



Ferrum College
Social Work Program

Field Practicum Manual
SWK489/499

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Social Work Program
Ferrum College
Beckham Hall 225
Ferrum Mountain Rd. Ferrum,
VA 24088

*The Ferrum College Baccalaureate Degree Program in Social Work
awards graduates the BSW Degree.
Accredited by the Council on Social Work Education*

Revised February, 2024

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1.1 Introduction

The complexity of daily life and the variety of social problems require social workers, as generalist practitioners, to gain knowledge, skills and values supported by a strong theoretical foundation. Social workers must be aware of how cognitive/ affective processes affect their own judgment and behavior as well as their clients. The Ferrum College Social Work Program utilizes the field practicum to better equip students as social workers to help vulnerable clients face challenges and problem solve. Field practicum experiences serve as the signature pedagogy of the social work profession's educational process. It is imperative that all those involved with field practicums (the college and faculty, the agencies and field instructors, and most certainly the students) are strongly rooted in the NASW Code of Ethics and clearly guided by the competencies and practices established by the Council on Social Work Education.

The Ferrum College Social Work Program provides a variety of field placements in which students have the opportunity to work with a range of clientele and constituencies (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities). While linking theory and classroom learning to the field practicum, in all of these experiences students gain direct contact with clients and can demonstrate social work competencies.

1.2 Social Work Program Mission Statement

Rooted in a liberal arts tradition our program prepares students to be self-aware generalist professional social workers committed to ethically empowering diverse populations. Our students advocate for the social welfare of all individuals, groups, families, communities, and organizations. As advocates, social work students practice under an ADEI lens that allows them to address client systems holistically without discrimination or bias. The BSW program collaborates with social service agencies as well as community organizations in supporting the use of evidence-based practice and advocacy for human rights.

1.3 Definition of Generalist Practice

Generalist social work practice involves holistic helping relationships with diverse clients (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) using best-practice interventions guided by social work knowledge, values and ethics, and skills, including cognitive and affective processes. With an emphasis on the problem-solving model, generalist practitioners use systems theory and the person-in-environment framework to maximize strengths of those in need.

1.4 Goals of the Social Work Program

The primary goals of the Ferrum College Social Work Program are to equip students to be professional social workers using knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes in social work practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and vulnerable communities. Students will be prepared to:

1. Appreciate and abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.
2. Apply generalist social work practice knowledge, skills, and values to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate all different types of client needs and constituencies while demonstrating appropriate use of self.
3. Apply research and critical thinking skills to practice using appropriate communication.
4. Respect and empower diverse clients using a strengths approach and cognizant of bio-psycho-social-spiritual and cultural considerations.
5. Advocate with and for clients to address policy changes to advance human rights while promoting social, economic, and environmental justice.
6. Behave professionally in field practicum and applied service-learning projects in a variety of contexts.
7. Realize the importance of continuing professional education.

1.5 Council on Social Work Education: EPAS 2022 Competencies (Summary)

The Ferrum College Social Work Program curriculum builds upon the Council on Social Work Education's [2022 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards](#) (EPAS). Each of the nine Core Competencies and related Practice Behaviors serves as the foundation to guide our sound curriculum development. All are critical for students to be fully prepared to address the complex and multifaceted social problems facing individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

- Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
- Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Council on Social Work Education. (2022). *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*.

1.6 Organizing Rationale of Field Practicum: Relationship to Total Curriculum and Theory to Practice

The Ferrum College Social Work Program is structured to expose the student, from the very beginning to the importance of a holistic approach to generalist social work practice. As a liberal arts college, Ferrum requires all students to be immersed in a range of knowledge-based courses including English composition, fine arts, history, human biology, physical education, political science/ economics, philosophy/religion, psychology, and sociology. The Social Work faculty assists students in recognizing the intersectionality of the liberal arts education knowledge areas with skills and values pertinent to aspects of the social work field.

Early on students learn some of the distinguishing elements of the social work profession as compared to sister professions such as psychology and sociology, and the importance of the biopscho-social-spiritual cultural holistic approach, along with the person-in-environment theory, systems theory, and strengths perspective. We believe it is crucial for a student, considering a major in social work, to begin the process of self-awareness in preparation for field experiences and the profession itself. Throughout the curriculum, the Social Work Program highlights the importance of cognitive and affective aspects of all people through learning to be self-aware regarding one's values and behaviors as well as recognizing the vital role of social work professional values. Starting with the first course, SWK 201: Introduction to Social Work, the student must write an initial personal essay reflecting on her or his values and how they came about, followed by a comparison to the primary Social Work professional values.

If a student is fully accepted into the major, he or she may choose to pursue the optional SWK 299: Introduction to Community Services. This course gives many students their first exposure to a field agency experience of 75 hours along with some class assignments and seminar time for reflection. Our social welfare policy course (SWK 320), the Human

Behavior in a Social Environment (HBSE) course (SWK 330), and the first practice course (SWK 370) all include various writing assignments from academic research papers to reflective writings on books, films, speakers, political debates, etc. In addition, several courses also include a community project either on campus or with an agency/organization, in which students serve as organizers, facilitators, evaluators, and educators. These projects are all meant to increasingly prepare students for the intensive senior field practicum.

Our three 1 cr. Professional Seminars are interspersed throughout the curriculum leading up to the senior field practicum.

1. **SWK 297: Professional Seminar I** (Fall Semester, Sophomore or Junior Year) covers the social work major requirements and the application process, an introduction to the CSWE Competencies and Practice Behaviors as well as the NASW Code of Ethics, a resume overview, and an examination of self through usage and discussion with faculty of the [Professional Behavioral Checklist](#) which will be reexamined in each professional seminar. As part of the application process, the student must have a criminal background and Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) check completed, develop a resume, have 2 [reference forms](#) (copy link and send to references to complete) completed, and an in-class typed essay exploring factors influencing the student's choice to pursue social work, along with reflection on his or her strengths and limitations as well as short and long term goals. Students must complete the minimum number of specific initial courses and have the required minimal GPA (2.2) criteria in order to apply. The students also go through an interview with a faculty member and a local social worker who sits on the advisory committee. All of these components are stepping stones in preparation for the eventual senior field practicum and ultimately becoming a professional social worker.
2. **SWK 397: Professional Seminar II** (Spring Semester, Junior Year) introduces students to field practicum options, provides an overview of the professional interview process along with mock interview experiences, and after actual field placement interviews, the semester culminates with the field placement assignment to be ready for the senior Fall Semester.
3. **SWK 497: Professional Seminar III** (Fall Semester, Senior Year) provides for students to support one another in the beginning development of the senior portfolio notebook which will eventually lead into the final semester senior capstone course PowerPoint presentation. Students begin to brainstorm experiences and artifacts they could use to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities related to the CSWE EPAS 2022 Competencies and Practice Behaviors, and then engage in practice presentations with peer/faculty feedback.

Ferrum College's upper level social work classes typically range in size from about eight to sixteen students so close interaction is available enabling students to get extensive group facilitation, leadership and presentation experience along with peer and faculty feedback.

This curriculum structure enables our social work majors to have gained extensive knowledge, skills, and values through these experiences prior to the two-semester senior year field practicums and seminars (Fall Semester: 75 field practicum hours and Spring Semester: 400 field practicum hours, both supported with weekly seminars). If a student completed SWK 299, then typically the Field Coordinator works with the student to have a different type of agency/clientele experience in the Senior Field Practicum to broaden exposure to the range of social work career areas.

In the final Spring Semester students are also enrolled in SWK 498: Senior Capstone. As part of this course, students demonstrate leadership skills by facilitating and discussing ethical case dilemmas with their peers. The students complete their Capstone Binder and a PowerPoint which includes artifacts to address each of the CSWE Competencies and Practice Behaviors (EPAS 2022) through a PowerPoint presentation. These artifacts may be drawn from practicum client cases or various agency experiences, research activities, or other major projects/papers. This final presentation is the accumulation of the student's connection of theory and classroom learning to practical application in the field practicum and major projects. The student's presentation is first evaluated by the faculty and then assessed by two members of the Social Work Program Advisory Committee all of whom interact with and provide verbal and written feedback to the student.

The Field Education Program has very specific criteria for student eligibility and agencies must be able to provide a range of experiences that lead the student to develop the required competencies. These will be described following descriptions of the two field practicum and seminar course experiences: SWK 489 in the Fall Semester and SWK 499 in the Spring Semester.

2 Social Work 489/499 Field Practicum and Seminar

Below are the Ferrum College Catalog descriptions:

SWK 489 Senior Field Practicum and Seminar I

The first of two parts of the senior field experience will be an introduction to the agency in which the student will spend two semesters. The agency experience will be supervised by a Faculty Liaison and a Field Instructor who has earned the MSW or BSW degree with a minimum of three years' experience. Field practicums are typically developed to fit the student's career interests. During fall semester senior practicum, the student will be in the agency for a minimum 75 hours along with a **one hour weekly classroom seminar**. The student will have the opportunity to be fully oriented to the agency's services in preparation

for more concentrated hours in the second practicum during spring semester. The agency will also often provide the setting for the senior student to implement course projects for two required practice courses (SWK 297 and SWK 397) and the research course (SWK 341).

Prerequisites: SWK 330, 397; concurrent with: SWK 497, and SWK 341. Three hours, three credits

SWK 499 Field Practicum and Seminar II

A 400-hour ($13\frac{1}{2}$ week) agency experience supervised by a Faculty Coordinator and a Field Instructor who has earned the MSW or BSW degree with a minimum of three years' experience. Field practicums are typically developed to fit the student's career interests. This course includes a weekly **2-hour seminar**. *Prerequisite: all SWK major requirements and concurrent with SWK 498. Nine credits.*

To receive full credit for SWK 489 and 499 the student must complete:

1. **Field Practicum Hours:** Successfully complete a minimum of 75 hours in the fall semester and a minimum of 400 hours in the spring by adhering to the [Field Practicum Performance Plan \(FPPE\)](#) (please make copy of the file before editing) and receiving a positive evaluation on the competencies and practice behaviors.
2. **Field Seminar Requirements:** The field seminar, led by the Faculty Liaison/Field Coordinator, meets weekly for **one hour (SWK 489: Fall Semester)** and **two hours (SWK 499: Spring Semester)**. The seminar combines a discussion of common readings related to the seminar outcomes, didactic learning on issues related to the field, case presentations, agency analyses by students, demonstration of research techniques, and time for informal sharing and support, all of which positively impact student learning outcomes. The student will:
 - (a) Be present for each weekly seminar in its entirety and participate fully by communicating integration of classroom and field to Faculty Liaison and classmates;
 - (b) Come prepared to share difficulties and successes in the field;
 - (c) Successfully complete required reading, writing assignments, and projects as listed in the course syllabus;
 - (d) Contribute to seminar discussion in a concise, clear, and constructive manner through appropriate oral contributions using critical thinking skills;
 - (e) Provide thoughtful feedback to classmates and instructor by demonstrating respect for diversity within the class, in verbal and non-verbal interactions;

- (f) Demonstrate a developing awareness of self as a professional social worker by exploring and evaluating personal values, beliefs, attitudes, and competencies with the help of peers and faculty;
- (g) Demonstrate the ability to engage, assess, intervene and evaluate practicum situations while seeking feedback from colleagues (classmates, peers) and teachers when the practicum presents problems to solve; and
- (h) Demonstrate the ability to appropriately respect the confidentiality of agency and client situations.

3 Field Practicum: Criteria for Selection, Responsibilities, and Guidelines

3.1 Field Education Program Criteria for Students

A field practicum opportunity is a privilege, not a right. The Ferrum College Social Work Field Education Program has specific criteria that a student must adhere to in order to be considered eligible for the senior field practicum. The following requirements **must be** completed before the Field Practicum may begin. The social work major student must:

1. maintain a 2.2 GPA or higher (overall and within the social work major);
2. have completed all prerequisite social work major required courses with a minimum grade of “C”;
3. complete a [Field Practicum Application and Interest Survey](#) for the SWK 489/ 499 Field Practicums;
4. have completed a Criminal Background and DMV check (not have any disqualifying factors)
5. complete any additional individual agency requirements (such as Drug Test, TB Test, etc.)
6. sign and adhere to the [Student Behavior Code of Conduct Pledge](#) which includes abiding by the NASW Code of Ethics;
7. sign and adhere to the BSW Student Handbook Agreement; and
8. be in “good standing” based on academic standards as well as the Community Standards of Conduct as stated in the Ferrum College Student Handbook.

Students who do not meet these minimum standards are not eligible to participate in the Social Work Field Practicum.

When an Agency and Field Instructor make the serious time commitment to instruct and provide learning opportunities for a student, we expect a high degree of responsible behavior from the student. Client consumers of services are often suffering from various life problems and a student does not have the right to make the clients' lives worse or become a burden to the community agency.

Coursework, advising, speakers, class and field experience all continuously emphasize the holistic nature of the social work field and the value in diverse experiences that students are able to have along with their two semester agency client experiences. Students need to understand that in social work practice one rarely gets to work only with one particular type of client or problem and that they may be placed in a setting not of their first choice. It is crucial for students to broaden their exposure to different client systems and varying agency structures or approaches in order to deepen their knowledge and skill base. This process also tends to help students move past some of their own discomfort with the unknown.

3.2 Field Practicum Student Assignment Process and Orientation

While the Field Coordinator reviews the completed Application to Field and meets with each student prior to placement, the final decision to place a senior student in a specific field practicum agency is a process that includes several stages.

In the spring, preceding a student's senior year, students take SWK 397 Professional Seminar II in which they update their resume and engage in mock interviews.

Eligible students complete the [Social Work Field Practicum Application and Interest Survey](#). Students then attend a campus Human Services Career Fair to expose them to a variety of agency representatives. This is followed up by the Field Coordinator meeting with each individual student to discuss specific field options, follow-up agency interviews, final field agency assignment, and later orientation.

Early in the Spring Semester all junior level students who will be eligible for senior field practicum the following academic year are required to attend the campus based Human Services Career Fair (HSCF) put on by the Social Work Program, Criminal Justice Program, and the Ferrum College Office of Career Services. The purpose of the Human Services Career Fair is to introduce students to local agencies in Franklin County, Martinsville/Henry County, Roanoke City and County, and some other areas of the state. Each student is expected to bring a copy of an updated resume as this serves as an opportunity for initial interviews with potential field placements.

Once the student has met with some agency representatives, the Field Coordinator holds individual appointments to discuss the student's goals for field and to match up potential sites. The Field Coordinator speaks candidly with the student to consider a field placement of interest but also one which will help broaden the student's growth and exposure to diverse

clientele and services. Once a tentative plan has been determined, the Field Coordinator contacts the agency on behalf of the Social Work Program and only then does the student set up a formal interview. After the student reports a completed interview, the Field Coordinator follows up with the agency to see if the student is accepted. Any additional agency requirements are reviewed with the student and s/he is expected to get whatever needs to be done completed before the next Fall Semester begins.

Prior to the first day of classes in the Fall, the Field Coordinator meets with all seniors to review the paperwork and forms for the field, reminders of basic field policies are discussed, and student safety guidelines are covered (all items are here in the Field Practicum Manual which is available online on the Social Work Program's website). The campus police chief covers basic safety during home visits, as well as what to look for related to drugs in people's homes.

A few days later in the first week of the Fall Semester a Field Orientation for Field Instructors and their matched field students is conducted in Rocky Mount, the county seat where many agencies are located. The orientation is held either in a conference room in one of the agencies or at a local public adult education center in the center of town and the Social Work Program provides lunch or snacks. The site location is to maximize the attendance of field instructors and lets the students meet all of the community agency field instructors. The primary focus of this orientation is to discuss the [Field Performance Plan and Evaluation tool](#) through use of a PowerPoint, providing some examples for assisting field instructors to plan activities to support students to meet all of the CSWE Competencies and Practice Behaviors. Field Instructors and students are given time to work on the initial Field Performance Plan (which is in lieu of the old Learning Contract) with the Field Coordinator and Program Coordinator available for consultation. In addition, discussion is held regarding some of the concurrent courses students will be taking, especially in the Fall Semester, and possible course/field project ideas such as joint agency/student research projects. The faculty member who teaches the research course attends to facilitate some of this discussion.

3.3 Field Practicum Opportunities

The Ferrum College Social Work Program is very proud of its positive reputation in the community for preparing responsible, ethical, hard-working interns who recognize their important responsibilities to provide service to client consumers and to diverse constituents. Field practicum agencies strive to provide opportunities for students to gain experience within a range of intervention practice levels including micro, mezzo and macro.

Examples of field practicum settings used by Ferrum College include Department of Social Services, school systems, child advocacy and court-appointed special advocate programs, health and rehabilitation centers, hospices, mental health and substance abuse services (both public and private community-based as well as in-patient treatment), equine therapy, LGBT

services/diversity centers to name a few. (See a comprehensive list of Field Practicum Agencies including contact information and mission statements in Appendix: Section 2).

A student might assist with intake phone calls at Department of Social Services and work to obtain resources to meet client needs; help prepare a report to be submitted at a Juvenile and Family Court hearing on a child abuse or neglect custody case; interview a new member for a substance abuse group and help facilitate a group session; function within the public school system to meet the basic needs of students which might include helping to facilitate a group for children of divorce or those needing to work on anger management; help a family member cope with grief after the loss of a loved one in hospice; or participate in a community family assessment planning team (FAPT) meeting to advocate for a child or family to gain access to needed resources. In rare circumstances, if needed, a student may gain a specific experience through an additional agency beyond his or her primary placement.

3.4 Criteria for Selection of Field Practicum Agencies

1. The agency's philosophy, goals, programs, and policies are compatible with professional social work standards.
2. The agency's board, administrator, and staff are committed to the Ferrum College Social Work Program, and its goals and objectives are viewed as important to the agency.
3. The agency is in good standing in the community and in compliance with local, state, and/or federal standards of operation.
4. The agency administrator and staff are willing to cooperate with the College in planning for supervision and evaluation of placed students.
5. The agency is located within a reasonable distance from the College (50 miles).

3.5 Responsibilities of Agency Practicum Sites

The agency is responsible for providing an environment in which the student may learn about her/himself, the client population served, the role of the agency in a particular social services network, and the profession of social work. This will include offering tasks that contribute to learning, assigning supervision that includes weekly meetings, maintaining contact with the Field Liaison, and participating in the evaluation of the student's experience. The agency shall:

1. Complete the required paperwork agreements for the Ferrum College Social Work Program; [Agency Placement Profile](#) and [Field Instructor Information Form](#) (requires submitting a current CV)

2. Agree with intended learning outcomes for the practicum and be willing to assign tasks that will help the student fulfill the outcomes/competencies and practice behaviors;
3. Appoint a Field Instructor who:
 - (a) possesses an MSW or BSW degree from a CSWE accredited program;
 - (b) has a minimum of three years of social work experience;
 - (c) is not under sanction by licensing agency; and
 - (d) has a commitment to direct the learning of a student;

Note: If a Field Instructor does not possess the MSW or BSW degree, she/he will work closely with the Field Liaison to ensure a social work practice perspective.
4. Designate space to be used by the student that is appropriate for the task assigned (e.g. private for interviewing) **with appropriate equipment (telephone, computer)**; and
5. Notify the Social Work Program Field Coordinator of any disciplinary actions related to the agency field instructor that could impact the student's learning experience in the practicum.

3.6 Responsibilities of the Field Instructor

1. Complete [Field Practicum Agency](#) and [Field Instructor Information](#) forms;
2. Attend Ferrum College Social Work Field Orientation and meetings
scheduled with the Field Liaison to become acquainted with the Social Work Program and student supervision;
3. Provide an agency orientation to the student, including its history, mission and purpose, funding sources, administrative and staff organization, and personnel policies and practices – telephone and computer practices, meetings, forms, insurance and liability policies, dress code, etc.;
4. Develop (with student input) the [Field Performance Plan and Evaluation \(FPPE\)](#) (please make a copy of the file prior to editing) (consistent with CSWE Competencies and Practice Behaviors) by establishing expectations and goals of the student while in the agency;
5. Review the FPPE frequently and work with the student on revisions in the plan or agency assignments as necessary;

6. **Meet with student at least once weekly**, (in case of an emergency reschedule the weekly supervision meeting) to discuss the:
 - (a) Weekly Reflection and Time Usage information
 - (b) integration of experience with class work
 - (c) assignments and readings used in methods courses to assist the students in application of theory with practice and (d) interactions with client/staff.
7. **Notify the Field Coordinator immediately** of irregularities in student's performance (e.g. frequent absence or tardiness, resistant, negative, or apathetic attitudes, any inappropriate professional behavior); and
8. Be willing and able to evaluate the student's performance regarding the field experience in a timely fashion using the Field Performance Plan and Evaluation Form (FPPE), meeting with the student and Field Liaison at mid-term and final.

3.7 Responsibilities of the Faculty Field Coordinator/Field Liaison

1. Recruit agencies to provide practicums and inform students of the possibilities;
2. Provide Field Instructor orientation and recognition for their efforts with CEU's offered by NASW-VA.
3. Prepare the students for the field practicum, including reviewing their responsibilities to the agency, the Program, the profession and themselves;
4. Arrange for Ferrum College Police Department to speak at orientation to advise students on safety related to home visits and travel.
5. Provide a weekly integrative seminar;
6. Offer supervisory assistance through individual conferences, field visits, or telephone contacts as needed to troubleshoot emergencies and unusual occurrences;
7. Conduct a minimum of two site visits (midterm and final evaluation) during the semester with student and instructor to review student learning objectives and student progress at agency; and
8. Assign the student's grade with input from the Field Instructor.

3.8 Responsibilities of Field Practicum Student

1. Fulfill hours as scheduled, notifying the Field Instructor and the Field Liaison of absences, illness and car trouble **immediately**;

2. Bring enthusiasm and curiosity to the learning situation;
3. Respect client and agency confidentiality;
4. Work with Field Instructor to develop and revise as needed the FPPE;
5. Make increasing efforts throughout the semester to contribute to the agency's work, look for what needs to be done, take initiative to ask for guidance when applicable, and work independently when appropriate, following guidelines and supervision;
6. Follow agency practice regarding all policies: dress code, attendance at meetings, maintaining agency records, cell phone usage, texting, checking personal email and Facebook, etc.;
7. Demonstrate appropriate professional social work skills necessary to work in the agency to engage, assess, intervene and evaluate clients which include:
 - appropriate use of the telephone and computer system, as well as their information and referral network;
 - professional preparation of written documents;
 - professional interviews and client interaction;
 - participate in staff meetings, conferences, etc.
8. Gather information about the agency's services, programs, client group and related community systems by reading publications, historical materials, and case records;
9. Seek ongoing feedback from Field Instructor, prepare WRTU (part of timesheet) for weekly supervisory conferences, frequently assess own strengths and weaknesses, and initiate change where needed; share relevant materials from integrative seminar;
10. **Notify Field Coordinator as quickly as possible of any concerns or discrepancies at the practicum that cannot be mutually resolved between student and Field Instructor/Supervisor;**
11. Accumulate self-knowledge that enables her/him to assess individual suitability for the social work profession and for particular areas within that profession by:
 - Assessing her/his strengths and limitations,
 - Accepting constructive criticism, and
 - Attempting to change or minimize limitations;
12. Make a consistent effort toward "purposeful use of self," integrating theory and practice;

13. Complete the evaluation process, including meetings with the Field Instructor and Field Coordinator on-site and a written evaluation of the field practicum ([mid-term](#) and [final](#));
14. Conduct her/himself in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics for the Virginia Board of Social Work; and
15. Review, sign and abide by the [Ferrum College BSW Field Practicum Manual and NASW Code of Ethics Agreement](#).

3.9 Guidelines for Students and Agency Field Instructors: Hours, Absences, Professionalism

3.9.1 Hours

1. Students are expected to keep an on-going record of hours given in the Field Practicum. These hours must be verified by the agency Field Instructors weekly. A minimum total of 75 hours must be completed in the Fall Semester and 400 hours for Spring Semester in order to receive course credit. These hours are the absolute minimum. **(Hours will be recorded online daily and approved by Field Supervisor each week)**
2. Students should not be expected to be at their field sites during the days of Fall or Spring break but will need to make arrangements for making up any hours needed during this time with approval from Field Supervisor and Field Liaison.
3. Practicum hours should be completed by the **last day of class** in the Fall or Spring semester.

3.9.2 Absences

1. If illness, inclement weather, or transportation difficulties should arise, the student must call the Field Instructor and the Field Coordinator immediately. The student should then make arrangements with the Field Instructor to make up hours missed. This should be a rare circumstance.
2. Excessive absences or non-reported absences will affect the student's grade and may result in a "failing" grade.

3.9.3 Professionalism

1. It is expected that students will be open and receptive to learning at all times.
2. Students are to behave, dress, and communicate in a manner that reflects positively of Ferrum College, the agency, the social work program, and themselves at all times.
3. Students are to honor and abide by the NASW Code of Ethics and the Ferrum College Community Standards of Conduct as stated in the Student Handbook.

3.10 Guidelines for Change or Termination of Field Practicum and Student Status Review Policy

To maintain the integrity of the Social Work Program and to graduate quality social work practitioners there may be circumstances which warrant a change or termination of a student's field practicum. This issue may fall under the broader Student Status Review Policy guidelines which are partially addressed below regarding field practicum and more fully addressed in the *Social Work Student Handbook* (available at the Ferrum College Social Work Program website, in Brightspace for your course, and in your Personal Google Drive). Any of the three participating parties (Student, Field Instructor/Agency, or Faculty Liaison) may initiate such a review.

3.10.1 Initiated by Student

A student may initiate a review based on concerns regarding the specific field practicum. If a student experiences any kind of difficulty with the field experience, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. The student should discuss the problem with the agency Field Instructor.
2. If this discussion fails to solve the problem, the concerns should be brought to the attention of the Faculty Coordinator who will discuss the situation with the Field Instructor and/or the Agency Executive.
3. After deliberation by all parties it is hoped that the concerns can be addressed and the field practicum will continue.
4. If the student's concerns cannot be resolved, and have been validated by the Social Work Field Coordinator (in consultation with all parties) to not be the fault of the student, then the Field Coordinator will work with the agency to appropriately end the placement and if at all possible the student will be moved to a new practicum agency.

3.10.2 Initiated by Field Instructor/Agency or Faculty Coordinator

A Student Status Review may be initiated by the Field Instructor/Agency or Faculty Coordinator due to concerns as to whether a specific agency is able to fulfill the learning needs of a student and in such cases the above procedures should be followed to address those concerns.

A Student Status Review is especially important when concerns exist regarding a student's unacceptable performance or behavior (academic, professional, or violation of the NASW Code of Ethics or campus community standards as defined in the [Ferrum College Student Handbook](#)). This review process may ultimately lead to a change in the student's field

practicum or more likely the student's termination from the field practicum and potentially termination from the Social Work Program. Examples of unacceptable student performance include but are not limited to:

- Inability to adapt to the practice context of the agency and/or the community
- Failure to adhere to practicum agency policies or professional standards
- **Chronic absence, lack of punctuality and/or failure to notify the Field Instructor and Field Coordinator of a planned or unplanned absence**
- Unethical behavior related to such issues as appropriate boundaries, confidentiality, respect for self-determination of the client or other serious breaches of the [NASW Code of Ethics](#)
- Hostile or resistant attitude toward learning or supervision
- Inability to carry out assignments in the field in a satisfactory manner
- Failure to use sound judgment, both in work with clients and in regard to oneself, such as failure to seek professional help for physical or emotional problems which interfere with professional functioning (NASW Code 4.05)
- Lack of respect toward clients related to issues of age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation
- Substance abuse
- Felony conviction

The following steps should be taken related to a request for termination of a field placement due to any of the above concerns: (Note: some extreme cases may warrant immediate termination)

If Field Instructor/Agency or Faculty Field Liaison is concerned with a student's performance or behaviors the procedures are as follows:

1. The Field Instructor/Agency Director or the Faculty Liaison should immediately bring the issue to the student's attention and clarify the agency's expectations.
2. If the student's performance does not adequately improve after following the above procedure, the agency should immediately contact the Faculty Liaison or Field Coordinator who will discuss the situation with the student and consult the agency executive. A remediation contract may be developed or termination may be considered.
3. If a satisfactory solution cannot be achieved the student may be removed from the agency or may be allowed to withdraw. The agency and Faculty Coordinator will work

out a mutual understanding in writing as to the reasons for termination and how termination should be accomplished with a copy given to the student. If appropriate for clients/agency, the student may be allowed some time for closure.

4. In such circumstances the Faculty Coordinator will also send a copy of the written account of reasons for termination to the Social Work Program Director and the Dean of the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences. A copy will also be recorded in the student's departmental file.

Appeal: Termination by a specific agency cannot be appealed since the Social Work Program has no authority over external agencies.

5. If the Field Coordinator, in consultation with the Social Work Program Director, ultimately determines the student is found to be inappropriate for any field practicum, depending on the circumstances of the student's behavior and timing within the semester, the student may receive a WP, WF or F. The student's behavior will also determine if the student is removed completely from the Social Work Program.

APPEAL: If a student is terminated from the field practicum, s/he may petition to continue in the Social Work Program and repeat the practicum by submitting the request in writing within 5 business days to the Field Coordinator who will forward the request to the Program Director. The student petition must directly address issues outlined in the termination notification.

1. Such request for continuation will be determined by the Program Director in consultation with at least two Social Work Program Advisory members. If accepted, the student will be notified within 5 business days with specific remedial terms and deadlines for continuation.
2. If the above appeal is denied the student may (within business 5 days) make a final appeal in writing to the Dean of the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences will notify the student of the decision.

4 The Field Performance Plan and Evaluation (FPPE)

The Field Instructor, with input from the student, will use the **Field Performance Plan and Evaluation form (FPPE)** to plan agency task activities to be used as the evaluative measures of the student's ability to reach the nine CSWE Competencies and 20 Practice Behaviors (see Appendix), taking into account the knowledge, behaviors, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes expected of the social work profession. The FPPE form for an individual student must be developed and approved by the Field Coordinator **no later than week two of the Fall Semester**. This FPPE should be used to assess progress at weekly

supervision meetings, and ultimately serves as the midterm evaluation form and final evaluation form. The FPPE is taking the place of the Learning Contract that had been used previously.

You will notice on the FPPE that all of the CSWE Competencies and 20 Practice Behaviors are listed singularly. The FPPE is used as the planning tool as well as the evaluation tool for both the Fall and Spring Semesters. It is the Field Instructor's responsibility to specify an agency task and method of evaluation for each item, with a planned date followed by a date of completion and a rating.

The FPPE is an essential tool for approaching the field practicum. The Social Work program uses the FPPE:

1. To facilitate a practice centered and diversified learning experience for the student that fits within the overall goals and programs of the agency.
2. To give the student an opportunity to participate in the planning of the field practicum.
3. To ensure that the student understands the agency's expectations.
4. To identify criteria for evaluating practice behaviors.

The FPPE is a fluid document and can be changed or adapted at any time during the two semesters as the student's learning progresses or the agency's needs change. For example, the Field Instructor might link conducting intake and client follow-up with several of the Practice Behaviors listed in Competencies 6-9 which address working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities through engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.

4.1 Supervision: Weekly Reflection and Time Usage (WRTU)

Supervision must take place on a weekly basis. Students may participate in group supervision if available but at least half of their supervision should include individual time between the Field Instructor and the Student Intern. In addition to reviewing the FPPE, students should be prepared for supervision with questions or concerns that reflect the specific field practicum setting or the social work profession. Students should relate field practicum experiences back to classroom learning. Students will use the Weekly Reflection and Time Usage (WRTU) form (located on the time form) and submitted weekly). This form is to cover the previous week and typically will be due on Sunday evenings before 8:00 p.m.

5 Ferrum College Social Work Program Field Policies

5.1 Criminal Background Checks, DMV Checks, and Health Requirements

The majority of social work related agencies are required by law or agency policy to conduct criminal background checks and health tests (proof of up to date vaccinations and TB screenings) on employees and usually on volunteers as well as student interns. Social work education programs, agencies and students have a duty to protect client consumers of services as well as the public and community at large. Agencies have the option to run criminal background checks, DMV checks, and other health related screenings (TB and drug screens). If at any time there is an issue the Field Instructor will notify the Faculty Coordinator immediately. Criminal Background and DMV checks are **only** administered by the Ferrum College Social Work Program when students are first admitted to the program. Any subsequent checks or screenings are to be done by agency.

5.2 Drug Free Workplace

In compliance with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, Ferrum College and the Social Work Program will abide by the following statement: The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is strictly prohibited on the Ferrum College campus and any violation of this policy may include but is not limited to the following: 1) Termination 2) Suspension 3) Notification of law enforcement officials, and 4) Referral to professional counselors/rehabilitation programs. For detailed information on controlled substances, their uses and effects, federal trafficking penalties, see the Criminal Code of Virginia's Classification of Offenses and Legal Classifications of Drugs. Consistent with the above statement, the Ferrum College Social Work Field Practicum Program also includes the following policies:

- At no time is it acceptable for a student to use or abuse alcohol or drugs while in the field placement, or during school/practicum related activities. This includes, for example, a student of legal age having an alcoholic drink on a lunch break. Also, most agencies are smoke free environments and a student must follow agency policy at all times, including while in an agency vehicle or at a client's home.
- Any student who is suspected of the use of illegal alcohol or use/abuse of substances, or whose professional behavior (during the field practicum or school/practicum related activities) is negatively impacted by such usage, may receive a failing grade and may be terminated from the agency field practicum and the social work program.

5.3 Employment Based Field Practicum Policy

Any student currently employed in a human services agency who desires to complete the requirements of either of the two senior Field Practicums in the same agency must meet with the Social Work Field Coordinator to discuss the CSWE stipulations about employment-based field practicums. To maximize learning opportunities students are strongly encouraged to complete their field practicum in a completely new agency, apart from their employment. However, in limited situations, an intern may request to remain in their employment agency to complete their practicum hours. Approval requires that the intern be assigned new responsibilities and be evaluated by a different supervisor. Any such arrangement must be carefully considered and approved by the Social Work Field Coordinator, employment supervisor, and field instructor with a thorough understanding of the Social Work Program policies.

A student is not allowed to complete a practicum under the same employment supervisor and in the same agency unit.

5.4 Informed Consent

The Social Work program promotes personal and professional growth of students who will become competent and ethical practitioners. Sometimes it is necessary to share relevant background information that could impact the student's performance. Information may be shared with the Field Instructor once the student has completed a release of information.

5.5 Insurance Coverage Policies

Some students may be responsible for providing a car for use in field and may need to carry additional liability auto insurance. Some agencies require that students carry malpractice insurance coverage. For information regarding liability insurance for students, please contact the Field Coordinator. Students may have some insurance coverage provided by the field agency. However, this varies from agency to agency. Interested students should discuss this with their Field Instructor. The student should not make any assumptions. All students enrolled in social work field practicums are covered by a Ferrum College sponsored liability policy. In addition students may choose to purchase the NASW member coverage which is available to all students for an annual premium (typically very affordable)

<https://naswassurance.org/>. Students are strongly encouraged to carry health insurance.

5.6 Non-Discrimination Policy

“Ferrum College does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran status, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, or any other protected status (identified in federal or state law) in its programs and activities including, but not limited to, admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in, any of its

programs and activities. For the complete Nondiscrimination Policy, [click here](#)” (College Catalog, 2022-23, p. 1).

5.7 Transportation Policy

Students in the Social Work program at Ferrum College are responsible for their transportation to and from the agency, trainings and other activities that are associated with the field practicum. If students are carpooling it is the responsibility of all students involved to get to their agency in a timely fashion; being late due to your ride being late is unacceptable. Times need to be determined before the practicum begins. Any student who regularly relies on another student for transportation to a practicum site should plan to assist the transporting student with gas costs. **At no time should students transport clients in their personal vehicle.**

Appendices

A Social Work Program Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The Ferrum College Social Work educational program prepares students for beginning generalist social work practice by building upon the nine Core Competencies and 20 Practice Behaviors developed and approved by CSWE in the 2022 EPAS. The section below is directly quoted from that document.

“The nine social work competencies are listed in this section. Programs may add competencies that are consistent with their mission to respond to their context. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that make up the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, and the descriptions that precede them represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

A.1 Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

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

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;

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

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

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

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

A.3 Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (A DEI) in Practice

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

and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

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

A.4 Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

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

- apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

A.5 Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects well-being, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and

critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings. Social workers:

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

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

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

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

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with

clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making. Social workers:

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

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

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

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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

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

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

Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, CSWE (2022).