

BSW Program Field Instruction Manual 2025-2026

FOREWORD

This Field Instruction Manual outlines guidelines and requirements for field education at Binghamton University. All students in field placements are required to review the updated manual each year that they are in a field placement. We expect students to reference the manual as questions arise throughout the academic year and adhere to the policies and procedures detailed in the manual.

All forms, calendars and resources related to field education can be found within Google Classrooms and within Sonia (our field education software).

Field education is the signature pedagogy of social work. Through close working relationships with a broad range of agencies, the Department of Social Work demonstrates its commitment to a wide range of communities by dedicating service to various populations. The policies in this manual have been created with input from community members, faculty members, and students themselves.

Our goal is for the manual to be helpful and supportive of students while in their field placements. We value ongoing feedback so we can collaborate to offer the best possible field experiences for our students while completing their field placements.

Sincerely,

Cara Ponomarev, LMSW, MPA
Director of Field Education

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Vision, Mission, Philosophy and Goals Binghamton University Baccalaureate in Social Work (BSW) Program

Our Vision

To develop future practitioners, activists, and leaders who are steadfast in engaging with others to promote the underlying values of the social work profession, with a particular focus on relationships, inclusivity, advocacy, social justice and the dignity and worth of all.

Our Mission

The Binghamton University Department of Social Work is committed to the development of future BSW practitioners, activists, and leaders by providing a solid and interdisciplinary liberal arts education. Our program promotes an understanding of, and appreciation for, the complexities of engaging and supporting individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in the advancement of relationships, inclusivity, advocacy, and social justice.

Our Goals

Our teaching, advising, and student engagement focus is designed to ensure that all graduates of the BSW program at Binghamton University have:

- The groundwork to becoming effective and competent generalist practitioners who are critically conscious, reflective, and autonomous thinkers; and,
- The skills to respond to the intersectionality of social justice related privileges and oppressions, and to educate, advocate for, and promote the advancement of relationships, inclusivity, advocacy, and social justice as the graduates enter the social work profession;

And are professionals who:

- Integrate research alongside respect for the wisdom of clients and consumers to inform their practice;
- Base their practice on a foundation of paradigms that include, but are not limited to: social constructionism, critical consciousness, anti-oppression, intersectionality, and strengths- and empowerment-based theories and perspectives of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- Develop social work practice and intervention skills informed by ecological systems, and developmental, trauma recovery, cognitive, behavioral, and relational theories.

Baccalaureate in Social Work (BSW) Program

Program Overview

A BSW degree from Binghamton University prepares students for generalist practice and will focus on understanding social work values, ethics, and professional behavior. Through a generalist lens, students will gain the knowledge and skills they need to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students will:

- explore historical oppression and structural inequality, and work towards navigating complex systems;
- increase their awareness of social injustices and the impact that social justice has on access to education, resources, and services; and
- learn how to maximize the empowerment of clients' and communities' experiences of oppression and institutional violence.

The curriculum is designed to create explicit linkages between practice, policy, and research. Students will:

- build knowledge around basic concepts and principles of research and create an understanding that, for social work practice to be effective, it is important that social workers be both consumers of, and contributors to, research efforts that aim to build knowledge and improve social work practice;
- gain knowledge about human development across the lifespan and become familiarized with a variety of frameworks for interpreting the interactions among human biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior; and
- be provided with a foundation for understanding social problems and social welfare policies in order to prepare them to become informed and competent providers of social welfare systems.

Program Curriculum

The BSW program is designed to accommodate full-time students. Students will complete a majority of their general education requirements and the BSW prerequisites in their first and second years of undergraduate study. As a part of the BSW prerequisites, students will take either SW 250 Public & Social Service Practice or SW 300 Introduction to Social Work Practice in order to explore the nature of the social work profession. Students will apply to the BSW program in the second semester of their sophomore year, and, if they are accepted, will matriculate into the BSW program in the first semester of their junior year. Students will complete major requirements in the third and fourth years of undergraduate study. Juniors focus on developing an understanding of the theories and topics in the field of social work, while seniors take practice courses and complete a two- semester internship, interning 16 hours per week for 29 weeks at a social service agency. In total, students will take 126 credit hours in their four years of undergraduate study.

Junior Year - Fall Semester

SW 304 Foundations of Scientific Inquiry with Social Systems, 4 credits

SW 410 Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals, 4 credits

Upper Division Social Science Elective, 4 credits

LAS Elective or Major Requirement or General Education Requirement, 4 credits

Junior Year - Spring Semester

SW 305 Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE), 4 credits

SW 303 Diversity and Oppression, 4 credits

Social Work Major Restricted Elective

Upper Division LAS Elective, 4 credits

Senior Year - Fall Semester

SW 315 Social Welfare Policy and Programs, 4 credits

SW 411 Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups and Families, 4 credits

SW 491 Field Instruction I, 4 credits

SW 495 Field Instruction Integration Seminar, 2 credits

Senior Year - Spring Semester

SW 412 Generalist Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities, 4 credits

SW 492 Field Instruction II, 4 credits

SW 496 Field Instruction Integration Seminar, 2 credits

Social Work Major Restricted Elective, 4 credits

General Education Requirement - Physical Activity & Wellness, 2 credits

Field Instruction

Organization and Structure

Field instruction is offered in the senior year of the BSW program. Students are in a generalist field placement where students learn to recognize and utilize multiple methods of strength-based interventions that can be implemented within a variety of systems that intersect with the client. They learn about the role of social workers and incorporate professional social work values and ethics within their field placement.

Field Instruction I and II are completed in the senior year. Students enroll in SW491: BSW Field Instruction I for the fall semester of the senior year and SW492: BSW Field Instruction II in the spring semester of the senior year. Students must successfully pass Field Instruction I to move forward in the program. Sequential completion with a passing grade for each level of Field Instruction must occur before moving to the next level.

If a student does not successfully complete SW491: BSW Field Instruction I and SW495: BSW Field Integration Seminar I, they will be required to repeat SW 491 and SW 495 if they remain in or return to the program. SW492: BSW Field Instruction II and SW496: BSW Field Integration Seminar II cannot be taken until SW491 and SW495 have been completed with passing grades successfully obtained. If a failing grade is earned for SW491, then a failing grade will be assigned for SW495. The same is true for SW492 and SW496. Field education coursework and field seminar are two classes that are connected and must be taken together and at the same time and in sequence with when they are offered. Students must remain in compliance with Binghamton University's policies on advancement and academic integrity.

Students in Field Instruction I and II spend a total of 510 hours in the field and earn 8 academic credits for their field placement. Students traditionally spend 16 hours per week, over the course of two semesters, at an organization within Broome County and the surrounding regions.

Students complete one placement while in the BSW Program and field education coursework occurs over two consecutive semesters. When a student accepts a field placement, they are committing to completing two consecutive semesters at that field placement. Students are discouraged from terminating their field placement without consulting the Changes in Field Education Course Sequencing and/or Placement Termination, which can be found later in this manual. That policy provides the guidelines for exploring and considering a field placement termination. If/when a student identifies a potential disruption to their field placement, they must contact their instructor of record as soon as possible to determine possible options.

Student Support: Binghamton University Resources

There are a wide range of resources in place at Binghamton University to support students as they move through their academic journeys.

Services for Students with Disabilities:

Responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Any/all students who think they may need accommodations should contact SSD. Students are encouraged to request any approved academic accommodation letter(s) as early as possible. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Field placement accommodations require a separate process than academic accommodations, as academic accommodations do not automatically transfer to the field. Students wanting field placement accommodations should reach out to SSD as soon as they can to determine if any accommodations are possible in the field.

Title IX Office:

Supports pregnant (and pregnancy related conditions) and parenting students as well as students who may have experienced intimate partner violence. Any/all students who think they may need academic accommodations related to field education and pregnancy and parenting are encouraged to contact the **Title IX Office** as soon as possible to request accommodations.

Fleishman Career Center:

Offers initiatives and individual consulting around career development.

Success Coaching:

Professional and Peer Success Coaches support student learning through personalized one-on-one coaching appointments. They focus their empowering questions on a student's learning, who they are, and how they have experienced their academic journey. Success Coaches are trained to collaboratively work alongside a student to create an actionable success plan regarding a variety of topics.

CARE Team:

The CARE Team (Consultation, Advocacy, Referral and Education) works to educate and inform members of the Binghamton University community through caring, advocacy and supportive endeavors. The CARE Team offers case management services not clinical therapy or counseling

Counseling Center: The Binghamton University Counseling Center works to enhance the psychological and emotional well-being of our students so they can take full advantage of the educational opportunities at the University.

Multicultural Resource Center:

Supports and educates the campus community through initiatives designed to increase awareness and understanding of cultural diversity.

Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Ensures development and implementation of policies and procedures that adhere to Title VII law, EEO regulations and ADA law by addressing unlawful discrimination and ensuring equitable workplace practices.

Q Center:

Advocates for the collective liberation of queer identifying people. We are cultivating an intersectional space where all queer students, faculty and staff at Binghamton University are empowered to be their full, authentic selves.

2022 CSWE EPAS Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards guide and inform the MSW Program's curriculum and field requirements. At the conclusion of the MSW program, students will demonstrate mastery in each of the CSWE EPAS competencies. Each course helps students build toward that mastery. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes that comprise 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.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

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

Social workers:

- A. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
- B. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- C. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- D. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote

social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

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

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

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

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge

and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings

in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

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

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, 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:

- A. 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
- B. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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

Social workers:

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

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

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

Social workers:

- A. 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
- B. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

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

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

Social workers:

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

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

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

Social workers:

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

Policies and Procedures for Field Instruction

Role and Responsibilities of Students

Role:

The role of the student is to meet the educational goals of the program by being an active and responsible learner. Students are not expected to know how to provide the services expected within the agency, but be willing and able to learn the skills necessary to provide services within the guidelines of the agency's mission. Students must know and adhere to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and consistently perform in a professional manner. Students must be willing to hear and respond to feedback, and participate as part of a team within the agency. Students must be prepared for meetings, complete required paperwork on time, follow through with commitments to clients and agency colleagues, as well as be reliable in their work. Students are expected to adhere to: 1) policies outlined in this manual, 2) policies outlined by the field agency in which they are placed, 3) expectations established by [Binghamton University Student Contract](#) and 4) educational goals outlined by 9 CSWE Social Work Competencies.

Students engage in both a personal and professional journey in which they will be immersed in self-discovery. Students have a responsibility to take care of themselves by finding support when needed and learning how to separate personal issues from professional conduct outlined in the [Binghamton University Student Contract](#). They must see themselves as representatives of both the agency within the community and the University. Students are part of a partnership between agencies within the community, and university and must be committed to working as part of this team.

Responsibility to Self:

1. To identify learning needs and objectives
2. To be ethical in all activities
3. To fulfill, as fully as possible, all legitimate expectations of the learner in the field, and to go beyond them as feasible
4. To apply self fully to learning and services, including realistic allotment of time to outside demands
5. To be willing to recognize the needs of others in the field instruction partnership system and to be helpful, if possible.
6. To practice and continue to develop professionalism and ethical behaviors, based on the NASW Code of Ethics, while in the field setting
7. To responsibly budget time to allow for adequate attention to both class and field and other student responsibilities

Responsibilities to the School:

1. To demonstrate an understanding of being in the role of a learner
2. To maintain open, honest and sharing communication for achievement of goals and for problem solving in field education
3. To complete all expected assignments fully and on time
4. To not do homework for other classes outside of field education while at field placement

5. To use field experiences to provide insight during class discussions when appropriate and while maintaining client confidentiality; to question and comment on the usefulness of concepts and methods taught in class in relation to field work
6. To fulfill all educational requirements, including spending the full time expected in the field as usefully as possible
7. To meet the academic field education calendar deadlines
8. To work diligently to solve problems arising out of inadequacies or misunderstanding in the field instruction system, including evaluation of the system and its functioning in relation to its goals
9. To work to improve ways in which the school functions with respect to field instruction through channels provided, such as the Field Advisory Council, and direct communication with the director of field education and field office team members.

Responsibilities to Field Setting:

1. To take initiative in work with field instructor, task supervisor (if applicable), and other partners in obligations of learning and reporting responsibilities, including dictations, agendas for conferences, identification of goals, problems, etcetera
2. To maintain open and honest communication for achievement of goals and for problem solving with field supervisor and others at the agency
3. To carry out service and other field activities in compliance with agency policy and practices
4. To question and evaluate agency policies and practices, and work responsibly for their improvement
5. To furnish all reports and other work required on time and fully, to devote the full amount of time expected in the field, and to be flexible when asked to change the specific hours worked for good reason
6. To help field supervisors keep an educational focus, if needed
7. To discover how one's own learning experiences may simultaneously promote one's growth as a professional and augment the agency's capacity to function
8. To enhance agency efforts, when possible, through extra service to clients, development of new resources, public relations contacts, feedback, sharing new learning, etcetera
9. To not do homework for other classes outside of field education while at field placement
10. To follow phone and technology and dress code policies set forth by the site
11. To demonstrate an understanding of being in the role of a learner

Responsibilities to Clients:

1. To practice social work in a disciplined manner, and at the highest level of competence possible in view of time and skill limitations
2. To work to maintain and improve social work service, of one's own and others
3. To offer service promptly, courteously, and without prejudice, and in other ways to put the client's interests first, before one's own convenience
4. To respect the privacy of clients, and their right to opportunity to make use of service (outreach)
5. To never exploit clients for one's own interest, and to share with appropriate persons the instances in which the agency and school policies or requirements collide with a client's needs
6. To demonstrate an understanding of being in the role of a learner

Roles and Responsibilities of Field Agencies

Role:

The agency plays a critical role in the education of students. The agency provides a foundation and context for students to learn and apply knowledge and skills related to the profession. The role of the agency is to provide students with diverse experience on a macro and micro level while delivering services ethically to vulnerable populations. The agency must be committed to education and create a meaningful learning environment for students.

Criteria for Selection of Field Agencies:

- Demonstrates a commitment to the educational process of students.
- Strives to adhere to the guiding principles of the BSW Program's mission, vision, and goals.
- Demonstrates an adherence to NASW Code of Ethics and professional values.
- Serves vulnerable populations, providing services to either one or a combination of individuals, families, groups, organizations, or communities from diverse backgrounds.
- Provides learning opportunities that correspond with field education goals and objectives in a supportive and ongoing manner.
- Provides an agency orientation for students that includes phone and technology and dress code policies.
- Allows agency staff serving as field instructors to provide a minimum of one hour of supervision each week.
- Allows staff serving as field instructors and task supervisors to participate in student and program evaluation processes.
- Allow staff serving as field instructors and task supervisors to participate in an orientation program and seminars, meetings, and gatherings, as offered or required by the Field Office.
- Identify staff members serving in their roles within the organization for a minimum of one year to serve as supervisors.

Policy:

All agencies selected as field placements must meet all of the criteria set forth for the program and must complete the necessary forms prior to students being assigned to the agency for field placement.

Procedure:

1. Field agencies may be identified by Field Office staff members, students, faculty members, or community members.

2. The Field Office meets with and assesses new field sites to explore whether or not the agency meets the criteria for field placement.
3. The Field Office reviews proposed supervisors to determine whether the individual meets the criteria and can serve as a field instructor for the program.
4. The Field Office will initiate the Affiliation Agreement process for approved field placements. An Agreement must be in place in order for a student to intern within an organization. More information about Affiliation Agreements can be found in this manual.
5. The Field Office will contact the agency with explanation regarding denial of appointment as a field site, with a specific explanation of reasoning.

Ethics in Field Instructors as Educators and Mentors

Policy:

Field instructors are entrusted with a powerful role and relationship when working with students.

Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence, and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.

Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.

Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

Field instructors who are supervising students must abide by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.

Roles and Responsibilities of Field Instructors

Role:

The role of the field instructor is central to the student's ability to learn. The primary role is to provide a sound educational experience for students in alignment with the Binghamton University Social Work Department Field Manual and policies and procedures. The field instructor's role is not to serve as an employer, but rather as an educator. Field instructors must be committed to education, understand different learning styles, and be able to engage students in the learning process. Field instructors must be able to provide a safe learning environment in which students can learn about information, values, and skills related to the profession. It is also expected that field instructors keep the task supervisor, field liaison, and field education team up to date on performance and progress of the student during the respective field placement.

Criteria for Selection of Field Instructors

1. Values the educational process for undergraduate level students.
2. Has served in their role within the organization for a minimum of one year prior to serving as a social work supervisor/ field instructor.
3. Has a master's degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).
4. Has had a minimum of two years post-MSW practice experience with client systems of a variety of sizes.
5. Must be licensed, if the field instructor's work responsibilities and student's placement activities fall within the scope of licensed social work.
6. Has a willingness to provide learning opportunities that expose students to issues of diversity.
7. Understands the difference between student-focused learning opportunities from what is expected of employees.
8. Has the ability to recognize generalist and advanced practice skills.
9. Has the ability to guide students to consider assessment and interventions from a bio-psycho-social-spiritual-cultural and environmental context.
10. Understands the strengths-based perspective.
11. Has the capacity to provide a minimum of 1 hour of structured supervision per week for the duration of the academic year.

12. Demonstrates adherence to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and professional values.
13. Has the ability and willingness to attend field supervisor orientation prior to supervising students, seminars, and meetings organized by the Field Office.
14. Has the ability and willingness to review, reference and uphold the Binghamton University Social Work Department Field Manual and policies and procedures as the guide for field education.
15. Has the ability to provide ongoing feedback to students.
16. Has the ability to identify and address performance issues that may arise.
17. Willingness to alert field liaison or the instructor of record of concerns should they arise.
18. Willingness and ability to participate in the student and program evaluation process.
19. Completion of the Field instructor Credential Form.

Policy: All field instructors selected to supervise students in the BSW Program must meet all of the criteria set forth for the program, complete the necessary credentialing forms, and receive orientation prior to supervising students.

If/when a supervisor's status and/or capacity to continue supervising an assigned student changes, the supervisor must email the assigned instructor of record and field liaison as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition process for the student. The instructor of record will contact the supervisor (or the agency contact for such cases in which the assigned supervisor is not the official agency contact) to obtain the name and contact information of the newly assigned supervisor.

Procedures:

1. Field instructors are identified by staff, faculty, or a Field Advisory Council member within the Department of Social Work, an Agency who has been approved and vetted by the Social Work Field Office to serve as a field site, or an individual who identifies themselves as interested in serving as a field instructor.
2. A Field Office staff member will meet with the interested individual and/or agency to review the criteria and to explore whether the individual meets the field instructor criteria.
3. The individual will complete a field instructor credentialing form, which outlines work experience, educational background, and licensing information.
4. The Field Office will review the information and determine whether the field instructor meets the criteria and can serve as a field instructor for the program.
5. The Field Office will contact the individual and agency with written confirmation or denial of selection as a field instructor, with specific explanation of reasoning.

6. If/when a supervisor's status and/or capacity to continue supervising an assigned student changes, they must email the assigned instructor of record and field liaison as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition process for the student. The instructor of record will contact the agency contact (if the assigned supervisor is not the official agency contact) to obtain the name and contact information of the newly assigned supervisor.

Roles and Responsibilities of Task Supervisors

Role:

A task supervisor may be assigned whenever an agency decides that this role is needed. A task supervisor is required when an agency does not have an employee or representative with an MSW degree and two years post-MSW experience on site. The role of the task supervisor is to meet with the student regarding day-to-day tasks and activities at the site. The task supervisor is fundamental in the students' on-site learning and their role is to serve as an educator, not as an employer. Task supervisors are committed to students' education, understand different learning styles, and are able to engage students in the learning process. Task supervisors must be able to provide a safe learning environment in which students can gain knowledge and skills related to social work in alignment with the Binghamton University Social Work Department Field Manual and policies and procedures. Task supervisors and field instructors must develop a schedule for regular meetings throughout the academic year to assess student progress toward competency and to support student learning.

Criteria for Selection of Task Supervisors:

1. Has served in their role within the organization for a minimum of one year prior to serving as a supervisor
2. Values the educational process for graduate level students.
3. Has a willingness to provide learning opportunities that expose students to issues of diversity.
4. Understands the difference between student-focused learning opportunities from what is expected of employees.
5. Has the ability to recognize generalist practice skills.
6. Has the ability to guide students to consider assessment and interventions from a bio-psycho-social- spiritual-cultural and environmental context.
7. Understands the strengths-based perspective.
8. Has the ability and willingness to attend field supervisor orientation prior to supervising students, seminars, and meetings organized by the Field Office.
9. Has the ability and willingness to review, reference and uphold the Binghamton University Social Work Department Field Manual and policies and procedures as the guide for field education.
10. Has the ability to provide ongoing feedback to students.
11. Has the ability to identify and address performance issues that may arise.
12. Willingness to alert field liaison or the instructor of record of concerns should they arise.
13. Willingness and ability to participate in the student and program evaluation process.
14. Completion of the Field Supervisor Credential Form.
15. If/ when a supervisor's status and/or capacity to continue supervising an assigned student changes, they must email the assigned instructor of record and field liaison as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition process for the student. The instructor of record will contact the agency contact (if the assigned supervisor is not the official agency contact) to obtain the name and contact information of the newly assigned supervisor.

Task supervisors and field instructors must develop a schedule for regular meetings throughout the academic year to assess student progress toward competency and to support student learning.

Roles and Responsibilities of Field Office and instructor of record

Field Office

The Field Office team includes a Director of Field Education, an Associate Director of Field Education, a Field Education Specialist, two Field Education Coordinator, a Staff Assistant and two graduate assistants.

Field Director

- Develops and oversees the Field Education Program.

Associate Director of Field Education

- **Serve as an instructor of record**
 - Is available should a student, field instructor or field liaison identify issues or concerns requiring extra attention.
 - Assigns course grades.
- Facilitates field seminars
- Serve as a field liaison.
- Lead the placement process and work closely with students to ensure placements are secured prior to the semester when students plan to enter the field.
- Leads field office events.

Field Education Specialist

- **Serve as an instructor of record**
 - Is available should a student, field instructor or field liaison identify issues or concerns requiring extra attention.
 - Assigns course grades.
- Teach and/or facilitate field seminars
- Serve as field liaison.
- Provide support to the field placement process as needed.

Field Education Coordinators

- Facilitate the field placement process
 - Manage Google Classrooms for the placement process
- Manage Google Classroom for Field Education Courses
- Work closely with instructors of record and review coursework submitted by students in Sonia
- Communicate with organizations to ensure they meet the qualifications for field placements
- Analyze and manage data from field placement applications.
- Create and develop forms for students and sites to effectively streamline the field placement process.
- Provide advising to social work students specifically related to field instruction.
- Communicate with new and potential field placements and field instructors in an effort to broaden student learning opportunities in the field.
- Plans field office events.

Staff Assistant

- Assist with the promotion of, and planning of, various events for the Field Office
- Coordinate the meetings for the Field Office team
- Facilitate the preparation of, execution of, and renewal of Affiliation Agreements
- Facilitate the application for, and renewal of, Certificates of Insurance (COIs)
- Provide coverage, as needed, to Field Education Coordinators

Field Office Graduate Assistants

- Work closely with the field education team and provide support across all aspects of the work.

Roles and Responsibilities of Field Liaisons

Role:

Binghamton University's commitment to supporting and being a part of the larger community are utmost priorities. Ensuring that agencies feel connected to the University and that the agencies feel supported and recognized by the University is essential to the success of the program. Ensuring that students know that the University and the agency are working together is also essential.

Field liaisons are faculty, adjunct instructors, and staff from the Department of Social Work whose role is to serve as a contact for students and field supervisors during the student's field instruction. When a student is assigned a field instructor and task supervisor, field liaisons will obtain input from both assigned supervisors. A field liaison meets formally with the field supervisor(s) and student at least once each semester and is in touch by phone or email, as needed. Field supervisor(s) and agency representatives are strongly encouraged to maintain regular contact with field liaisons to ensure that a) the student's learning corresponds with the goals and objectives of the program, b) supervisors and agencies are supported, and c) potential problems are prevented through early detection of concerns.

Role and Responsibilities Relative to Students:

1. Ensure the educational integrity of the field education placement.
2. Ensure that the student is receiving a beneficial learning experience.
3. Confer with the student and field supervisors regarding the appropriateness of assignments.
4. Oversee the progress of the student while in the field placement and ascertain that the placement is providing opportunities for the application of knowledge, values, process, and skills essential for ensuring the generalist social work focus.
5. Provide additional professional consultation regarding accurate assessments, process recordings, planning and evaluating appropriate interventions, and applying relevant social work theory to practice.
6. Provide support and guidance to the student on any and all points of the field education process.
7. Review and provide feedback on student's assignments, as needed.
8. Meet formally with the student and field supervisor(s) at the agency at least twice (once per semester) during the field experience and on other occasions as needed.
9. Mediate among the student and the agency when difficulties have arisen and have not been resolved between the parties.
10. Assess development and progress relative to the student's personal growth as a social worker.

Role and Responsibilities Relative to Field Education Agencies:

1. Maintain an ongoing relationship with the field supervisor(s).
2. Ensure that the student provides the agency with adequate professional practice.
3. Consult with the field supervisor(s) and other agency personnel regarding application of the generalist social work model to agency practice.
4. Mediate between the student, field supervisor(s) and the agency when difficulties have arisen and have not been resolved between the parties.

Policy: Every student and field agency will be assigned a field liaison whose purposes are to: 1) maintain contact between the agency and the University through visits and communication with the agency; 2) assist in evaluating the progress of the student's learning and integration of classroom learning into practice experience, 3) serve as a consultant and support to the student, agency, and field supervisor(s); 4) ensure the creation and implementation of the learning plan, and 5) assist with problems in placement should they arise.

Procedure:

1. Students will be notified of their field liaison assignment via email. Students will also be able to see who has been assigned as their field liaison in Sonia under assignments. Changes to field liaison assignments may occur under extenuating circumstances. In cases where students or agency would like to request a field liaison re-assignment, they must:
 - Discuss with their instructor of record reasons for requesting a reassignment and make a formal request in writing via email to the instructor of record.
 - Requests will be reviewed by the Director of Field Education.
2. It is the students' responsibility to contact their field liaison and coordinate a mid-semester field liaison visit minimally once a semester. Students must coordinate the date and time with their liaison and their field supervisor(s) to ensure that everyone is available to attend the meeting. Students should check that the attendees have the meeting on their calendars.
3. The field liaison will be available by phone, email, in person, or via video conferencing to provide assistance on an as-needed basis to the field supervisor(s), and/or the student.
4. The field liaison will meet with the student and the field supervisor(s) to review the learning agreement, ensuring that curriculum content is being met through practice opportunities.
5. The field liaison will utilize the [Field Liaison Checklist, which is an assessment tool](#), when meeting with the student and the field supervisor(s) and submit the Checklist via Sonia to the instructor of record.

Pool Field Instruction

Policy:

Pool Field Instruction identifies a supervisory structure wherein a student's assigned Field Instructor 1) does not work at the agency site with the student intern, 2) does not participate in a student's daily tasking, and 3) is assigned by the Field Office during the placement process to fulfill the role of Field Instructor. Pool Field Instructors are always assigned at the discretion of the Field Office after an assessment, conducted by the Field Office, of the educational opportunity available through the placement and alternative supervisory resources within the agency.

Pool Field Instructors are required to perform all roles and responsibilities assigned to Field Instructors.

Procedure:

1. A pool field instructor is assigned to a student
2. A task supervisor is assigned to a student
3. All related parties are connected via the field placement confirmation email
4. Expectations are established regarding best practices for pool field instruction, which include:
 - a. At the start of the placement, the student contacts their field instructor to establish an ongoing and regular supervision day and time. The student directly asks their task supervisor how task supervision will be structured and if a regular meeting should be scheduled.
 - b. Field instructor and task supervisor communicate, at minimum, monthly to discuss the student's progress, strengths, and opportunities for growth in the field placement. Best practice includes establishing an ongoing schedule for this communication to occur. This can be done via a remote meeting, phone, or email. Some agencies plan a monthly meeting including both supervisors and the student and we have gotten feedback that has been helpful. The task supervisor could join supervision once a month if that works for everyone's schedules.
 - c. The students and both supervisors establish how evaluations will be completed.

Field Advisory Council

Policy:

Field is the signature pedagogy of the BSW Program. It is invaluable to have the feedback and consultation of field supervisors involved in helping to develop and revise components of field instruction. The Field Advisory Council is composed of field education team members, field liaisons, BSW students, full time MSW students from the Brick in Mortar and Exclusively Online programs, part time MSW students, and field supervisors and/or MSW or BSW practitioners. The main objective of council meetings is to create space for community members, field team members and students to connect and discuss current themes in field education. The goal is to foster bidirectional and interactive discussions where community members have the opportunity to express their experiences and input into the field education process.

Procedure:

The committee meets at least twice an academic year and is chaired by the Director of Field Education. Members serve as advisors to the BSW, Brick and Mortar and Exclusively Online MSW Programs.

Field Placement Process

Placing and Monitoring of Students

Students will have a field placement assignment confirmed by the field office prior to the beginning of the semester that field instruction begins. Students may not begin accruing hours, towards their semester hourly assignment at the field site, no more than two weeks prior to the start of the academic year. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Field Office. In order to request an exception the Field Office must receive onboarding guidelines or requirements from the field site to initiate an assessment process. Final decisions will be communicated to both the site and the student by field office staff.

Academic and field instruction credit is not given for life experience or previous work experiences and cannot be counted toward field instruction hours.

When disruptions in the field placement process arise, students are notified via email by the Field Office that their field placement process will be paused and it is not guaranteed that a placement will be established by the start of the semester. Examples of disruptions include, but are not limited to, lack of consistent communication from a student, a student not receiving an internship offer after one or more interviews, or lack of submission of needed materials by established deadline(s). In the cases when disruptions persist, the Field Office will notify students via email that they are unable to start Field Instruction the following semester. They will also be disenrolled from the associated field education course.

There are some extenuating circumstances that may affect the field process; thus, field placements cannot be guaranteed for all students admitted into the program. Specific examples of extenuating circumstances may include: inability to successfully interview and be offered a field placement by an agency representative, failure to navigate the placement process in a timely fashion, or history of a past conviction(s) for a felony or felonies. If a student cannot successfully secure a placement, then the student will not be able to complete the program.

In most cases, placement opportunities require students to be present during traditional business hours (8:00am to 4:00pm or 9:00am to 5:00pm), when educational opportunities are most likely to be available. These hours are also when field supervisors are in the office to provide tasks, activities, and supervision for students. **While we do our best to match students to agencies based on student feedback and interest areas, we are unable to guarantee students specific locations or alternative time requests.**

The process of field assignment is a collaborative process that requires the input of the student, agency, and the Field Office. The Field Office coordinates all aspects of the placement process; thus, students are asked to not drive the process of setting up their own field placement. The Field Office requires students to notify the Field Office a minimum of eight weeks prior to the start of a semester that they would like to enter the field so there is ample time to plan for and coordinate placement. Notifications will be considered by Field Office team members in the context of regularly course sequenced offerings.

In fostering professional conduct and ensuring that students learn about interviewing skills within their profession, students apply, through guidance provided by field office staff, and interview for their field placement. **Field placement interviews MUST happen outside of academic coursework and current field placement hours.** A list of agencies is available to students once they are admitted through their Google Classroom.

Procedure:

1. Students review, sign and submit the [Binghamton University Student Contract](#) as part of the admissions documents. The contract is referenced throughout a student's time in the field placement process, when in a field placement and also in field integration seminars.
2. Students receive information from the Field Office team regarding the field placement process during BSW new student orientation. Students will be given the dates for required field placement meetings and they must attend one in the Fall semester in order to start their field placement process.
3. Students will receive reminder emails from the Field Office regarding the scheduled dates for the group field placement meetings.
4. Students attend a mandatory group placement meeting to learn the field placement process. Topics covered during the meeting include: the structure of field education, the field placement process, the field application, and guidelines for professionalism in field education.
 - a. If a student is unable to attend a field placement meeting, they are required to inform the Field Office and take steps to make up the content. Their field placement process may be delayed due to missing meetings.
5. Students are added to their assigned Google Classroom after attending the mandatory group placement meeting. The classroom includes copies of the content covered in the meeting, as well as instructions and deadlines associated with the field placement application and resume, which will need to be uploaded into the Google Classroom. Students have the option to schedule a meeting with a Field Office staff member during their office hours to ask questions and/or discuss their application and possible field placement opportunities.
6. Once the student has submitted their field placement application, a Field Office team member will review the application and then send the student's resume to an agency potentially offering opportunities to intern with one of the practice settings and/or populations identified in the placement application.
7. The Field Office will provide the site with the student's resume, and the site will choose if they contact the student or if the student contacts them to set up an interview. Every site we partner with has their own policies and procedures for setting up an interview with a potential intern. Some sites also require an additional intern application, which the student will be required to complete.

8. Once the student has an interview date and time scheduled, they are required to complete the interview confirmation form found in their Google Classroom to inform the Field Office of the date when their interview will occur.
9. Students attend an interview with an approved site. Once the student has completed their interview, they are required to complete the interview feedback form in the Google Classroom to provide feedback to the Field Office regarding how the interview went, who they had their interview with, and if they would accept the field placement, if offered.
10. The Field Office will review the interview feedback forms filled out by the site and by the student. If both forms are in agreement a match is made and the student's placement process concludes.
11. If a site does not believe that the student is a good fit following an interview, the Field Office has a discussion with the site regarding the concerns and requests specific feedback to provide to the student. After giving feedback to the student, the Field Office works with the student to identify another potential placement opportunity. The student will then be referred to the Fleishman Career Center, which can assist with strengthening interviewing skills.
12. After two unsuccessful interviews, the student may be permitted to interview one additional time only and will be referred again to and required to engage with the Career and Professional Services, which can assist with strengthening interviewing skills.
13. If a third interview does not result in a placement offer, the student's program status will be reviewed collaboratively by the Director of Field Education, the Associate Director of Field Education, the appropriate Program Director and the Director of Student Services to determine the next steps.
14. Once a student is confirmed at a placement, the student receives an official placement confirmation email, which includes information about their field placement and assigned supervisor(s), the required Onboarding Checklist assignment in the Google Classroom, and instructions on how to register for Sonia. **Once a student has been confirmed and accepted at a placement, that placement represents a commitment that must be upheld by the student from the time that the placement is confirmed through the duration of the academic year.**
15. The agency may request additional information from the student, or require additional steps, in order to complete background checks or reference checks. If that's the case, then the Field Office will assist with navigating the process for background checks, drug testing, and/or fingerprinting. Students are expected to cover the costs associated with the services.
16. Students are required to complete a field orientation prior to the start of their placement. **Students are not able to count hours for their field placement until they have completed field orientation.** The Field Orientations for Students policy in this manual specifies this

requirement. If a student needs to miss orientation, they need to follow the procedure detailed under the Field Orientations for Students policy in this manual.

17. Students and field supervisors are notified of their field liaison assignment for the academic year by the Field Office.
18. Students are expected to contact their assigned field liaison and/or the Field Office if there are problems or concerns from the perspective of the student and/or the field supervisor(s).

100-Mile Radius for Field Placements

Policy:

Placements will be limited to a site within a 100-mile radius from the University. The Field Office might make an exception, as long as the arrangement is feasible. However, the student could be responsible for costs incurred by the Field Liaison or members of the Field Office during their travel to the site.

Procedure:

1. If a student would like the Field Office to consider a placement *outside* of the 100-mile radius, then the student must initiate a request via email to the Field Office no later than the first day of the semester before the start of their placement. If, for example, the student plans to start their placement in the Fall semester, then the student must initiate the request before the start of the preceding Summer semester.
2. If needed, the Field Office and the student will meet to discuss the options for placement within the requested geographical area.

The Field Office might not accept the student's request. And, similar to other placements, the student must be in good academic standing, and both the agency and the supervisor at the agency must comply with the criteria established by the BSW Program.

Affiliation Agreement between Binghamton University and Agency

Policy:

Agencies that have met the criteria for the BSW Program and thus, have been approved by the Field Office, need to also agree to the University's terms presented in the Affiliation Agreement. There is an opportunity for agencies to negotiate the terms of the Affiliation Agreement with the Office of General Counsel at the University, but the Office of General Counsel has the authority to reject the changes proposed by the agency. If the agency does not agree to the University's terms, then the placement will not be an option for students.

The Field Office will provide a list of agencies that have already agreed to and signed the Affiliation Agreement. Agencies included on the list are located within 100 miles of the University and, in most cases, have worked with students from a Binghamton University Social Work program in the past.

Procedure:

1. After an agency has been selected to participate as a field education placement site, the Field Office will check the status of an Affiliation Agreement between the University and the agency. If the Department of Social Work has an active (that is, not expired) Affiliation Agreement on file, then the Affiliation Agreement process is complete. If the Department does not have an active Affiliation Agreement on file, then a new Affiliation Agreement will be forwarded to the site. Usually, either an attorney who represents the agency, or a Chief Executive Officer or Director reviews and signs the Affiliation Agreement.
2. If the agency does not have any objections to the terms of the Affiliation Agreement, then the appropriate party at the agency will sign the Agreement and then return it to the Field Office. If the agency would like to modify the terms of the Affiliation Agreement, then the agency will return the Affiliation Agreement to the Field Office with the proposed changes noted in the document.
3. In both scenarios, the Field Office will pass the Affiliation Agreement along to the Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel will determine whether the Affiliation Agreement is ready for signature or not.
4. Once the agency and the University have signed the Affiliation Agreement, then a copy of the fully-executed Agreement will be forwarded to the agency. The Department of Social Work will retain a copy of the fully-executed Agreement, as well.

Clinical Liability Insurance Coverage for Students and Agency

Policy:

The Department of Social Work will procure a Certificate of Insurance (COI) on behalf of students. Prior to being able to procure a COI, the Affiliation Agreement process must be complete. Once the COI is procured, a copy of the COI is forwarded to the agency. The Department of Social Work will keep a copy of the COI on file, as well.

Field Orientations for Students

Policy:

Binghamton University BSW students are required to complete a Field Orientation prior to the start of their placement. Field Orientation will be held in person (that is, not virtually), and will cover the following topics:

- Course syllabus and calendars
- Assignments
- Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Policies and Procedures
- Roles and Supervision
- Safety

Field Orientation will also include opportunities for students to learn about each other's field placements and also be introduced to members of the Field Office. Students are not able to count hours for the field placement until they have fully completed an orientation. If a student misses orientation, they will need to follow the procedure detailed below.

Procedure for students unable to attend Field Orientation:

1. Students will notify the Associate Director of Field Education via email that they need to miss a Field Orientation and the reason for their absence.
2. Students will work with the instructor of record to coordinate a makeup date for Field Orientation and potential assignments related to orientation.
3. The instructor of record will inform the student and their supervisors via email that the student needs to miss the Field Orientation. The instructor of record will also inform the supervisors of the makeup date and, subsequently, the date that the student will be able to officially start counting their hours for the course.

If a student is absent on a Field Orientation date without notice to the instructor of record, then the instructor of record will send an email to the student's supervisors that the Field Orientation was missed without notice. The instructor of record will note in the email that the student is not able to count any hours at their placement until the student attends a Field Orientation.

Mandated Reporter Training

Policy:

Students need to complete the New York State Mandated Reporter Training offered through the Department of Social Work at the University prior to beginning their field placement. This training is a New York State mandatory training provided prior to the start of the semester. If a student is unable to attend the training, then the student needs to follow the procedure detailed in the Field Orientation for Students section above.

*Please note that all students must take this training with Binghamton University while enrolled at Binghamton University. If a student has taken this training in the past either online or in person **they will still need to retake the training while enrolled at Binghamton University.***

If a student suspects that a child is being abused at the agency in which the student is placed for field instruction, then the student must discuss the case immediately with their field instructor and follow the mandated reporting procedures of the agency. Although no law in New York State requires mandated reporting for elders, it is the Department of Social Work's policy that, if a student suspects abuse of an elder at the agency in which the student is placed for field instruction, then the student must report the case to their field instructor and follow the agency's procedures.

Student Responsibilities Related to Transportation and Other Field Expenses

Policy:

The Department of Social Work Field Office does not coordinate or manage transportation for students to and from their field education placements and/or any activities related to their field education placements. Students are fully responsible for navigating and managing their transportation to and from their field education placements as well as any/all activities related to their field education placements.

Similarly, each student is responsible for expenses associated with transportation to and from their field education placements. Expenses might include gas, insurance, parking, and even food and lodging.

Students may also be responsible for the costs of medical screenings, such as Tuberculosis testing, prior to starting their field education placement at an agency. Students are responsible for the cost of background checks, drug testing, fingerprinting, physical exams, and vaccinations that may be required from certain agencies before the start of the internship. Students who are eligible may be able to arrange for services through the University Health Service. Students are responsible for expenses related to their health insurance that may cover injury incurred at the site.

These expectations begin at the start of the field education placement process, and continue throughout the entirety of the academic year.

Procedure:

Students are asked to indicate their mode of transportation on the Field Placement Application, so that the process is coordinated with students' transportation needs in mind (e.g., a site that's located near a bus route). If a student's mode of transportation changes during the academic year, the student is responsible for making an alternative arrangement so that the change does not interfere with the student's consistent attendance at their placement.

Transporting Clients

Policy:

If a student is required to transport clients to fulfill an agency's responsibilities, then the agency must be able to provide the student with a vehicle owned by the agency and must have a minimum of one million dollars (\$100,000,000) of liability coverage for students. Under **no** circumstances should a student transport clients in their own vehicle. The University does not assume responsibility for injury to, or caused by, the student during the field education placement.

Procedure:

1. Either a student or a representative from the agency will inform the Associate Director of Field Education and the appropriate instructor of record that the student will be transporting clients in an agency's vehicle.
2. The agency will submit the proof of the liability insurance to the Associate Director of Field Education and the appropriate instructor of record prior to allowing the student to transport any clients.
3. The Associate Director of Field Education and/or the instructor of record will route the proof of liability insurance to the appropriate individual(s) within the University for approval. If/when approval is obtained, a copy of the liability insurance will remain on file with the Field Office.

** The agency must provide a copy of the renewed coverage each academic year so that the current proof of insurance is on file with the Field Office.*

Field Schedule and Attendance Policy

Students in the BSW Program complete one internship over the course of two academic semesters. Students intern a minimum of 510 hours during the academic year. Traditionally, students intern for 16 hours per week. The schedule for field education runs concurrently with the schedule for classes so that students are applying field education to coursework and coursework to field education. It is required that the completion of hours for field education happens in alignment with the academic calendar for each semester. University breaks are not guaranteed for students. **Time off must be requested in advance and approved by supervisor(s).**

Students are expected to report back to field at the start of January (prior to the official start of the academic semester) to resume their placement and ensure continuity of service to clients, projects and the organization overall. Students are not permitted to intern extra hours with the intention of accumulating hours (i.e., banking hours or saving up) as to terminate their placement early (i.e., leaving field placement more than one week before the end of the academic semester).

Students are responsible for developing and remaining consistent with their internship schedule including days and hours, and are also responsible for planning around holidays acknowledged by the agency. The field education academic calendar is included in each field instruction syllabus, and should be used by students as a guide when planning their internship schedules. The schedule must not conflict with days and times when other required coursework is happening. Students should not miss an academic class to report to their field education placement. If a student needs to attend an academic class on a regularly scheduled day at their placement, then the student has to communicate with their supervisor(s). Students must ask their field supervisor(s) about the procedure regarding missing and making up time due to illness, emergency, or coursework. Students are required to manage their schedules professionally and maintain the hourly commitment set forth at the beginning of the field placement. It is important to a) provide continuity of care to clients, b) present as a reliable and professional colleague to the agency, and c) ensure the fullest opportunities afforded by field education, so missing field education will be considered an absence whether or not the student reschedules the missed time.

If a student has a reason and needs to end their field placement early, the student should:

1. Email the instructor of record for their field education course to alert them of their specific request and reason behind it.
2. If a student receives approval from the instructor of record, the student may then submit a request to their field instructor.
3. Students are responsible for communicating with their field education placement site about any changes to the duration of their placement.

A student could be in jeopardy of receiving an unsatisfactory/failing grade for their field instruction course if the student a) demonstrates a pattern of absences or tardiness, or b) accumulates extra hours and terminates their placement early without navigating the appropriate steps that are outlined above.

Remote Work Policy

Policy:

The extent of in-person and remote interning is fully dependent upon the climate and the discretion of the field site, and the guidance of the SUNY and Binghamton University Guidelines.

It is permissible for students to complete remote work as part of field hours when the below procedures have been followed.

Procedure:

1. Supervisors and students should first have a discussion on clear expectations regarding what remote will specifically entail.

This should include:

- Circumstances for completing remote work
- The extent and duration of the remote work assignment(s)
 - **Remote work should never outweigh the in-person hours, experiences and expectations for in-person field placements. *There are internship sites that are fully remote and that is acceptable and approved by the Field Office.***
 - Start/end dates of remote work
 - Amount of hours student is able to complete in a week (should not be more than 16 hours)
- The specific way(s) in which the remote work will be documented and justified
 - **Students should be concretely documenting their work (certificates from training, reflection papers, summary of research done, etc...)**

Evaluation of Student Learning

Evaluation of student learning occurs through the utilization of:

- Field Instruction Integration Seminar I and II
- Learning Plan
- Supervision
- Field liaison Meeting/Midterm Progress Report
- Field Instructor Midterm evaluation
- Field Instructor Final Evaluation
- Grading

All assignments are completed in Sonia (field education software).

Field Instruction Integration Seminar I (SW495) and II (SW496)

The mission of a Social Work Field Integration Seminar is to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical application by facilitating students' critical reflection on field and coursework. The vision is to develop social work professionals who can effectively apply their knowledge, value, and professional skills in real-world settings to promote and enhance social work ethics and values.

Field integration seminars are instructed by field liaisons. In an effort to provide students with the most possible support, field liaisons assigned to students will also serve as their field integration seminar instructor and students will remain in their section of seminar for both semesters over the course of the academic year. Therefore, the field integration seminar section students select for SW495: BSW Field Integration Seminar I for fall 2025 semester will also be held during the same day and time for SW496: BSW Field Integration Seminar II for the spring 2026 semester.

Student Learning Plan

Students develop a field Learning Plan that serves as the center of the student's field placement experience. It is designed to give direction and learning structure to the field experience and is developed around the core practice competencies that are designated in the 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE has operationalized these competencies by identifying behaviors defined as "a set of measurable component behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills." The internship plays a key role in teaching practice behaviors to students while measuring and reflecting the student's ability to demonstrate capacity in the nine core competency areas identified by CSWE. It is the joint responsibility of the student and field supervisors to negotiate the learning plan content within the first weeks of the field placement. The student is responsible for drafting and submitting their completed Learning Plan via Sonia to their supervisor(s) and instructor of record by the assigned due date stated in the Field Calendar and on Sonia. During the first six weeks, the field supervisor(s) and students begin to select tasks/activities that will be completed during the student's 510-hour fieldwork experience. The field supervisor(s) and student can add and delete tasks/activities that will or will not be completed and that are specific to this particular internship. The learning plan can be a "living

document” in the way that tasks and activities may be adjusted, added or deleted throughout the duration of the field placement. Such changes are captured through the student comments sections in the final evaluation. The learning plan will be referenced and utilized by the field liaison when conducting the mid semester field liaison visit.

Supervision

Supervision occurs between the student and field instructor each week for a minimum of one hour for the duration of the placement. Supervision should involve addressing both administrative and educational content.

Supervision should be scheduled and provided at a structured time each week to enable the student to explore issues related to values and ethics of social work, discussion of students’ goals (the progress and/or challenges), integration of class and field, and the exploration of theory as it relates to practice. Students should come to supervision prepared to discuss their caseload, ask questions related to their work, curriculum and ethical dilemmas. Field instructors should be prepared to offer feedback, resources, skill training and support. A student’s professional identity, skills and understanding of the agency and their role will change over time and supervision should be a time for students to gain information to help them in their educational and professional growth.

The mechanism of supervision also serves to monitor and support the student in the learning process. Students are enrolled in field education courses in the same way as any other course in the social work curriculum. Thus, direct feedback about current standing in field education is needed similarly to the ways in which feedback is provided in any other social work course. Feedback regarding performance should be provided to students on a regular basis during weekly supervision meetings and documented in mid semester and final evaluations. Evaluations should NEVER be a surprise. Supervision is a place to offer feedback and ask for what is needed, prior to any formal evaluation process. Students and field instructors should use this time to explore needs and expectations as frequently as is needed to ensure that the learning plan, objectives and program goals and objectives are met.

Field Liaison Progress Reports

Field liaison contact and interactions with their assigned students and field supervisor(s) throughout the course of the academic year are documented and shared with the Field Office to determine final grades for students in field instruction. Students are expected to contact their assigned field liaison early each semester to schedule a field liaison meeting.

The field liaison will discuss multiple components of the student’s field education as well as the placement overall with the field supervisors and the student to assess how the placement is progressing. Field liaisons have access to a student’s learning plan via Sonia and will use this at the end of the semester to assess the student’s progress. Once each semester the field liaison meets with the student and field supervisor(s) to evaluate student progress. The field liaison will utilize the Field liaison Visit Assessment Tool/Midterm Progress Report Form during the meeting. Recommendations for changes in the learning plan can be discussed at this time. The field liaison is also available to the student and field supervisor(s) whenever support or guidance is needed. All

interactions support the evaluation process by ensuring that there is continual communication, confirmation that there are connections being made between field instruction and the rest of the curriculum, and that additional guidance is available and provided to address concerns, prior to the completion of evaluations. All meetings between field liaison, student and field supervisor(s) provide opportunities to evaluate the student's performance, strengths and needs.

Practice Evaluation Instruments (Midterm and Final Evaluation)

Field instructors will complete field evaluations at mid-term point and at the end of each semester to assess the student's attainment of practice behaviors .

Students are responsible for routing their midterm evaluation via Sonia to their supervisor(s) so that it can be completed, reviewed and signed by the student and their supervisor(s).

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body on social work education, requires master's level Social work (MSW) students to demonstrate competencies in 9 areas. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice. The behaviors identified in this evaluation represent observable components of the competencies.

The social work field placement is an area in which the student is expected to demonstrate mastery of all competencies. To ensure this, Field instructors are asked to evaluate the student during the mid-semester point and final week to two weeks of each semester during their placements. **A field supervisor or supervisors should not complete a final evaluation prior to two weeks before the end of the semester.**

Mid-Semester Assessment Scale:

Use the following scale to assess the student's performance in the nine core areas of social work competency identified by the Council on Social Work Education:

Exceptional Performance	Exceptional performance is demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills of the practice behavior at high levels. Please provide comments as to your rating.
Advanced Performance	Advanced performance is demonstration of the knowledge, skills, and values where all components of the practice behavior are included are above beginning or rudimentary level.
Competent Performance	Competent performance demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills where all practice behaviors are included, but at the beginning or rudimentary level.

Inadequate Performance	Inadequate performance is demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills where one or more of the components of the practice behavior are missing. Please provide comments for your rating.
Lacking Performance	Lacking performance is the inability to demonstrate any of the components of the knowledge, values or skills related to the practice behavior. Please provide comments for your rating.

Final Evaluation Assessment Scale:

Use the following scale to assess the student's performance in the nine core areas of social work competency identified by the Council on Social Work Education:

Exceptional Performance	Exceptional performance is demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills of the practice behavior at high levels. Please provide comments as to your rating.
Advanced Performance	Advanced performance is demonstration of the knowledge, skills, and values where all components of the practice behavior are included are above beginning or rudimentary level.
Competent Performance	Competent performance demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills where all practice behaviors are included, but at the beginning or rudimentary level.
Inadequate Performance	Inadequate performance is demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills where one or more of the components of the practice behavior are missing. Please provide comments for your rating.
Lacking Performance	Lacking performance is the inability to demonstrate any of the components of the knowledge, values or skills related to the practice behavior. Please provide comments for your rating.

Grading

The instructor of record determines the field grade earned by each student. The evaluation of the student is based on the instructor of record's assessment of competency, the evaluations received from field supervisors and feedback from the field liaison.

All field education assignments outlined in field education syllabi must be fully completed in order for students to receive a satisfactory grade.

When an instructor of record for a field education course determines that a student earned a failing/unsatisfactory grade, they confer and consult the following individuals:

- MSW Program Director;
- Director of Student Services; and,
- Director of Field Education.

These individuals may assess all related documentation, including the student, field liaison, and field instructor. The goal of this consultation is to ensure all field policies were followed and the determined grade aligns with the information presented.

Policy:

Grades are “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”.

“Satisfactory” means the student consistently demonstrates an acceptable or above acceptable level of performance and that the student has achieved the minimal objectives of the course. In order to receive a satisfactory grade, students need to receive an overall rating of 3 (competent performance) or above in order for the student to receive credit for the course. Students who receive a 3 (competence) or above demonstrate consistently meeting expectations for knowledge, values, skills, and insight and/or awareness of an undergraduate level intern.

“Unsatisfactory” means the student's performance is below acceptable performance and means the student did not achieve the minimal objectives of the course. If a student receives an overall 2 (inadequate performance) or below (lacking performance) it indicates that the student's performance is below professional standards and expectations for knowledge, values, skills, and insight and/or awareness of an undergraduate level intern.

A grade of unsatisfactory is considered equivalent to a failing grade in other courses. Each field instruction course must be completed with a satisfactory grade before beginning each subsequent field instruction course.

Procedure:

1. The instructor of record for the class will assign a final grade, based on their assessment of the student's competency, the evaluations received from each student's field supervisors and from feedback shared by the field liaison.

2. Grades will be assigned by the grading deadline set by the Student Records and Registrar Services Office.
 - i. If a student would like to request an incomplete to allow for additional time to complete an assignment or assignments, they must contact the instructor of record prior to the end of the semester (by the deadline assigned by the Field Office) and complete an incomplete contract including field supervisor approval, which is documented through their signature on the incomplete contract. Please refer to the BSW Student Handbook for further guidelines regarding incompletes.

Field Assignment Policy

Policy: Students are responsible for fully completing field assignments by the due dates specified in the associated course syllabus. Students who do not fully complete all field education assignments by the assigned due dates will be in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for their respective field education class.

Assignments include: confirmation of field manual review, mandated reporter training certificate, timelogs, learning plans, field liaison visit reports, process recordings, mid-semester evaluations, and final evaluation.

Procedure:

1. If an assignment is not recorded in Sonia as fully complete (all supervisor signatures) by 5pm on the due date, the student will get an email notification that the assignment is overdue. The following individuals will be copied on this email: field supervisors, liaison and academic advisor. This will happen the next business day after the due date.
2. If the overdue assignment is not submitted within 2 business days after the first notice, an email will be sent to the student, field supervisors, liaison and academic advisor stating that the assignment is overdue and needs to be submitted as soon as possible.
3. If the overdue assignment is not submitted to the Field Office two business days after the second notice (4 business days after the initial notice), the placement will be suspended, and the student will not be able to report to field and count hours toward field until the assignment is fully completed and submitted. Students are required to make up any missed hours once the assignment is submitted.
4. If untimely submission of assignments continues after two placement suspensions, the student will be required to participate in a supportive action plan with the Field Office, their liaison and field supervisors. The goal of a supportive action plan is to provide the student with structured support so they submit assignments on time consistently going forward.
5. Students who repeatedly fail to complete all field education assignments by the assigned due dates and/or have missing assignments at the end of the semester will be in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for their respective field education class.

**Note: Fully completed assignments are not waiting on supervisor signatures: they are in green and say complete in Sonia.*

Keeping Track of Hours

Policy:

Students must log their weekly internship hours into the Sonia timesheets function. Students are required to obtain approval from their field supervisor(s) for the time they have interned by generating and routing a weekly timesheet.

Procedure:

1. Students are required to log their hours in Sonia via their timesheet feature. Students need to log their hours under direct agency hours and separate their one hour of individual supervision in their timesheet feature.
2. Students are responsible for documenting their time on a weekly basis so their field supervisor(s) can review and sign.
 - a. If time is not accounted for **and** approved in Sonia, it is not recognized as time that has been completed by the instructor of record.
3. Field supervisor(s) must review and approve that they agree with the timelog.

Learning Plan

Policy:

Students and field supervisor(s) are required to collaboratively develop a learning plan each semester. This must be completed by the due date noted in the course syllabus for each section of field instruction. In each section of field instruction, the learning plan must integrate the competencies and practice behaviors outlined in the 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) as set by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The learning plan identifies tasks and learning activities students need to complete in order to meet the competencies.

Procedure:

1. Students draft their learning plan within the Sonia system using guidelines described in the field instruction manual, discuss their plan with their field instructor and Task supervisor (if applicable) and route the document for all applicable signatures.
2. Once the plan is complete and has all needed signatures, it is routed to the assigned instructor of record for review and approval. Sonia will pull all of the tasks and activities into students' final evaluations so that they are evaluated specifically on what they proposed in their learning plan.
3. Field liaisons have access to a students learning plan via Sonia.
4. CSWE competencies are included at the beginning of this manual.

Guidelines:

The learning plan is a guide and agreement between the field supervisor(s), student, and school.

It should be used to help ensure learning opportunities in the areas outlined on the plan and is used to evaluate the students' performance at their field site.

Obstacles and Concerns in Field Placement

Policy:

Students and field supervisors may experience obstacles during the duration of field placements. The goal, for students and supervisors, is to directly identify and address obstacles in an effort to brainstorm solutions and develop a plan for resolution. Students should engage in discussions regarding concerns and questions with their supervisor(s) (field instructor and task supervisor, if applicable) as soon as a concern(s) have been identified.

This process should be navigated and problem solved using direct communication among students, field instructors and, when applicable, task supervisors. Opportunities to address obstacles and concerns could include (but are not limited to) one-on-one weekly supervision, midterm and final evaluations, as well as during the mid semester liaison visits. When a student needs additional support and guidance, they should contact their assigned field liaison and Field Office staff members who can provide direction with navigating obstacles and concerns.

In cases when students feel unsafe in their field placement, they should immediately contact their instructor of record for support and guidance. In cases where the instructor of record can not be reached, students should contact the Director of Field Education. Students are not required to attend their field placement while contacting the Field Office. Students are expected to inform their supervisor(s), any required site representatives and their instructor of record when they are not reporting to field due to safety concerns at the field site. The instructor of record will assess the safety concern(s) and provide guidance regarding potential next steps. The instructor of record will require documentation from the student, and/or supervisors, and/or the field liaison specifying the concerns. The assessment will happen in collaboration with the Field Process Committee, which is an ad hoc committee composed of the designated Social Work Program Director, Director of Student Services, Director of Field Education and the instructor of record. These individuals will review and assess all related documentation from all involved parties, including the student, and consult additional relevant entities on the Binghamton University campus as needed. The instructor of record may terminate a field placement if and/or when immediate safety concerns are confirmed.

Procedure:

When students and/or field supervisors continue to experience **ongoing** challenges **after** exhausting direct problem solving options within the context of the student and supervisor(s) relationship:

1. The field liaison should be contacted immediately and consulted for input that may help support the student and supervisor(s) to create a plan for resolution.
2. If the challenge(s) persist after consulting the liaison for input, the student and/or supervisor(s) should request a meeting with the liaison present to help support and facilitate a plan for resolution.

3. After the meeting, the field liaison will periodically follow up with the student and supervisor(s) to check on the status of the resolution.
4. If the challenge(s) remain ongoing after working through the above steps, the field liaison will notify the instructor of record for the field course.
5. The instructor of record will assess to understand the challenge(s) and provide guidance regarding potential next steps. The instructor of record will require documentation from students, and/or supervisors, and/or the field liaison specifying the concerns. This work and process will happen in collaboration with the appropriate Department of Social Work Program Director, as well as any additional relevant entities on the Binghamton University campus.

Supervisors and students are encouraged to contact their field liaison at any time for consultation. This policy is providing guidance regarding when liaisons must be engaged to provide support with obstacles and concerns that have not been resolved between the student and supervisor(s).

An instructor of record will address each student's concern on a case-by-case basis, including but not limited to: awareness of time constraints, learning needs/expectations, and learning opportunities. The instructor of record will collect documentation from all involved parties in order to make a final determination regarding next steps. If a student is re-placed, the placement choice will be entirely made by the instructor of record.

Changes in Field Education Course Sequencing and/or Placement Termination

Field placement terminations and changes in field education course sequencing create disruptions to student learning and the curriculum trajectory of Binghamton University's BSW Program. The Field Office collaborates with the other individuals who support field education, members of the Department of Social Work, and students to minimize disruptions to students' learning and to support students in building their skills and navigating the obstacles that might emerge during field education.

The Obstacles and Concerns in Field Placement Policy includes steps that should be taken by students and field supervisors when concerns arise. It is expected that concerns and challenges are discussed, and that a plan is created to remedy them prior to the initiation of a placement termination.

When a student's field placement is terminated by their supervisor(s), field agency representative, instructor of record, and/or the Director of Field Education as a result of demonstrating behavior that violates expectations outlined in the [Binghamton University Student Contract](#), the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), and/or behaviors that are determined to be detrimental to the client, agency, school, or the student themselves, the instructor of record will evaluate all related information to determine the field education grade associated with the course in which the student is registered. A placement termination could result in a failing grade or unsatisfactory grade being assigned for the field education course as well as the corresponding field integration seminar course. As per earlier guidance in this manual, BSW field instruction courses **MUST** be taken in parallel with field integration seminars. Students are typically unable to continue in their field integration seminar course when their field placement has been terminated. The Grading Policy in this manual outlines the process of how grades are assigned by an instructor of record.

Students who are assigned a failing grade for field education will be subject to the policies outlined in the [BSW Handbook](#). Please note, when students are assigned a failing grade for a field education class, they can only retake the failed course (a) one time; and, (b) when it is next offered by the program. They must also meet with their academic advisor prior to enrolling in the subsequent semester to develop a plan for alternative course sequencing. *Note: SW491: BSW Field Instruction and SW495: BSW Field Integration Seminar is offered in the fall semester and SW492: BSW Field Instruction II and SW496: BSW Field Integration Seminar II is offered in the spring semester.*

Students are discouraged from terminating their field education placement. Students' commitment to a field education placement starts when a student accepts a field placement and receives a confirmation email with the information about the field supervisor (and task supervisor, if applicable) assigned to them. Students' commitment to a field education placement spans the entirety of the Academic Year. The Field Office does not reassign supervisors during semesters unless the agency identifies a change that needs to be made to an assignment.

If/when a student chooses to terminate their placement and drop and/or withdraw from field education and field integration seminar courses,* the student is expected to obtain information about their options related to field policies and course sequencing.

They need to:

- 1) Schedule a meeting with the assigned field liaison and instructor of record to receive direction and guidance on the next steps.
 - a) If/when a student decides to terminate their placement, they will be required to complete a Field Placement Termination Request form in Sonia.
- 2) Contact the assigned academic advisor to further discuss their options and to obtain information regarding alternative course sequencing. Social Work students have the opportunity to retake a field education course the next time it is offered by the program. Changes in course sequencing can disrupt the timeline for the completion of the degree.

Regardless of the reason for leaving an agency before the planned end date, students are expected to conclude their commitment to the agency in a professional and responsible manner. This includes meeting with the representative(s) of the agency to determine the appropriate procedure for termination.

When a placement is terminated in the second semester (SW492), the student is required to complete an additional four weeks (60 hours for 4 credits), on top of the minimum required hours, at the new field placement to ensure adequate onboarding. These additional hours are required so that the students have adequate time to orient and adjust to the expectations, requirements, structure, and services of the new agency. This requirement is not negotiable.

Please note:

- As per earlier guidance in this manual, BSW field instruction courses **MUST** be taken in parallel with field integration seminars. Students are typically unable to continue in their field integration seminar course when their field placement has been terminated.
- If a student's field placement is terminated or changed, the student may:
 - Be assigned a failing or unsatisfactory grade for their field course.
 - Incur additional costs, such as: student fees or course registration costs for which the student will be responsible.
 - Be required to re-register for a field section(s) (e.g., SW492 and SW496). Additionally, hours accrued from the previous field section will not transfer to the new class or placement.
 - Experience a delay in graduation date or timeline for graduation.
 - Not be eligible to take a class(es) that semester and will need to enroll in one credit of continuous registration credit.

**Parts of this plan have been adapted from the Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare Office of Practicum Education Graduate Practicum Education Manual.*

Supportive Action Plan

Policy:

Supportive action plans are initiated in cases where an **instructor of record, task supervisor, field instructor, field liaison, or the Director of Field Education** has identified an area or areas where a student is not demonstrating competency in their field work.

Students are enrolled in field education courses in the same way as any other course in the social work curriculum. Thus, direct feedback about current standing in field education is provided similarly to the ways in which feedback is provided in any other social work course. Feedback regarding performance should be provided to students on a regular basis during weekly supervision meetings and documented in mid semester and final evaluations. Evaluations should NEVER be a surprise. Supervision is a place to offer feedback and ask for what is needed, prior to any formal evaluation process. Students and field instructors should use this time to explore needs and expectations as frequently as is needed to ensure that the learning plan, program goals, and learning objectives are met.

When students are not meeting expectations or reaching competency, they need immediate, direct, explicit and clear information and feedback to be provided by their supervisor(s), field liaison and instructor of record. Supervisors are expected to document their discussions with students regarding performance concerns, as such documentation is essential if a supportive action plan is needed. Supportive action plans are a crucial mechanism for providing structured support and guidance when performance concerns have been identified.

A supportive action plan is used as a tool to provide structured support to students who have performance area(s) that need improvement. Plans should reference applicable [Departmental performance standards and Social Work Competencies](#), which are provided to students upon entry into the program. When creating a supportive action plan, student's strengths and career goals are essential components. Students are asked to reflect on these areas while creating a plan.

A supportive action plan clearly and specifically outlines performance areas needing improvement, expectations to be met, and suggests ways to reach and maintain success. *Plans should: a) be task-oriented; b) articulate short-term and long-term goals that are measurable over the specified timeframe; and, c) include a specified timeline and support plan for the student as they work through the plan.*

The creation of an action plan may be initiated by an instructor of record, task supervisor, field instructor, field liaison, or the Director of Field Education. The duration of supportive action plans is typically six to eight weeks. The appropriate Department of Social Work Program Director is made aware of active plans when created for students within their programmatic purview, and the Program Director collaborates with the Field Office throughout the process. Relevant Binghamton University resources are also integrated into plans whenever possible.

The Field Office supportive action plan guide and examples are available upon request from an instructor of record. Instructors of record have final approval of any/all supportive action plans, as well as any alternative templates suggested outside of the Field Office template. If a student does not successfully complete an action plan, it could result in an unsatisfactory/failing grade for the course.

Procedure: The action plan process can be broken down into four phases: *identification, planning, implementation, and conclusion*. These phases and roles for each participant are clarified below.

Identification (expected timeframe: 1-2 weeks)

- An area or areas is/are identified where a student is not demonstrating competency in their field work. Any member of the field education team (task supervisor, field instructor, field liaison, instructor of record, or the Director of Field Education) may identify areas requiring improvement.
- Mid semester and final evaluations should include specific and explicit information regarding areas requiring additional skill building. Additional ways to document concerns and make sure students are in receipt of specific feedback include: emailing students a recap of feedback provided verbally and acknowledging that a conversation occurred. Additionally, supervisors are expected to notify their assigned field liaison of identified concerns so that the liaison can provide support and guidance to the student, supervisor and process.
- If areas are identified by a **field instructor or task supervisor**, they will communicate with other team members regarding the reasons for creating the plan and the performance areas that the plan will address. They should reference competencies and/or areas from the social work contract that relate to the performance areas that the plan will address. Field liaison can/will assist with this, as needed.
- If identified by the **field liaison**, they will collaborate with the supervisor(s) and instructor of record to finalize the identification of the specific reasons for creating the plan and the performance areas that the plan will address. They will suggest competencies and/or areas from the social work contract that relate to the performance areas that the plan will address.
- The **field liaison** will share a copy of the competencies and social work contract with the group and inquire about other areas that the student and/or supervisors might suggest be added to the plan.

Planning (expected timeframe: 1-3 weeks)

- The **field liaison** will share with the student and supervisor(s) the supportive action plan Google Form, which includes at least one relevant example. Both the student and supervisor(s) will complete the form.
- The **student** will follow guidance from their field liaison and instructor of record regarding their active participation in the creation of the plan so they can reflect and provide input on how the plan can be created in a way that aligns with their strengths. They will input a minimum of three suggested areas for growth into the action plan. The student is expected to suggest solutions in as many of the areas as possible.
- **Field supervisors** will also fill out a Google Form with their suggested areas for growth and competencies to be addressed within the action plan. The **field instructor** has the final responsibility to compete and submit the form.
- Once the link to the form is sent, both the student and supervisor(s) have up to one week to complete the form.
- The **field liaison** will review both Google Form submissions. Both form submissions will be compiled into one final draft Google Doc.
- The **field liaison** will send a final draft copy of the plan to all team members, including the instructor of record and director of field education.

- The **instructor of record** will review the action plan, provide feedback prior to the plan being finalized, and convene, lead, or participate in group meetings, as needed.
- The **field liaison** will then schedule an initial supportive action plan meeting where all team members discuss the finalized action plan.
- The **student** will receive the completed action plan, in writing and verbally, during a meeting including them, their supervisor(s), and their field liaison. They will then sign the action plan, indicating that they are clear about the plan.

Implementation (expected timeframe: 6-8 weeks)

- The **field liaison** will schedule a minimum of one check-in meeting with the student half way through the action plan timeline. It is the **student's** responsibility to participate in these meetings.
- The **field liaison** will obtain via email and populate a summary of feedback from field supervisor(s) and the student midway through the plan. They will share feedback with all parties to provide clarity on the student's progress midway through the plan.
- The **student** will discuss progress on the action plan regularly during supervision with field supervisor(s). The plan should be explicitly discussed and revisited so that the student receives ongoing, real-time feedback on their performance improvement or continued challenges.
- The **field liaison** will discuss and obtain the final decision regarding the outcome of the plan with the supervisor(s) and instructor of record one week prior to when the plan is set to conclude.

Conclusion (expected timeframe: 1 week)

- The **field liaison** will convene a final meeting, including all team members and the instructor of record where a final decision is shared and discussed with the student.

In addition, please note:

- The instructor of record or Director of Field Education has the discretion to initiate an action plan depending on student and/or field circumstances. In these situations, the action plan will be conditional upon a variety of factors that will be clarified with the student at the time of action plan initiation. The instructor of record, Associate Director of Field Education, and Director of Field Education will work in collaboration with the field liaison to lead the process.
- All action plans are contingent upon student participation. If a student chooses to disengage from their learning, as assessed by the instructor of record, field liaison and/or supervisors, the action plan process may be terminated and the placement may be terminated. Consequently, a failing grade for the course may be assigned.
- Supportive action plans may not be utilized and/or completed in situations where the instructor of record, field liaison and/or supervisor(s) determine that a student's actions are in direct violation of student conduct (outlined in the Student Handbook), the NASW Code of Ethics and/or create safety issues for the internship site.

Harassment

Policy: Members of the Binghamton University community have the right to participate in all that the campus offers without being subjected to physical violence, threats, intimidation, or damage to personal property, or any other form of harassing behavior.

Binghamton University is committed to creating a safe and supportive learning environment, to becoming a more inclusive community, and to fulfilling its obligations under federal and state laws, regulations and executive orders. Essential to these objectives is the maintenance of an environment in which individual dignity is respected, the richness of human diversity is welcomed, and harassment is not tolerated.

Accordingly, it is the policy of Binghamton University to prohibit harassment and to investigate allegations of such behavior promptly and thoroughly. This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, employees of the Research Foundation, contractors, vendors and visitors to the campus.

A) What is Harassment?

i) General Description

Harassment is generally understood to occur when the conduct of an individual or group of individuals has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's or group of individual's educational or work environment, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Some forms of harassment are prohibited by law. Understanding harassment begins with recognizing that there is no simple definition of the term, and that there is no finite list of behaviors that covers all potential forms of harassment. Rather, the circumstances of each case will determine whether specific conduct amounts to harassment.

Moreover, while the range of behaviors which may constitute harassment is broad, so is the range of speech protected by the First Amendment, and this is discussed in more depth in section "B" of this document. Finding the balance between harassment and protected speech can be challenging.

ii) Harassment Based on Protected Class.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) describes harassment based on protected class (including sexual harassment) as offensive conduct that is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it creates an unreasonable and substantial interference with the ability of members of a protected class to participate in the academic or employment setting. As with other forms of harassment, an individualized assessment of the circumstances in which the conduct occurred is essential to a final determination.

SUNY Sexual Harassment Response and Prevention Policy Statement

iii) Criminal Harassment

Harassment may also take the form of criminal behavior. As with any kind of harassment, the range of behavior that may constitute criminal harassment is broad. The New York State Penal Code defines criminal harassment as conduct intended to harass, annoy, threaten, or alarm another person.

B) Harassment and First Amendment Considerations

The concepts of academic freedom and an open exchange of ideas are essential to the mission of any educational institution. Binghamton University is committed to these ideals, and as a public institution, is legally obligated to protect its members' First Amendment right of freedom of expression. Respect for this right requires that members of the University tolerate the expression of views that are contrary to their own, and recognize that the expression of ideas that are intolerant, bigoted, or deeply offensive are entitled to First Amendment protection. Equally important, however, is the understanding that free expression carries with it the responsibility of civility and respect for others. The University views conduct intended to disparage or demean others as contrary to the pursuit of knowledge and rational discourse. So called "speech codes" have been deemed unconstitutional by the courts. Therefore, while Binghamton University does not condone incivility within the campus community, it has not adopted a policy to prohibit offensive speech. Moreover, Binghamton has a proud history of inviting and encouraging the expression of diverse views.

C) Reporting Procedures

Individuals who feel they have been harassed are advised to seek guidance and information from one of the offices listed in section "E" of this policy before taking direct action on their own. Doing so does not oblige anyone to file a formal complaint. The University strongly encourages anyone who has information regarding an incident of harassment involving violence or the threat of violence, to report it immediately to the University Police. While in some cases, reports of harassment may be resolved through informal means, some circumstances call for the use of formal complaint procedures. Both options are outlined below:

i) Informal Complaint Resolution

Informal complaint resolution is intended to stop the behavior in question and to rectify the situation immediately rather than to determine culpability or intent. For advice in addressing harassment through informal means, inquiries may be directed to any of the offices listed in section "E" of this policy. In addition, the offices of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the University Counseling Center, and the University Ombudsman, routinely provide strictly confidential advice on a variety of sensitive topics.

ii) Formal Complaint Resolution

Formal complaint procedures, a more official route of intervention usually requiring a signed statement, are available through a number of campus departments. Departments from across campus often work together to address harassment. However, given that certain types of situations inevitably involve a particular campus department, the University recommends that complaints be addressed as follows:

Formal Complaint Procedures:

- Harassment occurring in residential areas — Appropriate resident/community director or other professional residential life staff
- Harassment involving student conduct outside of residence halls — Office of Student Conduct
- Harassment involving the conduct of an employee — Associate Vice President for Human Resources or appropriate supervisory personnel
- Harassment or discrimination based on protected class — Director of Affirmative Action/Title IX Coordinator
- Any incident of harassment may be reported to the University Police. The University especially encourages the immediate reporting of any incident involving violence or the threat of violence. Any incident may be discussed informally and in

the strictest confidence with the University Ombudsman, and at the University Counseling Center or Employee Assistance Program.

D) Prohibition of Retaliation

Retaliation against any person who reports harassment, or who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing relating to such a report, is strictly prohibited. False reports knowingly made in bad faith are also prohibited. Violation of the University's harassment policy will subject the offender to the full range of penalties available, including criminal adjudication and separation from the University. In addition, certain types of harassment are criminal offenses and carry enhanced penalties under state and federal laws

E) Campus Resources

- **Dean of Students Office**
UUW-204
607-777-2804
- **University Counseling Center**
OO-264
607-777-2772
- **New York State University Police**
AD-G35
607-777-2393 (non-emergency)
911 (emergency)
- **Human Resources Office**
607-AD-244
777-2187
- **Office of Student Conduct**
TU-3J
607-777-6210
- **Employee Assistance Program (employees only)**
IN-B5
607-777-6655
- **Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
LSG-548
607-777-4775
- **University Ombudsman**
LSG-526
607-777-2388
- **Services for Students with Disabilities**
UU-119
607-777-2686
- **Title IX Coordinator**
AD 217
607-777-2486

National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's dual focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence.

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

The NASW Code of Ethics serves six purposes:

1. The Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.

2. The Code summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The Code is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The Code provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The Code socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards, and encourages all social workers to engage in self-care, ongoing education, and other activities to ensure their commitment to those same core features of the profession.
6. The Code articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members.* In subscribing to this Code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

The Code offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the Code must take into account the context in which it is being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the Code's values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the personal and familial to the social and professional.

* For information on the NASW Professional Review Process, see NASW Procedures for Professional Review.

Furthermore, the NASW Code of Ethics does not specify which values, principles, and standards are most important and ought to outweigh others in instances when they conflict. Reasonable differences of opinion can and do exist among social workers with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be rank ordered when they conflict. Ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker and should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the ethical standards of the profession would be applied.

Ethical decision making is a process. In situations when conflicting obligations arise, social workers may be faced with complex ethical dilemmas that have no simple answers. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this Code that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers' decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

In addition to this Code, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the NASW Code of Ethics as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients' and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This

may involve consultation with an agency-based or social work organization's ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel.

Instances may arise when social workers' ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this Code. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision. The NASW Code of Ethics is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this Code does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law.

Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the Code would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The NASW Code of Ethics reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

With growth in the use of communication technology in various aspects of social work practice, social workers need to be aware of the unique challenges that may arise in relation to the maintenance of confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries, professional competence, record keeping, and other ethical considerations. In general, all ethical standards in this Code of Ethics are applicable to interactions, relationships, or communications, whether they occur in person or with the use of technology. For the purposes of this Code, "technology-assisted social work services" include any social work services that involve the use of computers, mobile or landline telephones, tablets, video technology, or other electronic or digital technologies; this includes the use of various electronic or digital platforms, such as the Internet, online social media, chat rooms, text messaging, e-mail and emerging digital applications. Technology-assisted social work services encompass all aspects of social work practice, including psychotherapy; individual, family, or group counseling; community organization; administration; advocacy; mediation; education; supervision; research; evaluation; and other social work services. Social workers should keep apprised of emerging technological developments that may be used in social work practice and how various ethical standards apply to them.

Professional self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Professional demands, challenging workplace climates, and exposure to trauma warrant that social workers maintain personal and professional health, safety, and integrity. Social work organizations, agencies, and educational institutions are encouraged to promote organizational policies, practices, and materials to support social workers' self-care.

Ethical Principles

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

Value: Service

Ethical Principle: Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems

Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

Value: Social Justice

Ethical Principle: Social workers challenge social injustice.

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

Value: Dignity and Worth of the Person

Ethical Principle: Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.

Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

Value: Importance of Human Relationships

Ethical Principle: Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

Value: Integrity

Ethical Principle: Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers should take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Value: Competence

Ethical Principle: Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

Ethical Standards

- 1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients**
- 2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues**
- 3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings**
- 4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals**
- 5. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession**
- 6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society**

1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

NASW Code of Ethics: Ethical Standards

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may, on limited occasions, supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

1.02 Self-Determination

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent **risk to themselves or others**.

1.03 Informed Consent

(a) Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to

refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.

(b) In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.

(c) In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with their level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.

(d) In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients the social workers' policies concerning the use of technology in the provision of professional services.

(f) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should obtain informed consent from the individuals using these services during the initial screening or interview and prior to initiating services. Social workers should assess clients' capacity to provide informed consent and, when using technology to communicate, verify the identity and location of clients.

(g) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should assess the clients' suitability and capacity for electronic and remote services. Social workers should consider the clients' intellectual, emotional, and physical ability to use technology to receive services and ability to understand the potential benefits, risks, and limitations of such services. If clients do not wish to use services provided through technology, social workers should help them identify alternate methods of service.

(h) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before making audio or video recordings of clients or permitting observation of service provision by a third party.

(i) Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or others from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons.

1.04 Competence

(a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

(b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.

(c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

(d) Social workers who use technology in the provision of social work services should ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services in a competent manner. This includes an understanding of the special communication challenges when using technology and the ability to implement strategies to address these challenges.

(e) Social workers who use technology in providing social work services should comply with the laws governing technology and social work practice in the jurisdiction in which they are regulated and located and, as applicable, in the jurisdiction in which the client is located.

1.05 Cultural Competence

(a) Social workers should demonstrate understanding of culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

(b) Social workers should demonstrate knowledge that guides practice with clients of various cultures and be able to demonstrate skills in the provision of culturally informed services that empower marginalized individuals and groups. Social workers must take action against oppression, racism, discrimination, and inequities, and acknowledge personal privilege.

(c) Social workers should demonstrate awareness and cultural humility by engaging in critical self-reflection (understanding their own bias and engaging in self-correction), recognizing clients as experts of their own culture, committing to lifelong learning, and holding institutions accountable for advancing cultural humility.

(d) Social workers should obtain education about and demonstrate understanding of the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.

(e) Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socioeconomic differences among clients' use of and access to electronic technology and seek to prevent such potential barriers. Social workers should assess cultural, environmental, economic, mental or physical ability, linguistic, and other issues that may affect the delivery or use of these services.

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

(a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

(b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

(c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)

(d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.

(e) Social workers should avoid communication with clients using technology (such as social networking sites, online chat, e-mail, text messages, telephone, and video) for personal or non-work-related purposes.

(f) Social workers should be aware that posting personal information on professional Web sites or other media might cause boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

(g) Social workers should be aware that personal affiliations may increase the likelihood that clients may discover the social worker's presence on Web sites, social media, and other forms of technology. Social workers should be aware that involvement in electronic communication with groups based on race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical ability, religion, immigration status, and other personal affiliations may affect their ability to work effectively with particular clients.

(h) Social workers should avoid accepting requests from or engaging in personal relationships with clients on social networking sites or other electronic media to prevent boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

(a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from or about clients except for compelling professional reasons. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.

(b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

(c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or others. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.

(d) If social workers plan to disclose confidential information, they should (when feasible and to the extent possible) inform clients about the disclosure and the potential consequences prior to disclosing the information. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker–client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.

(f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

(g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

(h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

(j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

(k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.

(l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

(m) Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use applicable safeguards (such as encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.

(n) Social workers should develop and disclose policies and procedures for notifying clients of any breach of confidential information in a timely manner.

(o) In the event of unauthorized access to client records or information, including any unauthorized access to the social worker's electronic communication or storage systems, social workers should inform clients of such disclosures, consistent with applicable laws and professional standards.

(p) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of electronic technology, including Internet-based search engines, to gather information about clients.

(q) Social workers should avoid searching or gathering client information electronically unless there are compelling professional reasons, and when appropriate, with the client's informed consent.

- (r) Social workers should avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional Web sites or other forms of social media.
- (s) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws governing records and social work licensure.
- (t) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.
- (u) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.
- (v) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.
- (w) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

1.08 Access to Records

- (a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the client. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.
- (b) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of technology to provide clients with access to their records.
- (c) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

1.09 Sexual Relationships

- (a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communications through the use of technology or in person, or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.
- (b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers—not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship—assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social

workers—not their clients—who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

(d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

1.10 Physical Contact

Social workers should not engage in physical contact with clients when there is a possibility of psychological harm to the client as a result of the contact (such as cradling or caressing clients). Social workers who engage in appropriate physical contact with clients are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern such physical contact.

1.11 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass clients. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances; sexual solicitation; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

1.12 Derogatory Language

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written, verbal, or electronic communications to or about clients. Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients.

1.13 Payment for Services

(a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.

(b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

(c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

When social workers act on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make informed decisions, social workers should take reasonable steps to safeguard the interests and rights of those clients.

1.15 Interruption of Services

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, disruptions in electronic communication, relocation, illness, mental or physical ability, or death.

1.16 Referral for Services

(a) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that other services are required.

(b) Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.

(c) Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

1.17 Termination of Services(a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.

(b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

(c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

(d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

(e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

(f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

Taken from:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/Social-Workers-Ethical-Responsibilities-to-Clients>