) and provide the reasons for the absence or tardiness. If possible, the student should speak with the supervisor. If not, the student should leave a message, with a telephone number for a return call. If the student is absent from practicum beyond the 40-hour buffer, the hours absent will have to be made up at a later date. If a student fails to complete the required 440 hours within the semester, a grade of NC (No Credit), IC (Incomplete), or IP (In Progress) will be entered. The hours necessary for completion will be discussed by the student with the practicum
coordinator. The student is responsible for initiating and documenting a plan for completion of hours either at the current site or at another. The practicum coordinator will approve the plan and make any necessary practicum site arrangements for the completion of the practicum.

**Seminar**
Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted one unexcused absence. Students should communicate directly with the practicum coordinator about any additional absences. SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, must be taken concurrently with SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum; therefore any disruption of seminar attendance may impact the continuation of the practicum.

On the rare occasion that the agency has an educational event on a Friday that the student feels strongly that they would benefit from, the student may negotiate with the practicum coordinator to attend one event. This does not excuse the student from SOWK 447, Practice IV, nor should the student expect that instructor to waive Practice IV attendance policies. Students should be thoughtful about weighing the benefit of the absence against any possible repercussions.

**Location of Placement Sites**
The practicum coordinator will maintain a list of sites within approximately 150-miles of Minnesota State University, Mankato. Placements outside the 150-mile radius may be made under special circumstances. There are cost, supervision, travel, and seminar issues that must be considered with out of state placements. Students are encouraged to discuss any plan of that nature with the practicum coordinator a year or two prior to admission into practicum. These placement requests will be considered due to unique opportunities for students that are not available in a more immediate setting. Students may be asked to take some financial responsibility for facilitating such a placement.

**Communication**
The field supervisors and coordinators have the responsibility to communicate as needed with each other using any of a variety of formats (telephone, letters, in person, fax, email, etc) as a means to evaluate the student’s performance. The student is also responsible for communicating directly with both the field supervisor and the practicum coordinator in any of the
aforementioned formats. The BSSW field coordinators may consult with the Department of Social Work faculty if the need arises.

**Employment and Practicum**

The Department of Social Work follows the standards established by Council on Social Work Education that clearly state that the student’s practicum experience and supervision must be different than the student’s employment. The Department of Social Work will make every attempt to work with the student and the agency if the student requests to complete the practicum requirement at their place of employment. The following conditions must be satisfied in order to have a successful placement.

- The practicum assignment must be within a different unit/division/department than that of the employment.
- The student must be assigned a field supervisor who does not also supervise their employment.
- The agency must provide release time for the practicum.
- All other practicum supervision requirements must be met.

**Inclement Weather**

Most practicum sites are located in Southern and Central Minnesota and inclement weather can be expected. In that case, the student's departure to or from the practicum site may only be delayed an hour or so, or it could be for an entire day. Students may use the following to gain information regarding travel to and/or from their home or practicum site:

- The Statewide Road Conditions and Weather number 1-800-542-0220.
- Local radio stations for school closings and early dismissals.

If the student is at the practicum site and the weather conditions create unsafe road conditions, the field supervisor or another designated individual at the agency should be consulted. The student is permitted to leave early, take advantage of the agency’s overnight hospitality, or make other accommodations to stay overnight. Emergency assistance in cases of inclement weather is required for all out of town practicum sites. The student and supervisor should always consider the safety of the student in making travel plans. If a student is delayed by weather from leaving
home, they should immediately contact their field supervisor and negotiate an arrival time or absence.

**Nondiscrimination in Educational Opportunity**

**Definitions**

Minnesota State University, Mankato and the Department of Social Work have clear policies regarding nondiscrimination and the possible outcomes if it occurs. The following will assist students in determining if discrimination or harassment is occurring and the steps they should take.

- Discrimination because of race, sex, or disability is prohibited by state and federal law. Discrimination because of sexual orientation is prohibited by state law. Discrimination is defined as conduct that is directed at an individual because of his/her race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, mental/physical disability or that of his/her partner and which subjects the individual to different treatment by agents or employees so as to interfere with or limit the ability of the individual to participate in, or benefit from, the services, activities, or privileges provided by the university or otherwise adversely affects the individual’s employment or education.

- Harassment because of race, sex, or disability is a form or discrimination prohibited by state and federal law. Harassment because of sexual orientation is prohibited by state law. Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that is directed at an individual because of his/her race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability or that of his/her partner and that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to have the purpose or effect of creating a hostile work or educational environment. Harassment may occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty and student, supervisor and employee, student and student, staff and student, employee and employee, and other relationships with other person having business at or visiting the educational environment.

- Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may occur when it is directed at members of the opposite sex or when it is directed at members of the same sex.
• Acts of sexual violence are criminal behaviors and create an environment contrary to the goals and missions of Minnesota State University. These acts will be investigated and may subject an individual to complaints and disciplinary sanctions as well as possible referral to appropriated law enforcement agencies. (Taken from the 2009-2010 Undergraduate Bulletin, Minnesota State University, Mankato.)

Reporting and Documentation
1. The student should clearly, specifically, and firmly communicate to the alleged harasser that their behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
2. Notify the practicum coordinator and the field supervisor about the harassment. If the harasser is the field supervisor, notify that person’s supervisor. Do not delay.
3. When the harassment begins, and if it continues, the student should keep a written record for the specific dates, times, places, witnesses, and the nature of the harassment.
4. The practicum coordinator will act as the student’s advocate to see that the harassment ceases. The student will not be penalized if it becomes necessary to halt the placement. (Taken from the 2009-2010 Undergraduate Bulletin, Minnesota State University, Mankato.)

Persons with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that the University provide services for persons with disabilities. Students with a disability requiring an accommodation should contact the Disability Services Office prior to starting SW 450 & SW 455 to discuss their needs and develop an accommodation plan. In addition, it may be helpful to inform the field coordinator of your disability and involvement with the Disability Services Office. The supervisor will make the necessary accommodations based upon the direction of the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Visit the ODS at 132 Memorial Library or call 507-389-2825 (v/tty). Agencies that a student expresses interest in for placement may need to be involved in creating the necessary accommodations. Students will not be able to receive accommodations during the semester if an accommodation plan has not been developed.
**Scent Free Environment Policy**
The Department of Social Work has a “Scent-Free Environment” policy for our students, staff, faculty, and visitors. This is an accommodation in response to a request under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and as such, compliance is mandatory. There is no “right” to wear volatile organic compounds (VOC) of natural or synthetic composition that interfere with the health of colleagues, and there is a duty to assertively avoid the use of such substances during work hours. People with multiple chemical sensitivity or environmental illness have a range of responses to these compounds, such as headaches, nausea, disorientation, dizziness, migraines, skin reactions and asthmatic reactions. Some reactions can be severe, requiring oxygen treatment, continuous medication treatment, emergency room treatment, and/or hospitalization. Therefore we take our scent-free environment very seriously.

The most common, and easiest to control, volatile organic compounds are scented products, for example, perfume, body oils, powders, hair sprays, etc. Other scents that can be harmful come from scented clothes-dryer sheets and liquids, some printed materials, some cleaning compounds, some paints, carpet glue, new upholstery, chemicals, etc. It sometimes has been difficult to anticipate harmful products because there are so many chemicals used in our environment. Please monitor your use of scented products and don’t wear them while in Wissink Hall, Trafton Science Center, or in social work classes. This is also an important consideration as you begin to work with persons in the community who may have similar allergy problems. We would encourage you to limit your use of VOCs throughout your practicum and career.

**Grievance Procedures**
Grievance procedures have been developed for the use of students and faculty. The procedures are designed to deal with disagreements that may develop during the practicum experience. The students may grieve any decision made that will affect the student's outcome for this course. The student should follow the step-by step procedure that is outlined in the student handbook. (See *The Social Work Student Handbook* at [http://sbs.mnsu.edu/socialwork/](http://sbs.mnsu.edu/socialwork/)).
Career Development and Licensure

Program competencies and practice behaviors, located elsewhere in this document, focus on knowledge, skills, and values that social work students are expected to accomplish during their educational tenure. These include program competencies and practice behaviors that support students to graduate and transition into the professional social work community. The accomplishment of those objectives prepare students to begin professional careers in generalist practice, to identify with and take responsibility for the profession, to value and affirm diversity in society and the world, to be prepared for graduate education, and to implement the goals of the profession through contributions of scholarship and service, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Students are encouraged to recognize that the knowledge, skills, and values they develop in the practicum setting are those that employers are seeking. Students are encouraged to “package” their abilities in a professionally prepared vita, resume, and or portfolio. The Career Counseling Center has staff people to work with students from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to develop such a document.

Although it is not the policy of this Department that students must take a licensing examination, the Department strongly encourages students to do so. In Minnesota and many states, licensure is a requirement for social work practice and social service employment. Information will be provided regarding the nature of the examination, time lines for application for licensure, and for taking the examination, costs, and the requisite supervision. Information will also be made available regarding merit examinations. However, it is incumbent on the students to take the initiative to access information (including the licensure student handbook and application), contact the relevant agencies with questions, and, in general, manage their transition to professional work settings. The following are World Wide Web sites that are often requested from students for information about licensing, examinations, employment:

- Minnesota Board of Social Work (state licensing board, test information and forms)
  www.socialwork.state.mn.us/
- Association of Social Work Boards (licensure test information)
  www.aswb.org/
• Minnesota Merit System, Department of Human Resources (merit system information and forms)
  www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/agencywide/documents/pub/dhs_id_010515.hcsp
• Minnesota Department of Employee Relations (statewide career opportunities)
  http://www.doer.state.mn.us/employment.html
• Minnesota School Social Workers Association (school social work license information and statewide position openings)
  www.msswa.org/
• National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (professional organization information and opportunities for involvement)
  www.naswmn.org/
• MN School Board Association
• MN Nursing Home Association
• MN Non-profit Organization Association
Application Policies and Procedures

The application for admission to SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, is to be completed during the semester prior to enrollment. The application is contained in this manual and on the Department of Social Work’s Home Page.

The Department of Social Work will establish due dates for applications for fall and spring semesters. Notice of the due dates for the application will be posted on the social work bulletin boards and email listserve and announced in SOWK 443, and in SOWK 445.

Application Packet

All typed materials should be submitted in a standard size manila file folder. The application folder must include:

- A completed copy of the practicum application form. The practicum application is located in the appendix section this manual and on the social work homepage. Please keep in mind this form should be prepared thoughtfully as it will be reviewed by the entire faculty and will be sent to your potential field supervisor. Remember this is a critical step towards building your professional credibility in the practice world.
- Signed copy of the Professional Commitment, Appendix 3.
- A copy of your resume. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the Career Development and Counseling Center (located on the 2nd floor of the Wigley Administration Building) for review of your resume prior to submission with this packet.
- A copy of the signature page from the section on Criminal Background Checks. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.
- A current unofficial copy of your transcript. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.
- A copy of your SOWK 312 evaluation. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.
- A copy of your graduation plan and its approval from the registers office. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.

Students should maintain their own file of practicum forms submitted, correspondence with practicum coordinator and potential practicum sites, and meeting notes.
Application Review Process

The practicum coordinators review all applications and make recommendations regarding all applications to the Department of Social Work faculty who then discuss the applications and recommendations. Faculty will make decisions regarding each applicant's retention in the program and admission into practicum. The applicants will receive timely and confidential written notification of the Department's decision. The applicants may receive the following response:

- The applicant is **retained and accepted** into practicum.
- The applicant is **retained and conditionally accepted** pending satisfactory completion of required course work or other stipulated requirements. An explanation regarding this decision will accompany the response.
- The applicant is **retained, but delayed** for acceptance into the practicum due to special circumstances. An explanation regarding this decision will accompany the response.
- The applicant **will not be retained in the program and is denied practicum admission**. An explanation regarding this decision will accompany the response.

Practicum Placement Procedures

If students are not admitted to SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, they will stop the process at this point and meet with the practicum coordinators, their advisor, and the Department chair as needed for clarification, additional instructions, or re-direction.

Students admitted to SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, should note the following paragraphs are presented sequentially and include steps for the student and the practicum coordinator. Compliance to this sequence of steps is critical. Students *must* adhere to this process if they intend to begin their practicum in a timely fashion. Appendix 2 is a checklist provided for students to track their progress.

1. **Initial Meeting** - Students will be notified SW 443 and SW 445 of the date and time of a mandatory practicum informational meeting. *Missing this meeting will delay the placement*
process. If it is impossible to attend this meeting for any reasons, please notify the practicum coordinators as soon as possible.

- The purpose of this meeting is to review the placement processes and procedures in detail, discuss the placement opportunities, respond to any questions or concerns the students may have, and formally begin the placement process.
- The necessity of timeliness in one’s effort, possible placement opportunities, appropriate dress, the liability insurance requirement, background checks, NASW membership, brief information about licensure issues, safety, and roles and responsibilities will be discussed.
- At this meeting students will be given specific direction on the steps to meet the Department of Social Work’s requirement for professional liability insurance. This may be purchased through a private insurer, National Association of Social Workers, or Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- Electronic permission for registration for SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, and SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, will be given by the practicum coordinators. The Department secretary will enter electronic permission to register. If the student has completed all the requirements, has attended the orientation meeting, and is still unable to register, the student will check with the practicum coordinators.

2. Selecting Possible Practicum Sites – Students are asked to think carefully about their learning goals as they begin to consider practicum opportunities. Applicants may look at the database for practicum sites before or after the mandatory meeting. The database is located in the social work office or by contacting the practicum coordinators.

- Do not contact any of the practicum placements without prior permission of the practicum coordinators. This is the responsibility of the practicum coordinators.
- Students will be asked to provide the practicum coordinators with a list of their top five choices for placement (including any new placements) they believe will meet their learning goals. The practicum coordinators may have additional suggestions or information that may impact the site selection.
- If the placement that the student desires is not on the database, the student must discuss this with the practicum coordinators. Possible new placement sites are explored and
added to the roster each semester. Students are invited to provide agency name, telephone number, address, and contact name, if available, for any new site they would like to have explored.

- Placements are made within a 150-mile radius of MSU, M. Placements outside that radius should be discussed with the practicum coordinators two semesters prior to senior placement. The student requesting such a placement should also understand there may be additional financial responsibilities regarding transportation to SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, and for the practicum coordinators to make site visits.

3. Initial Agency Contact - From the list of top choices, the practicum coordinators will contact the agency and determine if they are interested in a practicum student, whether appropriate client contact to meet the educational goals of the student is available, supervision, space, etc. is available within the agency.

- If it is a previously unused agency the practicum coordinator will make a site visit to orient the agency personnel to the Department of Social Work’s requirements for student placements.
- If the agency is interested and can provide the required supervision, and student appropriate tasks and assignments are available, the student will be notified.

4. Cover Letter of Introduction - The student will prepare a generic cover letter of introduction to be mailed to potential placement supervisors along with a copy of the students' practicum application and resume. (This does not include the student’s transcript or 312 evaluation).

- All cover letters will be approved by the practicum coordinator prior to mailing. A copy of this letter will also be submitted to the practicum coordinator to be kept in the students file.
- Strict attention should be paid to correct grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and content. (Students have lost placement opportunities based on poorly constructed letters of introduction.)
- Students may also be asked to revise their resume and application if the practicum coordinators believes that it is in the student’s best interest.
• The cover letter of introduction should include the following:
  o Students’ letter head with address, phone number and email address
  o Contact person, agency name and address, date
  o Salutation – use appropriate address (Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr., etc.)
  o 1st paragraph – introduction of the student and their interest in the agency
  o 2nd paragraph – strengths the student has that will benefit the agency from volunteer experiences, previous placements, job related skills and social work knowledge, values and skills (that are not already listed on the student’s resume).
  o 3rd paragraph – student thanks the agency for their interest and states the student will call to set up an interview within the next week
  o Close with signature
  o Add enclosures section (Enclosures: resume, practicum application)

• Agencies may also require that students complete agency volunteer applications, submit to an additional background check, or submit to required medical tests.

5. Submitting Material to the Agency - When notified that an agency is willing to be a practicum site, the student will forward, by ground mail, a copy of the practicum application, resume, and the cover letter revised to describe the student’s interest in that specific agency or the population they serve.
  • Students will follow up with a telephone call to that agency within five working days to set an appointment for an interview. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule the interview – only on rare occasions will the agency call you.
  • Agency personnel will be aware that you are sending materials. Delays may impact their continued interest in hosting a practicum student.

6. Communication with the practicum coordinators - The student will report to the practicum coordinator the date and time of the scheduled interview and apprise them of the outcome of the interview. In some cases agency personal may also call the practicum coordinator with feedback.
• Students may interview at more than one agency, however the competition for placements exists not only with one’s student colleagues from MSU, M but also from other colleges and universities. This can be particularly important to keep in mind in the urban areas.

7. Finalization of the Practicum - Students will send a thank-you letter to the each interviewer regardless of the outcome of the interview. If the placement interview goes well and all parties (practicum coordinator, student, placement site) believe this will be a mutually beneficial field placement, a letter of acceptance of the placement is prepared by the student for the practicum coordinator’s review. The student should once again make sure the practicum coordinator reviews this letter prior to it being sent.

Placement Considerations

Keep in mind that placement is a negotiable matter between the student, the practicum coordinators, and the agency. The placement is based on the student's practice interests, educational goals, and the availability of agencies that are able to assist in meeting these goals.

Agency designees have the authority to accept or decline to accept a student for placement within their agency. This decision is based on information the agency designee has about agency availability, the information provided by the student and the practicum coordinator, and the interview between the student and agency designee. The student also has the right to accept or not accept any invitation for placement from an agency. The practicum coordinators have the final authority for approval of all practicum.

The Department of Social Work requires that students be placed in agencies where supervision will be conducted by a BSW/MSW credentialed supervisor. They may or may not be licensed. The supervisor is expected to have at least three years practice experience in social work and at least two years at the current agency. All new sites will receive an orientation visit that will include a discussion of the policies and procedures of the Department of Social Work before students begin placement.
Interviewing Policy

The Department holds the right to deny the student entering into SW 450 and SW 455 if the student has three failed placement interviews. If the student has attended three interviews with potential practicum supervisors and been denied a practicum at all three of the agencies, the Department will meet to discuss appropriate next steps to be taken with the student.
Roles and Responsibilities

Preparing students to begin professional careers in generalist practice requires a combined effort of the practice community and social work educators. Communication between the practicum coordinators, the field supervisor, and/or the student is a critical component to the success of all placements and should occur throughout the practicum. Such communication may be initiated by coordinators, supervisors, or students.

Site Selection

SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum, and SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, support the Department mission statement, program competencies and practice behaviors that prepare students to graduate and transition into the professional social work community by facilitating the development of practicum placements throughout central and southern Minnesota. Possible new placement sites are explored and added to the roster each semester. Agencies may come to the attention of the field coordinators through contacts in the community, a student expressing an interest in a specific agency or type of client population, or by the agency contacting the Department of Social Work and expressing their interest in being a practicum site. Agencies are screened to assure their willingness to abide by Department goals and policies, to provide significant learning assignments, and to provide the appropriate level of supervision.

The Department of Social Work requires that students be placed in agencies where supervision will be conducted by a BSW/MSW credentialed supervisor and where significant and appropriate tasks and opportunities exist for the student to apply generalist social work knowledge, skills, and values to enhance the well-being of people and to work toward the amelioration of environmental conditions that affect people adversely. The field supervisor is expected to have at least three years practice experience in social work and at least two years at the current agency. If agencies describe themselves as able to meet those basic requirements, a site visit is scheduled by the field coordinator to visit the agency and further discuss the opportunities that exist. Students are placed in new agencies only after the site visit has been completed.
The site visit provides the practicum coordinator the opportunity to meet with the proposed field supervisors and other agency personnel face to face. The field manual is provided and the competencies and practice behaviors of the Department of Social Work are shared and those of the field practicum are discussed. Clarification of the need for supervision, work space, time frames, scheduling, and evaluation also occurs during this site visit. This visit also provides the opportunity for agencies to share any special requirements they have of students, such as the completion of agency volunteer applications in addition to the Department application, submitting to a criminal background check, and or health screenings.

Practicum sites are evaluated by the students who are placed there at the end of the practicum. This information, along with the experience the field coordinator has with the agency, is used to determine whether a site will be retained on the database. Agencies may also opt to remove themselves from the database or to ask that no students be placed for specified lengths of time. Periodically, feedback will be provided back to agencies as evaluations from students are aggregated to provide a general review of all practicum sites. Aggregated data is used to protect student anonymity.

**Responsibilities of the Student**

The student is responsible for reading, understanding, and following this manual as it is explicit regarding completing the required prerequisites for field practicum and field seminar, applying to and setting up a placement, and assignments and requirements for participating in the practicum experience. In addition students will need to review agency policy and procedures, as directed by the field supervisor, and be prepared to act within the requirements of that agency. This includes, but is not limited to, adhering to policies regarding confidentiality for both the agency and clients, the use of computer and telephone for personal reasons, and dress code. If the student is uncertain about any specific policies that may impact their participation in the agency, the students should communicate with the field supervisor and practicum coordinator. For example, if the student is in doubt about sharing any agency or client information within or outside of the agency (in any format) the students should discuss this with the field supervisor and the practicum coordinator. As instantaneous communication via email, blogs, and listserves has become more common, and traditional communication channels like the telephone and
ground mail have not abated, students must be extremely cautious about breaching confidentiality. The student’s responsibility is to seek supervision when there is any doubt about actions they are taking within or on behalf of the agency. Information from the practicum site cannot be used in personal communication (on-line or in print) without written permission of the field supervisor and practicum coordinator.

**Responsibilities of the Field Supervisor**
Field supervisors are an integral part of the practicum experience by helping students to identify with and take responsibility for the profession, to value and affirm diversity and culturally sensitive practice, and to implement the goals of the profession through contributions of scholarship and service. Field supervisors have usually expressed an interest in participating in the practicum sequence of the social work program. We believe self-selection demonstrates a commitment to social work values, ethics, and the educational structure required. The Department appreciates that agencies can choose among many qualified students and that competition may exist for student placements. It is the intent of the practicum coordinators to ensure that the practicum is a mutually beneficial process, respecting the need for quality services for clients. This includes ensuring appropriate and timely support and interaction between agencies, the Department, and students.

Field supervisors are provided with an overview of student supervisory needs, skills, experience (volunteer and professional), and the particular learning goals the students has discussed during the placement process. The field supervisor is also encouraged to use the first week of the practicum as an assessment period during which decisions can be made regarding assignments, projects, or opportunities the student will allowed to pursue. The field supervisor is encouraged to maintain the ‘student’ orientation during the practicum, allowing students to grow progressively into more responsible roles while providing client services, to ask questions a new employee might not feel free to ask, and to allow time for reflection and the active application of knowledge and skills with clients, including assignments for practicum and seminar.

The field supervisors’ responsibilities are to work with the student to develop a learning contract or plan with the student that provides a written description outlining the student specific
opportunities, responsibilities, and tasks. A format will be provided in the field manual that addresses micro, mezzo, and macro practice. This is an individualized plan, negotiated between the student and the field supervisor, drawing on the learning objectives of the student and the opportunities that the agency can provide. The field coordinator has final oversight responsibility of the learning plan to assure the student has the opportunity to develop and practice a range of knowledge, skills, and values. Social work is not a stagnant profession and opportunities may arise during the practicum for student involvement that had not previously been considered. The plan can be amended to document other significant tasks and projects the student is involved with during the practicum.

The field supervisor should orient the student to the agency policies and procedures. This includes arranging for office space and facilitating any paperwork for the payment of all related expenses (i.e. mileage) as discussed and agreed upon. If the student is concurrently employed in the agency, the supervisor should also assist the student in adhering to the guidelines in this manual that address that circumstance. If the student is to receive a stipend from the agency the field supervisor should also facilitate that process.

The field supervisor must meet with the student to monitor progress toward meeting the learning plan goals and assess the student contribution to client care, in regularly scheduled, face to face supervisory meetings. These meetings should be, at minimum, one hour per week. It is expected that more informal direction, support, and supervision will occur. Although a designated field supervisor must meet with the student for the required supervision, this does not preclude the use of “task supervisors” for day to day work assignments. It is not the expectation of the Department that the student will only work with the field supervisor. Interaction with other social workers and multi-disciplinary staff will enhance the student’s understanding of professional cooperation, coordination, and collaboration.

Field supervisors should structure the students time until such time the student can function with more independence. The student should be allowed the opportunity to observe early on, with the expectation that the student will gradually take on more independent work and assignments (under supervision) so that eventually the student may be managing approximately 1/3 of the
caseload of a regular worker. This increase in responsibility should be carefully monitored by the field supervisor so that client needs are always foremost. As the student begins to act in a more purposeful way with clients, the necessity for the required supervision becomes even more critical.

Field supervisors have the authority to make reading, writing, task, participation, or training assignments as needed to benefit student learning and service provision. Field supervisors are asked to balance their need to make assignments with the assignments that are required for SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar. Seminar assignments may be read by the field supervisor.

The field supervisor should also notify the practicum coordinator immediately (verbally and in writing) of any serious concerns or problems related to the student's performance. This may include concerns regarding the student’s application of principles and theory, ethical issues such as confidentiality or work-related issues such absenteeism. These concerns may also be related to student behavior within the agency in regards to attitude, cooperation, compliance with agency policy or practices, or completion of the learning plan. The practicum coordinator will address student behavior by consulting with the field supervisor, by meeting with the student, or by meeting with both the student and the field supervisor. Resolutions will be sought that meet both the needs of the student and of the agency. In rare instances students may be removed from placement due to behavior that is incompatible with the work of the agency.

The field supervisor is required to complete the student’s performance assessments at mid-term and at the end of the practicum. Those forms are available in the field manual. The student should take responsibility for reminding the field supervisor of due dates. The field supervisor may also include the input of other social workers or staff with whom the student has worked. Although the field supervisor does not grade the student, their input significantly impacts the pass/no pass status of the student.
Responsibilities of the Practicum Coordinators

The practicum coordinators are responsible for overseeing all the aspects of placing students in appropriate settings with credentialed social workers, monitoring the placement through visits and journals, and consultation with both students and field supervisors. The practicum coordinator shares responsibility for ongoing dialogue regarding the process, procedures, and progress of the field practicum with students and field supervisors.

Practicum coordinators will read and respond to student journals, schedule two site visits during the course of the semester, make any necessary adjustments in consultation with the student and the practicum coordinator to the learning plan or other assignments. The coordinators will also assign the final grade for both SOWK 450 and SOWK 455.

The practicum coordinators will provide ongoing orientation and updates to supervisors regarding any additions or changes to the goals and objectives of the practicum. That information will also be made available in the field manual. The field manual is distributed to all parties to clearly communicate the goals and objective of the Department, and the objectives of the practicum sequence. The manual also provides an overview of the integration of the practicum sequence that includes SOWK 450, Integrative Seminar, and SOWK 455, Social Work Practicum.

In addition to the initial site visit, the practicum coordinators will make regularly scheduled visits to agencies when students are placed in the agency. These will take place twice during the semester to monitor student progress. Additional site visits can be made at the discretion of the practicum coordinator, student, or field supervisor. The coordinators will consult with the field supervisor, as requested, about possible assignments, experiences, and or events that may occur as part of the practicum. Practicum coordinators will also be available to field supervisors for discussion of concerns or issues related to the student's progress via the telephone, e-mail, or by a visit.

Practicum coordinators will also meet with field supervisors each semester to provide an update of the program, review curriculum changes, receive feedback on the preparation of students entering field, and hear about new developments in the field that may affect the practicum. This meeting may be in conjunction with a guest speaker or educational event on campus that
supports the professional development of the field supervisors. This is also an opportunity for practicum coordinators to gather feedback from field supervisors regarding the practicum program, the preparation of students coming into field, and the curriculum in general.

Potential and current field supervisors may be invited to campus periodically to meet the upcoming practicum classes and to informally discuss their agencies and possible learning opportunities during practicum. The anticipated effect of these meetings are that new sites are developed, students develop a greater awareness of the possibilities for placements, and the field supervisors can also become more aware of the caliber of the students and the changes in the social work program.
Appendix 1

Timeline for completion of placement steps

 ✓ Practice II and Practice III must be completed. A grade of “C” or better in any social work required course is necessary. Any In Progress (IP) or Incomplete (IC) grades must be resolved by the last day of the semester before practicum is scheduled to begin.

 ✓ If admission to practicum was conditional, the student must supply the practicum coordinators with proof of meeting the conditions by the end of the semester before practicum is scheduled to begin.

 ✓ Select, confirm, and have approved the placement site by the practicum coordinators prior to the end of the semester before practicum is scheduled to begin.

 ✓ Proof of liability insurance and NASW membership provided to the practicum coordinator by the first day of your placement.

 ✓ Proof of background check forwarded to the practicum coordinator by the first day of your placement.

 ✓ Register for Social Work 450, Integrative Seminar and Social Work 455, Social Work Practicum before the first day of your placement on the University’s MARS system.

 ✓ Provide the field supervisor a professional letter two weeks before you begin your placement reminding them of the start date and time. Remind the field supervisor that the days of practicum are Monday-Thursday, 7 1/2 to 8 hours per day with Friday reserved for classes. Provide the practicum coordinators with a copy of this letter.

 ✓ Submit the signed Memorandum of Agreement form to the practicum coordinators (Appendix 7) during the first week of practicum.

The importance of meeting these time lines cannot be overstressed. Practicum will not begin unless all timelines are met.
Appendix 2

Application Packet Checklist

All materials should be submitted in a standard size manila file folder and should be typed. The application folder must include:

✓ A completed copy of the practicum application form. This should be typed or word-processed. This form is Appendix 4 of this manual or on the social work homepage. Please keep in mind this form should be prepared thoughtfully as it will be reviewed by the entire faculty and will be sent to your field supervisor. This is a critical step towards building your professional credibility in the practice world.

✓ Signed copy of the Professional Commitment, Appendix 3.

✓ A copy of the signature page from the section on Criminal Background Checks (page 20).

✓ A copy of your resume. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the Career Development and Counseling Center (located in the Wigley Administration Building) for review of their resume prior to submission with this packet.

✓ A current, unofficial copy of your transcript. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.

✓ A copy of your SOWK 312 evaluation. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.

✓ A copy of your graduation plan and its approval from the registers office. This will not be sent to your field supervisor.
Appendix 3

Professional Commitment

When students enter practicum they are expected to accept and abide by social work obligations required by the profession, the law, and/or licensing regulations. Students assume responsibility for the liability risks that are inherent in their role as a practicing social worker. Each student must sign this section of the application in order to enter practicum. A copy of this form will accompany materials submitted to the potential practicum field supervisors.

1. I understand that criminal convictions may limit future employment and licensure. Federal and state law governs this. The Department has implemented a policy to require a criminal background check prior to senior placement. If, during the past five years a conviction occurred for a misdemeanor or felony for which a jail sentence could have been or was imposed, please describe these events, in writing and attach to this document. You may need to be redirected to appropriate areas of practice if a conviction creates conflicts with practicum agency requirements.

2. I understand that lapses in professional conduct are governed by licensing regulations and the profession. These are best summarized in Section I, B-3 of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Board of Social Work Standards of Practice, which I have reviewed.

3. I understand that the student social worker should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with professional judgment, performance, or jeopardize the best interests of those for whom the social worker has a professional responsibility.

4. I understand that if I have had substance abuse difficulties, an agency may require a signed agreement to refrain from use of alcohol and or other mind altering drugs during the period of the practicum.

I have read the above and understand that any misrepresentation of known, current life stressors that might affect my performance in the practicum, or any related legal problems in my background, could result in academic and/or ethical sanctions. I am at this time able to practice social work, as a student, within the legal and ethical requirements of the profession and the law.

Signature __________________________________________ Date __________________________
Appendix 4

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO

Letter of Good Standing and Consent Form

Date: __________________________

The following named individual is a student in good standing and has made application with Minnesota State University, Mankato, Department of Social Work for a Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Criminal Background Check.

Last Name of Applicant (please print): __________________________________________

First Name (please print): ________________________________________________

Middle (full)(please print): ________________________________________________

Maiden, Alias or Former (please print): ______________________________________

Date of Birth: ___________________  Sex (M or F): ___________________________

Month/Day/Year

Social Security Number: (Optional) ________________________________

I authorize the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to disclose all criminal history record information to Minnesota State University, Mankato Social Work Department, 358 Trafton Science Center N, Mankato, Minnesota  56001 for the purpose of Social Work 312, Junior Field Experience, or Social Work 450, Senior Practicum. The expiration of this authorization shall be for a period no longer than one year from the date of my signature.

I, __________________________________________ (print name) am signing this in the presence of a Notary.

_________________________________________  Date

Signature of Student

_________________________________________  Date

Signature of Notary
Appendix 5
Practicum Application
Department of Social Work
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Prepare this application thoughtfully and neatly. You may enter this format into your computer or download this application from the Department of Social Work's web page. The faculty and field supervisor will review this application. This application is to assist the faculty in determining your readiness for practicum. You must type your response to the questions. Do not leave any questions unanswered.

This application will also assist in making an appropriate match between your expectations, needs, and education goals and the agency in which you may be placed. Remember practicum is not training for a specific job, but continuation of your professional education.

Student's name:

Address:

Permanent address (if different):

Telephone number:

E-mail address:

Faculty Advisor:

I receive the Title-IV-B Child Welfare stipend recipient. Yes or No

Minor or Concentration:

Proposed class schedule during practicum:
1. You will be expected to provide your own transportation to and from your practicum placement. Do you have your own reliable transportation? Yes or No

2. Is there anything that might interrupt your practicum experience over the next semester?

3. Please write a 75-word narrative on your strengths as a social work practicum student. Be as specific as you can (use a separate sheet as necessary).

4. Please write a 75-word narrative on your limitations as a social work practicum student. Be as specific as you can (use a separate sheet as necessary).

5. Please describe your goals for the practicum experience. Be as specific as you can in 75 words (use a separate sheet as necessary).

6. Please describe in 75 words the model of supervision that you require. It may assist you to consider previous supervisors with whom you worked well (use a separate sheet as necessary).

7. Are you now or have you ever been convicted of a felony or any misdemeanor? Yes/No; if yes, when please give specific date(s), conviction, and resolution (use a separate sheet as necessary).

8. Are you or have you ever been known to the protective services division of any county due to a substantiated complaint of abuse or neglect to a child or adult? Yes/No; if yes, when please give specific date(s), specify complaint, and resolution (use a separate sheet, as necessary).
Appendix 6

*Questions a supervisor might ask a student*

Below is a list of questions that you might be asked during your interview for practicum placement.

1. Why are you interested in this agency?
2. What strengths do you bring to this agency?
3. Why do you want to be a social worker?
4. What skills or knowledge do you hope to learn here?
5. What qualities are you looking for in a field supervisor?
6. How will you use supervision time?
7. What are your previous experiences?
8. What experiences do you have with diverse populations?
9. What is your favorite social work class?
10. What social work course had been difficult for you?
11. Describe your learning style.
12. How do you handle stress?
13. Do you have a personal experience with the issues that this agency works with here?
Appendix 7

Questions a student might ask a supervisor

Below are a few questions that a student might ask the field supervisor during the practicum placement interview.

1. What is your experience with MSU, M students?
2. Why are you considering having a student?
3. What do you expect from a student?
4. How would you describe your supervision style?
5. What would a supervision session be like with you?
6. Are you available for informal supervision other than at the time scheduled?
7. Do you have time for scheduled supervision? How often?
8. What is a typical day like at this agency?
9. How did you get into the practice of social work?
10. What hours do you expect a student to have?
11. Are there meetings that I am required to attend?
12. How do you address issues of safety in this agency?
13. Will I need a car? Does the agency pay for mileage?
14. What training opportunities are available?
Appendix 8

The following Memorandum of Agreement is the formal agreement between the practicum setting, the student, and the Department of Social Work. This form should be signed by the designated social work supervisor and an agency administrator if they so choose. The student should also sign the form. The field coordinator with whom the student will be working during the placement semester will also sign the form. This form should be signed prior to or during the first week of practicum with copies remaining with the agency, the student, and placed in the Department file.

If there are questions or concerns regarding this contract please call the field coordinator.
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

AND

This Agreement is entered into between the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, on behalf of Minnesota State University, Mankato (hereinafter “the University”) and ________________________________ (hereinafter “the Agency”). The Agreement, and any amendments and supplements thereto, shall be interpreted pursuant to the Laws of the State of Minnesota.

Agency Name: ____________________________________________________________

Agency Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________ State: __________ Zip: __________

Agency Telephone Number: ____________________________________________________

Supervisor’s Name: ___________________________________________________________

Supervisor’s Telephone Number (if different from the agency telephone number): ____________________________________________________________

Supervisor’s email address: ____________________________________________________

WITNESSETH THAT:

WHEREAS, the University has established a Baccalaureate Program in Social Work with access points for entering freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors and transfer students, for qualified students preparing for and/or engaged in the practice of Social Work; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is authorized by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 136F to enter into Agreements regarding academic programs and has delegated this authority to the University; and

WHEREAS, the Agency has suitable programs in social or human services for the educational needs of the Social Work Department of the University; and

WHEREAS, it is in the general interest of the Agency to assist in educating persons to be
qualified as social workers; and

WHEREAS, the University and the Agency are desirous of cooperating to furnish a Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum for students of social work enrolled in the University.

NOW, THEREFORE, It Is Mutually Agreed By And Between The Parties:

DEFINITIONS:
1. Junior Field Practice is defined as an observational experience where direct consumer services will not be provided by the student. An Agency staff will be present with the student on site. A University faculty member will not be present during the experience, but may be available by telephone or e-mail. Junior Field Practice is part of the social work student’s formal education requirements (150 hours) consisting of ongoing observation/work in a community social services agency under the supervision of a social worker or social service professional. The student will have the opportunity to observe classroom content in the practice setting (Barker, R.L., 1995 The social work dictionary 3rd Edition. NASW Press Washington D.C.)

2. Senior Practicum is defined as: Experience is on-site training at the Agency (minimum of 440 hours). The University offers several different types of Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum for the Senior Social Work Student. Practicum experience will be determined based on the student and the specific educational needs of the student. Such experiences may include, but are not limited to observation; training supervised by an Agency supervisor, employee, or task supervisor, and direct practice under the supervision of the supervisor. The social work supervision will be provided by a degreed social worker. Part of the professional education of students in which they apply knowledge, skills and values acquired primarily through classroom assignments to direct practice with clients. In social work education, this occurs primarily in field placement assignments in which students work, under close social work supervision, with clients in social agencies or other social or human services settings (Barker, R.L., 1995 The social work dictionary 3rd Edition. NASW Press Washington D.C.).

3. Task supervisor experience is defined as an social service expert as identified by the Agency who engages in one-to-one teaching of the student within the context of the actual Agency setting; who teaches through demonstration of knowledge, skills and values encompassed in the practice roles; and who models collaborative practice behaviors.

4. Field supervisor is defined as a degreed social worker actively engaged in the practice of social work who closely supervises the student in the major areas of the social work practice with individual, families, groups, organizations and communities; professional practice including knowledge, skills and values, research and program evaluation, diversity, professional impact, employment management, continued learning through professional growth and development (Edwards, R.L, and Hopps, J.G Editors, 1995. Encyclopedia of Social Work 19th Edition. NASW Press Washington D. C.)

I. UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES
A. The University, which is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, is responsible for offering the Social Work Program which is
accredited by the Council on Social Work Education

B. For undergraduate Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum, the University will provide coordination and liaison of its students during the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum at the Agency. The University faculty so assigned will hold current licensure valid in the State of Minnesota and/or a MSW or Ph.D.

C. The University will be responsible for coordinating the Junior Field Practice and assigning a grade for the student’s learning experience. The University will electronically contact the Agency for the Junior Field Practice if necessary. The University will facilitate an on-site meeting if requested by the Agency or deemed required by the Junior Field Practice supervisor.

D. The University faculty will be responsible for coordinating the Senior Practicum and assigning a grade for the students’ learning experiences. The University faculty will facilitate at least two visits at the Agency or electronic contact as deemed necessary for the Senior Practicum.

E. Insurance Coverage for the Senior Practicum Student: The University, through the Department of Administration’s Risk Management Division, has obtained private group student intern malpractice insurance for University students with liability limits of $1,000,000/$3,000,000 with no deductible. A certificate of insurance for this coverage is available from the University and/or the Risk Management Division. Students are not state employees and the State and the University are not responsible for their acts or omissions under Minnesota Statutes 3.732 and 3.736 (the Minnesota Torts Claims Act.).

Student may elect to take part in this malpractice insurance opportunity or any other professional malpractice coverage that is comparable to the Department of Administration’s Risk Management Division (i.e. National Association Social Work malpractice insurance coverage).

H. Insurance Coverage for the Senior Practicum Student the University will maintain a record of students’ criminal background check (BGC), and shall obtain student permission to submit data regarding their criminal background to the Agency. The University will require a criminal background check at the time of admissions to the program. Agencies may request a follow-up criminal background check at the time of placement the agency may pay for the BGC or request that the student’s to assume this expenditure.

II. AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Agency will have current accreditation by the State Department or any other appropriate accreditation, certification and/or licensure as may be required.

B. The Agency is responsible for the overall safety and quality of care provided to its consumers by the students who are participating in the Junior Field Practice and
Senior Practicum program at the Agency.

C. For Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum:

The Agency shall appoint an appropriate social work supervisor and preceptor, if necessary (task supervisor) for each student placed at the Agency. The Agency will provide Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum for undergraduate social work students from the University. Hours used for such student experiences may be day or evening depending on Agency preference and intern availability.

D. The Agency will provide the University with a copy of its policies and regulations that relate to the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum upon request or provide access to these documents.

E. The Agency will permit the University students use of its facilities for Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum according to a mutually approved learning plan.

F. The Agency will allow a reasonable amount of Agency staff time for orientation and joint conferences with University faculty, for the University faculty orientation to the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum, student supervision and evaluations.

G. When available, physical space such as offices, conference rooms, and classrooms of the Agency may be used by the University students who are participating in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum.

H. The Agency assumes responsibility for the orientation of the University Students to Agency policies and regulations.

I. The Agency assumes no responsibility for the cost of meals, clothing, housing, or parking of University students who are participating in the field/practicum program. The Agency will permit University students who are participating in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum program to use any cafeteria on the same basis as employees of the Agency. The Agency will permit University students to use Agency parking spaces under the same policies governing Agency personnel. The Agency will pay mileage for University students when the students are utilizing their own automobile for Agency business or contact with consumers under the same policies governing Agency personnel.

J. The Agency recognizes that it is the policy of the University to prohibit discrimination and ensure equal opportunities in its educational programs, activities, and all aspects of employment for all individuals, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, veteran’s status, marital status, age, disability, status with regard to public assistance, or inclusion in any group or class against which discrimination is prohibited by federal, state, or local laws and regulations. The Agency agrees to adhere to this policy in implementing this Agreement.
III. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES
A. Personnel of the University and the Agency will communicate regarding planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum. The communication may include but not be limited to:

1. Communication to familiarize Agency personnel with the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum, program’s philosophy, goals and curriculum;

2. Communication to familiarize the University faculty with the Agency’s philosophy, policy and program expectations;

3. Communication to keep both parties and the parties’ personnel who are assigned to the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum informed of changes in philosophy, policies and any new programs which are contemplated;

4. Communication to identify areas of mutual need or concerns regarding the University student;

5. Communication to seek solutions to any problems which may arise in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum; and

7. Communication to facilitate evaluation procedures which may be required for approval or accreditation purposes of the University’s social work curriculum.

IV. REQUIREMENTS OF STUDENTS
A. Each student will be required, as a condition for participation in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum, to submit the results of a criminal background check to the University upon the time of admission to the program. If requested, by the Agency to submit to an additional BGC upon placement in the agency, to verify that no criminal problems exist which would jeopardize consumer’s or Agency’s welfare.

B. University students will submit any health requirements of the Agency such as a Mantoux or rubeola/rubella tests. The results of these tests will be supplied to the Agency at the request of the Agency. Positive results will result in the University student following the guidelines established by the Agency

B. University students participating in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum are encouraged to carry their own health insurance.

C. Students participating in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum are responsible for carrying their own professional liability insurance either through the University or NASW or private provider. The Agency may request proof of liability insurance. The University will have proof of insurance on file in the Social Work Department Office
D. The University agrees that the students who are not otherwise employees of the Agency do not become employees of the Agency by reason of this agreement. Students and supervisors who are not otherwise employees of the Agency are not entitled to any benefits or compensation from the Agency which may be due the employees of the Agency (with the exception of reimbursement of mileage costs).

Students who are not otherwise employees of the University do not become employees of the University by reason of this agreement. Students who are not otherwise employees of the University are not entitled to any benefits or compensation from the University which may be due the employees of the University.

V. **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPOSURE**

A. Any University student who is injured or becomes ill while at the Agency shall immediately report the injury or illness to the Agency and receive treatment (if available) at the Agency as a private patient or obtain other appropriate treatment as they choose. Any hospital or medical costs arising from such injury or illness shall be the sole responsibility of the University student who receives the treatment and not the responsibility of the Agency or the University.

B. The Agency shall follow, for University students exposed to an infectious disease at the Agency during the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum, the same policies and procedures which the Agency follows for its employees.

C. University students contracting an infectious disease during the period of time they are assigned to or participating in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum must report the fact to their University and to the Agency. Before returning to the Agency, such a University student must submit proof of recovery to the University or Agency, if requested.

VI. **LIABILITY**

Each party agrees that it will be responsible for its own acts and the results thereof to the extent authorized by law and shall not be responsible for the acts of the other party and the results thereof. The University’s liability shall be governed by the provisions of the Minnesota Tort Claims Act, Minnesota Statutes, Section 3.732 et seq., and other applicable law.

VII. **TERM OF AGREEMENT**

This Agreement is effective on the later of _________, or when fully executed, and shall remain in effect until either party terminates the agreement. The Agreement will be reviewed annually. If no changes are needed, a cover signature page noting the annual review and continued renewal will be attached to the agreement currently in effect. This Agreement may be terminated by either party at any time upon written notice to the other party. Termination by the Agency shall not become effective with respect to students then participating in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum.
VIII. **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION**

A. The University and the Agency shall each bear their own costs associated with this Agreement and no payment is required by either the University or the Agency to the other party, except that, where applicable (if the Agency decided to employ the student as an intern), the Agency shall pay the students it places in the Junior Field Practice and Senior Practicum.

B. The Agency is not required to reimburse the University students for any services rendered to the Agency or its consumers pursuant to this Agreement.

IX. **AMENDMENTS**

Any amendment to this Agreement shall be in writing and signed by authorized officers of each party.

X. **ASSIGNMENT**

Neither the University nor the Agency shall assign or transfer any rights or obligations under this Agreement without the prior written consent of the other party.

XI. **STATE AUDIT**

The books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the Agency relevant to this Agreement shall be subject to examination by the University and the Legislative Auditor.

XII. **VOTER REGISTRATION (When Applicable)**

The Agency shall provide nonpartisan voter registration services and assistance; using forms provided by the University, to employees of the Agency and the public as required by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 201.162.

XIII. **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) COMPLIANCE**

The Agency agrees that in fulfilling the duties of this Agreement, the Agency is responsible for complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. Chapter 12101, et seq., and any regulations promulgated to the Act. The University IS NOT responsible for issues or challenges related to compliance with the ADA beyond its own routine use of facilities, services, or other areas covered by the ADA.

XIV. **MINNESOTA DATA PRACTICES ACT, The United States Health Insurance Probability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) and Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Patient Records**

The University and the Agency agree to comply with the terms of the Minnesota Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13, in handling all data related to this Agreement.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Patient Records

Solely for the purposes of defining the students’ and faculty roles in relation to the use
and disclosure of the Facility’s protected health information, the University students and faculty engaged in activities pursuant to this Agreement are members of the Facility’s workforce, as that term is defined by 45 CFR 160.103 and in 42 CFR part 2. The University students and faculty are not and shall not be construed to be employees of the Facility.

The University shall cooperate with Facility in complying with its obligations as a HIPAA covered entity, including, but not limited to, making its students and faculty available for Facility’s training in its policies and procedures under the HIPAA 45 CFR parts 160 and 164 and Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Patient Records 42 CFR part 2 privacy regulations. Prior to placement at the Facility, the University shall instruct its students and faculty to comply with the Facility’s policies and procedures governing the use and disclosure of individually identifiable health information.

XV. OTHER PROVISIONS (attach additional page(s) if necessary)
None.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

APPROVED:  

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

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Appendix 9

Department of Social Work – MSU,M
Learning Agreement/Plan Form SOWK 455

Student’s name

Agency Identification
Field supervisor
Agency Name
Mailing Address
Telephone
Practicum Coordinator
Student hours: Beginning Date Ending Date
Weekly Schedule: M. T. W. Th. F. Seminar

Student will develop knowledge of:

Agency
- Agency programs
- Agency policies and procedures
- Community power structure
- Other professions
- Use of resources

Socio-economic status
- Poverty level or below
- Low income
- Middle income
- High income

Ethnic groups
- Asian
- African American
- Hispanic
- Native American
- White (non-Hispanic)
- Other

Age
- Pre-school
- Elementary
- Adolescents
- Young adults
- Middle age adults
- Older adults

Sexual Orientation
- Gay/Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Heterosexual
- Transsexual

Gender
- Male
- Female

Major client intervention experiences the student will encounter during this practicum.
Write 3-6 sentences that describe your practicum site and the broad areas of services in which you will be involved.

Individualized Competencies
In behavioral terms, state the major objectives that are agreed upon by the student’s field supervisor and the practicum coordinator. These should reflect the Outcomes described on pages 12, 13, 14 of the Field Manual. Consider adding personal characteristics or traits that may need to be addressed in a professional setting. A minimum of four objectives should appear for each goal. Your research project may also be included in your learning plan.
Be specific in identifying expected outcomes and methods of evaluation. Use a variety of methods to describe what you are learning from your work in the agency (your objectives). You may use feedback from your supervisor as ONE measure, implementing feedback and reporting changes you made can be another. Self-evaluation may be appropriate for some objectives but not for others. Other levels of measurement can include feedback from clients, co-workers, and numbers of contacts with agencies or referrals responded to. Keep in mind that we are looking for an evaluation not only on quantity of your work but also quality.

Objectives in the four categories should comply with the following formula: *I will 1) perform, complete, or understand, 2) a specific task, intervention, or assignment with, 3) a specific number of clients or groups, 4) by a specific point in the semester, 5) and be able to evaluate my performance through supervision, documentation, or other means. Example: I will lead an educational group, with children in a classroom, by mid-term, with performance observed by and discussed with the supervisor. Example: I will develop a curriculum that addresses one diagnostic category and present it to the staff, by the end of the semester, with feedback provided by a pre- and post-test of the participants.*

**Goal 1. Apply Social Work Processes:** These objectives should incorporate social work methodology (rapport building, data collection, problem assessment, planning, managing the intervention process, evaluating, and terminating) as they relate to intervening with micro (individual), mezzo (group/family), and or macro (agency/policy) client populations.

**Goal 2. Apply Professional Relationship Objectives:** These objective should include the development of interpersonal skills (assertiveness and initiative, for example) that enhance the professional provision of direct services to individuals, families, small groups, community AND the skills required to do the business of social work with other professionals. This category MUST include the application of social work values and ethical principles.

**Goal 3. Apply Communication Skills:** These objectives should include both verbal, nonverbal, and written skills. These are critical to the delivery of direct services to clients within micro, mezzo, and macro practice settings; and to the range of skills required to interact professionally with one’s peers within the community, in meetings, and through daily interaction.

**Goal 4. Apply Knowledge of Community and Organizational Behavior:** These objectives require the student to apply knowledge of how an agency interacts (internally and externally) in response to the greater political, economic, cultural, and practice environment in which the agency and their clients reside. Objectives can include the student’s integration into the agency, refining an appropriate work ethic, and learning time management skills.

**Practice learning opportunities in which student will engage:** (check as many as appropriate)
- Work with individuals
- Work with families
- Therapeutic group
- Support group
- Administration
- Research
- Policy development
- Grant development
- Resource development
- Team development
- Program development
- Other
Teaching materials and methodology that will be used by field supervisor: (check as many as apply)

- Daily log
- Case note/documentation review
- Question of the Week
- Individual conferences
- Group supervision
- Audio taping
- Video taping
- Direct observation of student
- Other (describe)

Signatures:

Student __________________________ Date __________________________

Field Supervisor __________________________ Date __________________________

Course Instructor __________________________ Date __________________________
Appendix 10

Mid-Placement Evaluation

It is the student’s responsibility to provide their field supervisor with a copy of the mid-placement evaluation form in a timely manner. This evaluation should take place during the sixth or seventh week of the student’s practicum experience and the student is responsible for turning it in to the field coordinator.

The mid-placement evaluation is an opportunity to spend time with your supervisor discussing and reflecting on your overall performance to this point of your learning experience. This is also an occasion to complete a “professional self” assessment of your strengths and areas of deficiency. It is important for the student to have a time to discuss with their supervisor the overall performance and the use of self within the context of the practice setting. It is much easier to make corrections at this point of your learning experience rather than at the end. Please note that many students will use their mid-placement Evaluations as documentation of their social work experience; therefore, please make sure that this evaluation is legible.

Student’s Name: __________________________________________________________

Field supervisor’s Name: ______________________________________________

Agency: _______________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________________________

Rating Scale:

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<th>1. Unacceptable</th>
<th>4. Above Expectations</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Below Expectations</td>
<td>5. Greatly Exceeds Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. At Expectations</td>
<td>6. NA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. NYA (not yet addressed)</td>
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Knowledge

Does the student:

1. Apply information, theory, and concepts from the liberal arts foundation and the social work specific coursework, relying on generalist social work methodology, in the practicum site with clients at the micro, mezzo, and/or macro level?
   Rating ______

2. Develop population specific information and interventions via reading, training, and/or the World Wide Web, regarding clients distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender or sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age and national origin encountered in the practicum site?
   Rating ______

3. Demonstrate an appreciation for social and economic justice issues at micro, mezzo, and/or macro levels that may be present in the agency and in the lives of clients and the use of advocacy in resolving those issues?
   Rating ______

4. Develop an awareness of agency specific issues and concerns, historical and current, as presented by social work student colleagues, through agency observation, and as part of supervisory consultation?
   Rating ______

5. Recognize the different models of organizational structure and the models of service delivery systems of practicum agency?
   Rating ______

6. Demonstrate an awareness of social work history and the impact of history on the current practices of social work?
   Rating ______

7. Understand rationale, requirements, and preparation to take the social work licensing examination and merit examinations?
   Rating ______
Skills

Is the student:

8. Completing 440 hours of practicum experience utilizing generalist social work skills, intervening at micro, mezzo, and/or macro levels, in a social work setting that provide, at minimum, BSW supervision?
    Rating ______

9. Demonstrating an understanding and application of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Board of Social Work Standards of Practice and Ethical Conduct?
    Rating ______

10. Applying research skills in practicum setting by identifying, researching, and presenting information on a specific issue or concept related to client or practice issues?
    Rating ______

11. Demonstrating the use of critical thinking skills within the context of generalist social work practice?
    Rating ______

12. Demonstrating an understanding of issues of confidentiality in seminar setting (and other communication venues, including web-based) when discussing agency and client issues?
    Rating ______

13. Able to assess the activities of organizations and the dynamics of organizations?
    Rating ______

14. Able to practice culturally relevant generalist social work inclusive of bio-psycho-social assessment, planning strategies for social change, implementation, and evaluation that accurately describe and prioritize the needs of clients, particularly those from groups that are oppressed or are subject to discrimination?
    Rating ______

15. Demonstrating professional behavior in all interactions and communication, both verbal and written, related to the practicum site, the seminar, and the role of developing social work professional?
    Rating ______
16. Able to comply with documentation styles and methods of agency documentation?
   Rating ______

17. Beginning to acknowledge and use colleagues (student and agency) as resources, sources of information, support, and feedback?
   Rating ______

18. Able to use computer technology to communicate with peers, colleagues and to access relevant social work information and resources?
   Rating ______

19. Able to use practicum experiences, seminar assignments, and participation for self-assessment and to make performance adjustments as necessary?
   Rating ______

Values

Does the student:

20. Have a consciousness of the complexity of being a social worker in a variety of social work environments, at the micro and/or mezzo and/or macro level?
   Rating ______

21. Understand that inherent to that consciousness will be the awareness of the critical nature of using theoretically and ethically sound social work knowledge, skills, and values in working at the micro, mezzo, and/or macro level with populations at risk and with populations that are distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender or sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age and national origin?
   Rating ______

22. Demonstrate the concepts of respect, of being nonjudgmental, and being supportive in the learning environment as that is analogous to creating a safe, constructive, and cooperative client/social worker relationship?
   Rating ______

23. Understand the ethical requirement and rational for professional guidance (supervision) both in seminar and in the practicum site and the use of reflection to incorporate feedback into corrective action?
   Rating ______
24. Have a clearer understanding of career goals and the requirements, educationally and professionally for fulfilling those goals?

Rating _____

Student’s Signature: ____________________________________________________________
Comment: __________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Date: ________________________________________________________________________

Field supervisor’s Signature: __________________________________________________
Comment: __________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Date: ________________________________________________________________________

Practicum Coordinator’s Signature: _____________________________________________
Comment: __________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Date: ________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 11
Final Evaluation

It is the student’s responsibility to provide their field supervisor with a copy of the mid/final placement evaluation form in a timely manner. This evaluation will take place during the fourteenth week of practicum. The student is responsible for turning it in during the last week of the practicum experience.

It is important to both the student and the profession that the supervisor provide a clear and accurate description of the student’s ability to carry out assignments and the readiness to begin practice as a generalist practitioner. Supervisors are to complete this form by rating the student’s performance and then providing a narrative evaluation of the student’s performance in each section of the evaluation. Please note that many students will use their Mid-placement Evaluations and Final Evaluations as documentation of their social work experience; therefore, please make sure that this evaluation is legible.

Student’s Name: __________________________________________________________

Field supervisor’s Name: __________________________________________________

Agency: __________________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

Rating Scale:
1. Unacceptable 4. Above Expectations
2. Below Expectations 5. Greatly Exceeds Expectations
3. At Expectations 6. N/A
I. Overview of the Student’s Professional Performance

a. Identify the student’s strengths. How did the student demonstrate social work practice skills, knowledge and values? What skills are the strongest? What skills produced the greatest achievements during their practice experience?

b. What barriers, disappointments, or challenges did the student encounter? How did the student respond to those?

c. What professional goals would you recommend the student continue to work on as the student moves toward employment as a generalist practitioner?

How would the supervisor rate the student’s overall performance? _______
II. Professional Learning, Growth, and Development

a. Describe the quality of the work completed by the student in each of the Learning Plan Objectives.

1. Social work process objectives incorporate social work methodology (rapport building, data collection, problem assessment, planning, managing the intervention process, evaluating, and terminating) as they relate to intervening with micro (individual), mezzo (group/family), or macro (agency/policy) client populations.

2. Professional relationship objectives include the development of interpersonal skills that enhance the professional provision of direct services to individuals, families, small groups, community AND the skills required to do the business of social work with other professionals. This includes the use of social work values and ethical principles.

3. Communication objectives, both oral (verbal and nonverbal) and written, are critical to the development of skills to facilitate the delivery of social work services to clients within micro, mezzo, and macro practice settings; and the range of skills required to interact professionally with one’s peers within the community, in meetings, and through daily interaction.

4. Community and organizational behavior objectives require the student to develop and apply understanding of how an agency interacts (internally and externally) in response to the greater political, economic, cultural, and practice environment in which the agency and their clients reside. This includes the student’s need to integrate them into the agency and develop an appropriate work ethic.

How would the supervisor rate the student’s overall performance? _______
III. Listed below are social work skills that are central to social work practice.

Summarize the student’s ability to use each skill.

a. The student’s ability to identify their values, strengths, limitations, and then to become aware of how those traits are perceived by others.

b. The student’s ability to identify and appreciate the strengths in diversity, to recognize their own diversity, and understand the effects of oppression on diverse populations.

c. The student’s ability to articulate and implement the role of the social worker at the agency, to engage clients, assess the clients strengths, needs, and issues, to write recommendations or referrals, to implement plans, to evaluate the outcomes, and learn how multiple systems interact.

d. The student’s ability to understand and articulate the purpose of professional supervision and utilize supervision to explore strengths and areas for future growth.

How would the supervisor rate the student’s overall performance? _______
Overview of the student’s professional performance (from page 74) Score _____

Professional learning, growth, and development (from page 75) Score _____

Summary of student’s ability to use social work skills (from page 76) Score _____

Student’s Signature: ______________________________________________________

Student Comments: ______________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________________________

Field supervisor’s Signature: ______________________________________________

Field supervisor’s Comments: _____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________________________

Practicum Coordinator’s Signature: _________________________________________

Practicum Coordinator’s Comments: _________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________________________
Appendix 12

Student Evaluation of the Agency

Student’s Name: __________________________________________________________
Agency: ________________________________________________________________
Field supervisor’s Name: ______________________________________________

Please complete the following form. It will be used in making an assessment for agency selection in the future. It may also be used for aggregated feedback to the agency supervisor and for the Department of Social Work.

I. Schedule and Availability
   a. Overall during the practicum, the supervisor was available for questions and supervision. Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   b. Apart from scheduled meetings, the supervisor was available for additional contact. Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   c. Did your supervisor provide you with a tour or arrange a tour of the placement site? Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   d. Did your supervisor introduce you to other staff when you began your practicum? Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   e. Did your supervisor discuss procedural matters and agency policies when you began your practicum? Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   f. Did your supervisor discuss ethical and legal issues when you began the practicum? Yes___ No___ Unsure___

II. Activities
   a. Your tasks, assignments, and responsibilities were always clearly defined. Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   b. Your assignments, tasks, and responsibilities were general challenging. Yes___ No___ Unsure___
   c. The agency provided travel reimbursement for expenses incurred while performing agency business. Yes___ No___ Unsure___
d. You had the opportunity to record case notes, social histories, or assessments.  
   Yes___  No___  Unsure___

e. You experienced learning activities that involved individuals.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

f. You experienced learning activities that involved families.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

g. You experienced learning activities that involved groups.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

h. You experienced learning activities that involve communities.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

i. You experienced opportunities to develop problem solving competencies?  
   Yes___  No___  Unsure___

j. You were exposed to learning experiences that provided opportunities to apply social work values.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

k. You experienced opportunities for understanding the interrelationships between social work practice and research.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

l. You experienced a general work environment that was harassment free and provided for you personal safety.  Yes___  No___  Unsure___

III. Narrative Questions

a. What were the positive features of this practicum experience?

b. What were the negative features of this practicum experience?
c. Would you recommend this agency as a practicum site for future students? If yes, why? If no, why?

d. What recommendations would you make regarding this practicum site?

e. Does the supervisor address concerns that are raised by the student?
Appendix 13

Verification of Criminal Background Check Policy

I __________________________ (print name) understand the MSU, M Department of Social Work criminal background check policy.

________________________________________________________________________ Date:________________
Student signature

Please copy and submit this page with your Application to SOWK 455