MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

STUDENT HANDBOOK AND

FIELD MANUAL

Bridgewater State University

Bridgewater, Massachusetts

2017-2018

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SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Bridgewater State University School of Social Work

Master of Social Work Program

Welcome

The Bridgewater State University School of Social Work welcomes you to a dynamic community of students, faculty, staff and a vast array of community agencies. We share a commitment to social work education, knowledge and skill in social work practice and in social justice. We are pleased to begin a partnership with you and look forward to your contributions to our mission. In an ever changing world, you will understand and reflect on the strengths and needs of our multiple communities, as you further develop your identities as advocates and agents of social change. Ultimately, you will be challenged to develop the flexibility and range of competencies needed to be at the forefront of change with and for people. Your guide in part will be the underlying principles of our field which drive our profession.

If you have questions or if I can be of assistance, please contact me and I will do my best to help. My office phone is 508.531.2370 or feel free to send me an email at: karen.fein@bridgew.edu.

Welcome to the School of Social Work at Bridgewater State University!

Karen R. Fein, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW
Coordinator Master of Social Work Program

Accreditation

Accreditation is a system for recognizing educational institutions and professional programs affiliated with those institutions as having a level of performance, integrity and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve. The Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education is authorized to accredit baccalaureate and master's programs in social work education in the United States.

The accreditation review process provides professional judgments on the quality of a social work education program. These judgments are based on applying the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) promulgated by the Commission on Education Policy and the Commission on Accreditation. The Commission on Accreditation establishes standards for the accreditation of social work education programs at both the baccalaureate and master's levels. Master's programs are reviewed for their preparation of students for specialized social work practice (CSWE, 2012).

The Master of Social Work Program at Bridgewater State University is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Faculty/Staff Directory

School of Social Work
95 Burrill Avenue
Bridgewater, MA 02325

Administrative Support	***Room***	***Phone***	***Email***
Delaney, Andrea, Administrative Assistant I	102	508.531.2256	Andrea.Delaney@bridgew.edu
Tarr, Marcia, Administrative Assistant I	102	508.531.2773	Marcia.Tarr@bridgew.edu
Chairperson			
Alcon, Arnaa, Ph.D., Professor, Chairperson	102 P	508.531.2180	Arnaa.Alcon@bridgew.edu
MSW Coordinator			
Fein, Karen R., LICSW(CA), Ph.D., Associate Professor	102 R	508.531.2370	Karen.Fein@bridgew.edu
BSW Coordinator			
Lovett, Beverly, DSW, LICSW, Professor	102 S	508.531.2253	Beverly.Lovett@bridgew.edu
Faculty			
Bailey, Kathleen, Ph.D., LMSW, Associate Professor	102 L	508.531.6150	Kathleen.Bailey@bridgew.edu
Bond, Barbara E., LICSW, Ed. D., Associate Professor	102 U	508.531.1465	Barbara.Bond@bridgew.edu
Boyd, Margaret, Ph.D., MSW, Assistant Professor	102 X	508.531.2127	Margaret.Boyd@bridgew.edu
Brenner, Mark J., Ph.D., ACSW, LICSW, Professor	102 E	508.531.2760	Mark.Brenner@bridgew.edu
Douglas, Emily M., Ph.D., Associate Professor	102 M	508.531.2012	Emily.Douglas@bridgew.edu
Duffy, Mary Ann, Instructor	102 M	508.531.1836	MaryAnn.Duffy@bridgew.edu
Lacet, Castagna, Assistant Professor	102 N	508.531.2071	Castagna.Lacet@bridgew.edu
Lee, Jonghyun, Ph.D., Associate Professor	102 Z	508.531.2689	Jonghyun.Lee@bridgew.edu
Martin-Jearld, Anna, Ph.D., LICSW, BCD, Professor	102 Y	508.531.2246	Anna.Martin-Jearld@bridgew.edu
O'Malley, David J., LICSW, Ph.D., Associate Professor	102 T	508.531.2978	David.O'Malley@bridgew.edu
Sattler, Leslie, LICSW, Instructor	102 J	508.531.2518	Leslie.Sattler@bridgew.edu
Tan, Jing, Ph.D., Associate Professor	102 H	508.531.6170	Jing.Tan@bridgew.edu
Williams, Wendy Champagnie, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, Asst. Professor	102 V	508.531.2548	Wendy.Williams@bridgew.edu
Willison, Judith S., Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, Asst. Professor	102 W	508.531.2843	Judith.Willison@bridgew.edu
Zgoda, Karen, MSW, LCSW, Instructor	100 F	508-531-2657	Karen.Zgoda@bridgew.edu
Field Staff			
Masshardt, Carol, LICSW, Administrator of Field Ed.	102 K	508.531.2177	Carol.Masshardt@bridgew.edu
Shibli, Nasreen, MSW, Field Education Specialist	102 F	508.531.1459	Nasreen.Shibli@bridgew.edu

MSW PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS

School's Uniqueness and Origin

Bridgewater State University was founded in 1840 and is one of the country's oldest public colleges. Originally dedicated to teacher preparation, it became a comprehensive college in 1960. The University's Carnegie classification is Master's College and Universities (Master's I). Bridgewater is the largest of the nine Massachusetts state universities and is the fourth largest public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth. Located in Southeastern Massachusetts where it functions as a major regional resource, the University's mission statement reflects the dual nature of its commitment to the region:

> To educate the residents of Southeastern Massachusetts and to use its intellectual, scientific and technological resources to support and advance the economic and cultural life of the region and the state.

The Master of Social Work (MSW) Program was established in 2003 in response to requests by the local social service community for an MSW program at BSU. Community leaders, not faculty, were in the forefront in seeking a public MSW program for Southeastern Massachusetts.

Mission Statement of the MSW Program

The Mission of the MSW program at Bridgewater State University is to prepare:

> …clinically informed advanced practitioners who will enhance the lives of individuals, families and communities of Southeastern Massachusetts, address regional needs and promote social justice. The program prepares culturally sensitive advanced professionals who are grounded in strengths-based, biopsychosocial practice models. Emphasis is placed upon systems across multiple levels, in order to identify what can be done to affect change and strengthen relationships among individuals, families and communities in order to promote optimal functioning. The program educates professionals who, grounded in social work's history, purposes and philosophy, integrate the values of the profession into an ethical approach to all professional activities at an advanced level of knowledge and skill.

Our mission has guided the faculty in the development of integrated programmatic goals. The mission and goals of our program are reflective of the knowledge development and research purpose of social work education.

Program Goals of the Master of Social Work Program

The MSW program prepares students for clinically informed advanced social work practice with individuals, families, groups and communities. Students learn clinical, organizational, policy and research skills necessary for effective social work practice and to promote social justice.

The MSW program has six program goals:

1) To provide an educational program that prepares graduate students for clinically informed advanced social work practice utilizing strengths-based, biopsychosocial and systems practice models that support diversity and social justice in individuals, families, groups and communities.

2) To provide an educational program that prepares graduate students for culturally sensitive and increasingly culturally competent practice with individuals, families, groups and communities.

3) To provide students with the analytical skills and substantive knowledge essential for clinical social work practice, for assessing the effectiveness of current social work methods and for developing more effective practice procedures.

4) To develop in students the capacity and confidence to be leaders in public and private social service agencies in Southeastern Massachusetts, the Commonwealth and globally.

5) To promote and support research and the development of knowledge to improve the effectiveness of social work practice, policies and programs.

6) To promote social work practice based on the values and ethics which guide the social work profession.

Conceptual Framework of our Curriculum

The coherence and integration of the curriculum is derived from the close relationship between the Program's goals and the knowledge base of the social work profession. The following four knowledge bases provide the conceptual framework - built on relevant theories that inform our curriculum:

1. Strengths-based framework
2. Biopsychosocial framework
3. Systems framework
4. Social justice framework

A brief overview of each is provided below.

1. Strengths-based framework: The strengths-based framework has become a principle orientation of social work practice and provides a thematic foundation for the development of our practice approach. Saleebey (2006) states that:

> Practicing from a strengths orientation means this – everything you do as a social worker will be predicated, in some way, on helping to discover and embellish, explore and exploit clients' strengths and resources in the service of assisting them to achieve their goals, realize their dreams and shed the irons of their own inhibitions and misgivings and society's domination (p. 1).

Social work has long presumed itself to be building on clients' strengths, but in fact, that impulse has been undermined by our cultural and professional reliance on pathology—or deficit-based explanations and interventions (Graybeal, 2001). The strengths perspective includes and is informed by theory and research focused on individual, family and community resilience (Mattaini & Lowry, 2007). To utilize the strengths-based perspective in social work practice, then, is to work to enhance the resilience of client systems, but not to avoid the recognition of problems and issues where they exist.

2. Biopsychosocial framework: Specialty direct social work practice is predicated on "understanding the clients' subjective realities and responding to their difficulties, pain, strengths and humanity. It is about professional competence in empowering the clients to recognize their internal strengths and to negotiate the external resources toward their health and well-being" (Simpson, et al., 2007, p. 7). Biopsychosocial

frameworks offer social workers information and perspectives regarding biological, psychological, relational and social dimensions that interact and influence human functioning and well-being (Garland & Howard, 2009).

A biopsychosocial framework includes an intergenerational focus as well the rich array of other theories we use to inform our curriculum. Knowledge of biological influences, psychological and lifespan perspectives and social theories on ethnicity and culture, social movements, socioeconomic class and social institutions are introduced in the foundation year curriculum and examined in greater depth and specificity in the Specialty year curriculum.

3. Systems framework: These theoretical models bring attention to the multiple and interdependent systems that influence people and their experiences. Thus, for example, family systems theory focuses on linkages that connect individuals with each other in their families – however they define that term. It implies the need to change the system as well as individuals and families within it in order to attain a better "fit" between the two (Nichols, 2008). "From a social systems point of view, behavior is understood as the outcome of the total social situation in which an individual subsystem, group subsystem, or other social unit finds itself" (Green, 1999, p. 218). As a number of models emphasize different aspects of the systems that affect people's lives, our curriculum draws on this rich theoretical base.

Related to systems theory is the ecological perspective. It emphasizes the goodness of fit between the person and the environment. This perspective helps social workers understand people's transactions with their environments and allows social workers and clients to identify and address those processes that undermine human dignity, self-actualization and fulfillment (Darling, 2007; Swick & Williams, 2006). Our curriculum emphasizes the importance of families, support systems and other communities in the lives of individuals. As critical human associations, communities -- whether based on ties of geographic space, kinship, relationship, social and cultural identities and/or shared experiences -- can greatly aid or hinder individuals' attempt to provide meaning in their lives, meet needs and accomplish goals (Kemp & Scanlon, 2007; Simpson, Williams & Segall, 2007). Each of these systems frameworks stress that social workers must be involved in strategies aimed at changing those systems that do not optimally support clients (van Wormer & Synder, 2007). These strategies include advocacy, empowerment, policy development and change implementation (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002).

4. Social Justice: Social justice is the organizing principle of social work (Marsh, 2005; Pelton, 2001). "The concern of the social scientist should not be so much to explain the world as to transform it" (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 19). A commitment to human rights and social justice across multiple levels provides the moral and conceptual grounding for social work practice and research. These concepts direct social work resources and activities toward people who are oppressed and marginalized. Since respect for basic human rights provides the necessary conditions for a just society, freedom and well-being are the starting points and ultimate criteria by which we judge the value of social work practice and research. Social workers contribute to a just society by both helping to alleviate individual suffering and by creating the structural arrangements and social processes in which these fundamental rights are honored and resources are obtained and distributed in an equitable manner.

Theorists and practitioners have increasingly addressed the role of social justice and human rights in social work practice and social work education over the last three decades; such consideration is invigorating and imperative for a profession whose goal is to ensure that economic and social resources are available on an equal basis to all. The valuing of social justice and human rights and the implications of that valuing for the profession is thoroughly integrated into Bridgewater State University's MSW program and curriculum. This philosophy defines the conceptual parameters and commitments of the program. It articulates the assumptions that undergird the curriculum and outlines our vision of professional social work.

Clinically Informed Advanced Social Work Practice Concentration

The MSW curriculum offers a single concentration: clinically informed advanced social work practice with individuals, families, groups and communities. This implies that clinically informed interventions may be directed towards any systems that facilitate and enhance the quality of life for individuals, families, groups and communities. The concentration is shaped by four ideals: 1) the enhancement of critical thinking; 2) the professional use of self-based on advanced social work values, knowledge and skills; 3) a commitment to the tradition of promoting social and economic justice and equality; and 4) a commitment to individual, family, group and community well-being. These four professional ideals complement and elaborate on the Program's mission and the foundation content mandated by CSWE, which informs the curriculum as a whole and is woven into course syllabi.

The clinically informed advanced social work practice paradigm that constitutes the defining framework for the Bridgewater State University Master of Social Work Program features the following elements:

1. A liberal arts perspective informed by recognition of the critical import to social work education and practice of cultural, political and socio-historical context; skills in communication, reasoning, analysis and critical thinking and inquiry; human behavior knowledge; and scientific method;
2. Social work knowledge, values and skills essential for making sound, ethical and autonomous professional judgments and decisions;
3. Thorough exploration of many social identities and dimensions of human diversity; histories of social, economic and racial oppression are examined and skills for culturally competent and socially just social work practice are developed;
4. Specialized training in clinically informed advanced social work practice with individuals and families, to address the basic social service needs of Southeastern Massachusetts residents. As indicated earlier, the single concentration of our Program is to prepare students to engage in clinically informed advanced social work practice at all systems levels. In Southeastern Massachusetts, the majority of Master of Social Work level professionals function as direct practitioners at all levels, in public, private and nonprofit agencies with scarce fiscal resources and personnel. There is a particular dearth of social work professionals with advanced training.
5. Building on the foundation curriculum, the advanced curriculum and field work provide preparation for interventions at advanced levels of complexity. The advanced curriculum prepares students with knowledge and skills of sufficient depth, breadth and specificity for more sophisticated, creative analysis, decision making, leadership and expertise at multiple systems levels;
6. Building on strengths-based, biopsychosocial system practice models, our overarching conceptual framework emphasizes social justice across all levels.

Graduate education is ideally characterized by intellectual curiosity and the desire to contribute to human knowledge. It is much more than merely a continuation of undergraduate work. Bridgewater State University's master's degree program in social work is designed for students who have demonstrated in their earlier studies and professional experiences, outstanding academic ability and the capacity for independent thought and work. The graduate curriculum emphasizes the enhancement of both cognitive and pragmatic abilities. As a result, students are required to operate in a manner that includes intentional reflection on their

interactions at the level of both content and process. The course descriptions for courses at both the foundation- and the advanced MSW curriculum can be found in the BSU Catalog.

Competencies and Practice Behaviors of the MSW Program

In compliance with the Council on Social Work Education Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards [EPAS], the MSW program has adopted the following 9 competencies. These competencies are holistic, taking into account, knowledge, skills, values, cognition and affect. Additionally, both foundation and specialty level competencies have been further explicated by expectations of skills and knowledge.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

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

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

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

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

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, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate

engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

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 with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

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 with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

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 recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Curriculum Schedule

All students enter in the fall semester and move through the program in cohorts. Following is the prescribed and required curriculum schedule for each cohort.

FULL-TIME (2 YEARS)

(First Year)

Fall

SCWK 500: Introduction to Social Welfare Policy I: History, Programs and Issues
SCWK 502: Dynamics: Diversity and Oppression
SCWK 510: Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
SCWK 530: Social Work Practice I
SCWK 590: Field Practice and Seminar I

Spring

SCWK 508: Social Policy II
SCWK 511: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
SCWK 531: Social Work Practice II
SCWK 540: Introduction to Social Research
SCWK 591: Field Practice and Seminar II

(Second Year)

Fall

SCWK 512: Human Behavior and the Social Environment III
SCWK 541: Research: Evaluating Practice
SCWK 551: SW Practice III
SCWK 592: Field Placement and Seminar III
Elective

Spring

SCWK 550: SW Practice IV
SCWK 572: Social Policy III
SCWK 593: Field Placement and Seminar IV
2 Electives

PART TIME (3 YEARS)

(First Year)
Fall
SCWK 500: Policy I: Social Welfare Policy
SCWK 502: Dynamics of Diversity and Oppression
SCWK 510: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I

Spring
SCWK 508: Policy II: Policy Advocacy, Development and Analysis
SCWK 511: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II
SCWK 540: Introductory Social Research

Summer* (3 credits)
SCWK 580: Special Topics (Elective)

(Second Year)
Fall
SCWK 530: Social Work Practice I
SCWK 572: Social Policy III: Mental and Physical Health Care Policy
SCWK 590: Field Practice and Seminar I

Spring
SCWK 512: Human Behavior in the Social Environment III: DSM
SCWK 531: Social Work Practice II: Groups and Community-Based Practice
SCWK 591: Field Practice and Seminar II

Summer* (6 credits)
SCWK 580: Special Topics (Elective)
SCWK 580: Special Topics (Elective)

(Third Year)
Fall
SCWK 541: Research: Evaluating Practice
SCWK 551: Social Work Practice: Intergenerational Strengths-Based Practice with Individuals
SCWK 592: Field Practice and Seminar III

Spring
SCWK 550: Social Work Practice: Intergenerational Strengths-Based Practice with Families
SCWK 593: Field Practice and Seminar IV

*Please note: while it is suggested that SCWK 580: Special Topics courses be taken during the summer, these courses can also be taken during the academic year.

PART-TIME (4 YEARS)

(First Year)

Fall

SCWK 500: Introduction to Social Welfare Policy I: History, Programs and Issues
SCWK 502: Dynamics: Diversity and Oppression
SCWK 510: Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Spring

SCWK 508: Social Policy II
SCWK 511: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
SCWK 540: Introduction to Social Research

(Second Year)

Fall

SCWK 530: Social Work Practice I
SCWK 590: Field Practice and Seminar I

Spring

SCWK 531: Social Work Practice II
SCWK 591: Field Practice and Seminar II

(Third Year)

Fall

SCWK 541: Research: Evaluating Practice
SCWK 572: Social Policy III
Elective

Spring

SCWK 512: Human Behavior and the Social Environment III
2 Electives

(Fourth Year)

Fall

SCWK 551: SW Practice III
SCWK 592: Field Placement and Seminar III

Spring

SCWK 550: SW Practice IV
SCWK 593: Field Placement and Seminar IV

ADVANCED STANDING (2 YEARS)

(First Year)

Fall

SCWK 502: Dynamics of Diversity and Oppression
SCWK 541: Research: Evaluating Practice

Spring

SCWK 512: Human Behavior and the Social Environment III
SCWK 531: Social Work Practice II
Elective

(Second Year)

Fall

SCWK 551: SW Practice III
SCWK 572: Social Policy III
SCWK 592: Field Placement and Seminar III

Spring

SCWK 550: SW Practice IV
SCWK 593: Field Placement and Seminar IV
Elective

SECTION II: ETHICAL CONDUCT, STUDENT HONOR CODE AND BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS

Ethical Conduct

Please review the *NASW Code of Ethics* and bring to classes as requested. The Code of Ethics can be found in English at: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp and in Spanish at: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp?c=sp.

Bridgewater State University's Student Code of Conduct

Institutions of higher education are dedicated to the pursuit of truth. In this pursuit, academic honesty is of fundamental importance. Faculty, students and administrators all have a responsibility to value, demonstrate and safeguard academic integrity as one of the university's most essential institutional values.

The university has an obligation to establish and promote standards of academic integrity and each member of the university community has the responsibility to understand, support and practice them. When standards of academic integrity are followed, teaching and learning can proceed in an environment of trust. When such standards are violated, teaching and learning are in doubt and under suspicion. Therefore, the best interests of the University community require that cases of alleged academic dishonesty be addressed seriously but equitably. Please refer to the BSU Graduate Student Handbook at: http://handbook.bridgew.edu/policies.cfm as well as at: http://catalog.bridgew.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=970. Please see section V for relevant definitions as well as other sections of this important document.

Behavioral Standards for Master of Social Work Students*

The Bridgewater State University School of Social Work offers a professional social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). As such, it is mandated by the Council on Social Work Education that we foster and evaluate the development of professional behavior for all students in the social work program. The School of Social Work also bears a responsibility to the

community at large to produce fully trained professional social workers who consciously exhibit the knowledge, values and skills of the profession of social work appropriate to their level of education. The values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Given this context, **all students enrolled in the Master of Social Work courses will be expected to exhibit** *the standards of behavior outlined as follows:*

The *MSW Behavioral Standards* of the Bridgewater State University School of Social Work are designed to ensure that those individuals who graduate from the MSW program meet the requirements of a master's level prepared professional social worker. Attention to these standards will be paid by faculty responsible for assessing course performance, by field instructors, faculty advisors, field staff and by others with whom students interact within the School of Social Work community. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all of the policies included in the Master of Social Work Student Handbook and Field Manual and the College of Graduate Studies and University Student Handbooks.

Social work students in the Bridgewater State University MSW Program are expected to adhere to the following standards in the classroom, field placement and within the School of Social Work community:

Behavior: in interactions with faculty, administrators, staff, agency personnel, clients/consumers and other students, act in accordance with the mission of the Bridgewater State University MSW Program and the goals and standards of social work as outlined in the Field Manual, in the NASW Code of Ethics including commitment to social and economic justice, client self-determination, integrity, human dignity and human diversity (see www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp e.g.,), the Bridgewater State University Code of Conduct (http://handbook.bridgew.edu/docs/BSU_Student_Code_of_Conduct_2016_2017.pdf), the Bridgewater State University College of Graduate Studies policy on Academic Integrity (http://catalog.bridgew.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=725#Academic%20Integrity)and all academic and behavioral standards as designated by Bridgewater State University.

Self-awareness: openness to new ideas, differing opinions and feedback from others and integration of these into professional and student roles and performance; an understanding of the effect of one's statements and behaviors on others; the ability to modulate one's behavior to promote a productive professional environment and appropriate relationships; a willingness to examine one's beliefs, values and assumptions and change one's behavior to ensure ethical professional practice.

Academic: critical evaluation and application of knowledge and research findings to professional performance; classroom participation that promotes academic freedom, complies with respectful classroom behavior, follows all conventions of academic integrity, complies with instructor's directives; and allows for course instruction and participation of all students.

Interpersonal: interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to students, faculty, school personnel, agency staff, clients and other professionals; these include compassion, empathy, integrity, respect and consideration, reliability and responsibility for one's own behavior.

Self-care: the ability to engage in appropriate self-care and seek resources and/or treatment for medical and personal problems that interfere with academic and professional performance.

Appropriate use of existing channels of communication: (e.g., faculty advisor, classroom instructors, School of Social Work administrators, field instructors) and procedures for addressing problems and concerns at the School of Social Work as outlined in this handbook; an awareness of the importance of communicating directly with the involved personnel and through the prescribed medium; an ability to provide timely feed-back and/or information in a process wherein such is requested.

Professionally-appropriate presentation of self: awareness of and ability to attend to issues of professionally- appropriate dress and personal hygiene in one's course work and field placements; understanding and conducting self in a professional way within the social media context.

Consequences: Failure to act in accordance with these standards may result in suspension or termination from the Bridgewater State University School of Social Work MSW Program on the basis of professional non-suitability if the School's faculty determines that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, program or institutional policies. In addition to any sanction imposed by the MSW Program Coordinator or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, a student who has been found guilty by the University for a violation of the University community standards is subject to suspension or termination.

*Adapted from - Boston University School of Social Work "Behavioral Standards for Social Work Students" and Florida Atlantic University, School of Social Work "Professional Expectations of Student Behavior".

SECTION III: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Non-Discrimination Policy

BSU is a public institution with a long-standing commitment to equal opportunity for all. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, disability, political belief or affiliation, marital status, gender identity and/or genetic information in admission to the university. Nor does Bridgewater State University discriminate in its treatment of employees, in selecting a candidate for a job position, or in selecting which students can participate in an activity or program. Concerns or questions regarding the implementation of this policy can be directed to the Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, Disability Compliance and the Title IX Coordinator.

Advising

Upon admission, students are assigned a faculty advisor and are notified of this assignment in via email and posted information in the SSW. As part of their faculty responsibilities, all faculty members with primary affiliation [M1]to the MSW program serve as advisors to MSW students. In social work education, advisors have two areas of responsibility; professional advisement, which concerns experiences in the field, selection of professional concentrations or areas of focus and work opportunities and academic advisement, which concerns the ordering of courses, the selection of electives and any concerns that a student may have regarding his/her academic performance, such as comprehension, writing, conducting research, etc. Advisors serve as resources for academic and professional advising and may serve as advocates, liaisons or mediators should problems occur in class or field. Advisors must also be involved as soon as possible when serious concerns about one of their advisees are raised. Under unusual circumstances, the student may ask the MSW Program Coordinator to be reassigned to a different advisor.

MSW Student Request for Revision of Educational Program

Students are admitted into the MSW program by cohort and are expected to complete their proposed course of study with that cohort. Students who have a need to change their plan of study, i.e., full-time or part-time, should discuss their situation with their faculty advisor. Students

considering altering their education program must complete a "*MSW Student Request for Revision of Educational Program*" form no later than December 14 or the next business day if the 14th falls on a weekend or holiday. (See Section VI for form.)

Date for receipt of the request is by December 14 (or next business day if falls on weekend or holiday). Changes can be made only for the following academic year. This deadline will be strictly adhered to for requests that involve changes to field placements. The faculty advisor, the Field Education Director and the MSW Program Coordinator will consider the proposed plan for program completion and will communicate their decision via email, the BSU formal method of communication.

While every attempt will be made to honor student requests, the Program's commitment to class sizes and to agencies and institutions providing field placements will also be considered.

Transfer Credit

Students can transfer up to six credits into Bridgewater State University. Only grades of "B" and above are granted credit at BSU. If the student is transferring elective credit, the student's academic advisor and the MSW Program Coordinator must approve the elective.

Graduate Assistantships

Students must apply directly through the College of Graduate Studies. Information about Graduate Assistantships and Graduate Research Assistantships can be found at the website of the College of Graduate Studies (http://www.bridgew.edu/academics/colleges-departments/college-graduate-studies).

Criteria for Student Evaluation

Criteria for evaluation of students' academic performance start with participation in an orientation session. All course syllabi in our program provide a description of what is required to pass each course. It is the student's responsibility to remain current with his or her own progress in the classroom and the field. In other words, the professor is not responsible for seeking out a student concerning his or her status in the program. At the same time, students may make appointments with

professors, leave voice messages, or correspond by e-mail. The professor's obligation as a teacher is to be available on a regular, posted basis and to respond to messages in a timely manner. The student, however, is responsible for initiating discussion about progress in courses and fieldwork.

Academic Performance

The policies of the MSW program concerning academic performance are consistent with those of the University. Thus, policies pertaining to academic and field education academic performance can be found in the University Catalog, the University's Student Handbook and this MSW *Student Handbook and Field Manual*. Please refer to the University Catalog and Student Handbook for details on all academic policies.

MSW Academic and Professional Policies

It is the responsibility of the faculty teaching in the MSW program to grant academic credit only to students whose academic and professional performance meets or exceeds minimum acceptable standards. Academic standards apply to class attendance and performance, field education attendance and performance, as well as ethical and professional conduct. Please see the BSU Student Handbook for additional details governing academic policies.

Academic Standards

Academic standards apply to class attendance and performance, field education performance and attendance, as well as ethical and professional conduct. Students are expected to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* and BSU's general policies and procedures for academic standards.

1. Students whose GPA falls below a 3.0 will be notified by the College of Graduate Studies that they have been placed on academic probation and should discuss their academic standing with their advisor.
2. Students may repeat one course only while a student in the MSW program. The higher grade of the two courses will be applied to the students' grade point average.
3. The receipt of an "F" for a final course grade is grounds for dismissal from the MSW program.

4. Students must have a G.P.A. of 3.0 or higher to graduate. Students who do not complete their course work with a 3.0 or higher grade point average must meet with their faculty advisor to discuss additional requirements which must be approved in writing by the MSW Program Coordinator and are subject to the final approval of the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.
5. If students believe that a mistake was made in the original grade recorded for a course, they may petition instructors for a change of grade no later than the last day of final exams in the academic semester following the semester in which the grade was recorded. A change of grade will not be considered after this time.

Academic Problems in the Classroom

Students are advised to deal with concerns or problems as soon as they arise. When a student encounters academic difficulties, the student can seek consultation with the professor(s) in whose classes difficulties are met and often problems can be worked out. The student can gain clarity and direction from the professor. All faculty in the program hold regular office hours, have voice mail and use e-mail extensively. There are many avenues for pursuing and achieving discussion with faculty and students are strongly encouraged to use any or all of them to seek the assistance they need. Faculty members review students' progress each semester. Specifically, the following steps should be followed when a student has concerns or problems:

1. Resolution of student learning difficulties should first be initiated and negotiated between the student in question and the classroom instructor. The student should assume responsibility with the faculty member in initiating and negotiating a resolution of the learning difficulty.
2. If the student feels that resolution of the learning difficulty appears improbable, then the student should consult his or her faculty advisor. It is suggested that after a conference with the faculty advisor some form of a three-way meeting of the student, the classroom instructor and the faculty advisor take place for a speedy resolution of the learning difficulty.
3. It is the intent of these guidelines that most student learning difficulties can be resolved at the classroom level or in joint consultation with the faculty advisor.

4. If, after following these steps, the student feels that the resolution of the difficulty is unsatisfactory, the student should consult with the MSW Program Coordinator.
5. If the situation may result in the student not meeting the requirements for continuation in the program, the MSW Program Coordinator will refer the matter to the Academic Review Committee. When students experience difficulty meeting the academic standards an academic review may be scheduled with the student. The MSW academic review process is designed to provide a systematic approach for addressing student performance problems, including dismissal from the MSW program. This process serves as a mechanism to provide students the greatest possible opportunity to be successful in the program and to be successful as professional social workers. The academic review process can include convening of an Academic Review Committee (ARC) which is intended to serve in a problem-solving capacity in support of student success.

The Academic Review Committee will:

1. Review identified academic difficulties, and may also include those from the field practicum that cannot be resolved through other specified channels with the parties involved.
2. Review concerns about student conduct which are contrary to the guidelines for professional conduct for social workers as specified in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the BSU Code of Conduct.
3. Recommend a course of action to the MSW Program Coordinator resulting from committee deliberations with the student.

Academic Review Protocol

1. Any student who receives a failing grade for a course will be referred for an academic review.
2. Any faculty, staff, or field supervisor may recommend a review for any student who is perceived to be experiencing academic difficulty in the classroom or in the field*, or who appears to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of the *NASW Code of Ethics,* the MSW Behavioral Standards or the BSU Code of Conduct.
3. Written referrals identifying specific concerns are sent to the MSW Program Coordinator, who forwards the request to the Chair of the Committee. In order to obtain a fuller view of the student's

academic program status, the student's advisor will be asked to gather information from other instructors and relevant parties and to share this information in writing with the ARC Chair. During the academic year the Chair will convene the Committee, if possible, within two weeks after receiving the request for review. The Program Coordinator will send formal communication (email) notification of the academic review meeting to the student and to her or his faculty advisor. The notification will indicate the reason for the review, the parties being asked to attend and the date, time and location of the meeting. A copy of the notification will be placed in the student's folder.

4. Present at the meeting should be the student and the members of the Committee. Faculty and other parties who may have pertinent information to share regarding the specific concern may be invited by the Committee Chair to present that information. In cases where the field practicum is involved, the practicum supervisor may be invited to present information. These parties external to the deliberation will be present only to convey their relevant information.
5. The student scheduled for an academic review may bring a "support" person with them. The person of choice can be another student and he or she will serve as an advisor or advocate for the student during the academic review. Students who wish to bring a support person will need to inform the MSW Program Coordinator no less than 24 hours prior to the academic review.
6. The goal of the discussion is to arrive at a plan that will allow the student to improve her or his academic performance and to make reasonable progress toward her or his MSW degree.
7. After a discussion about the expressed concerns, the discussion with the student may address possible remedies, if needed. The Committee will excuse the student and meet in closed session to formulate a recommendation to the MSW Program Coordinator. The Committee Chair will write a report of findings with a recommendation to the MSW Program Coordinator within one week of the review.
8. The MSW Program Coordinator will notify the student, the Committee members and the person who initiated the referral of any resulting decisions within one week of the Committee recommendation.
9. The program may choose to modify this process if the seriousness of the concern so indicates.

*if concern(s) in field exist, the Field Director, MSW Program Coordinator, and Field Liaison if available (student advisors may also attend) and the student will meet for a Field Status Review (FSR). If the Advisor was not in attendance, s/he will be appraised of the issues as well as the meeting outcomes. The student will be notified of the FSR via email by the Field Director or her designee. Issues will be

summarized along with any and all recommendations or decisions and will be sent to the student via email. A hard copy will be placed in the student's file. Only in the case in which termination from the program is a possibility will an academic review be held.

Academic Review Structure

1. The Academic Review Committee shall consist of a minimum of two MSW faculty who have primary affiliation with the graduate program and additional faculty and staff as needed who will convene on an *ad hoc* basis. The MSW Program Coordinator will appoint the Committee chair.
2. In cases where the MSW Program Coordinator is directly involved in the concern of record, the chair of the School of Social Work will assume the responsibilities of the MSW Program Coordinator in that matter.
3. In cases where committee members are directly involved in the concern of record, they may be excused from participation and the MSW Program Coordinator will appoint an alternate faculty or staff person for this review.

   Only those persons who have been identified prior to the date of the proceedings to provide information may appear before the Academic Review Committee. These individuals must appear separately and are not to remain to hear information from other persons scheduled to appear. Exceptions can be made when the information to be provided by two or more persons is so closely related that separate appearances would seriously diminish the value of the information to be provided.

Policies and Procedures for Termination

Failure to adhere to the Bridgewater State University Code of Conduct, Behavioral Standards for Master of Social Work Students or the *NASW Code of Ethics* may result in dismissal from the MSW Program. The student will be notified of the recommendation for termination in writing. The recommendation for termination will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Students may review all aspects of the academic grading and disciplinary process, including policies and procedures governing dismissal for academic failure or behavior misconduct in detail in the University Catalog and in this *Student Handbook and Field Manual*. Students are expected to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* and BSU's Code of Conduct.

Failure to do so is grounds for dismissal. Students who are dismissed for academic or professional reasons have the right to a hearing before the Graduate Education Council for the purpose of presenting information in support of possible reinstatement.

Termination policies include the following:

1. The receipt of an "F" for a final grade in a course is grounds for dismissal from the MSW program.
2. Students who are dismissed for academic or professional reasons have the right to a hearing before the Graduate Education Council for the purpose of presenting information in support of possible reinstatement (the appeal policy may be found in the Handbook of the College of Graduate Studies).

Dismissals from graduate programs are difficult for all parties involved. The MSW Program academic review process and review by the Academic Review Committee is designed to provide a systematic approach for dealing with student performance problems, including dismissal from the MSW program. This process serves as a mechanism to provide students the greatest possible opportunity to be successful in the program and to be successful as professional social workers. The Committee is intended to serve in a collaborative problem-solving capacity.

Procedures Governing Reinstatement

If the student whose performance has resulted in termination believes extenuating circumstances exist that might justify reinstatement the student may request in writing that the MSW Program Coordinator consider these circumstances. Requests for reinstatement shall be made as soon as possible, but no later than *three classroom days* after the commencement of classes in the next semester following termination. Consideration by a Reinstatement Committee is at the discretion of the MSW Program Coordinator.

1. Within *three classroom days* of receipt of this request, the MSW Program Coordinator shall establish a Reinstatement Committee, which shall consist of a minimum of two MSW faculty members with primary affiliation with the graduate program and additional faculty and staff as needed. The instructor of record, in a course whose grade results in termination, will not be eligible to service on the Reinstatement Committee.

2. The Chair of the Committee will be appointed by the MSW Program Coordinator and will make every attempt to convene the Reinstatement Committee within a week of notification. The Committee will review the materials before it and may ask the student and/or others to appear before it at its discretion.
3. A student may request to appear before the Committee and may bring a "support" person with them. The person of choice can be another student and he or she will serve as an advisor or advocate for the student. Students who wished to bring a support person will need to inform the MSW Program Coordinator no less than 24 hours prior to the committee meeting.
4. Documentation of request: The student shall submit in writing to the Reinstatement Committee his or her reasons to believe satisfactory performance can be achieved upon reinstatement and may submit in writing any relevant supporting data to help elucidate his/her belief that reinstatement is merited.
5. Additional documentation: The Committee may also request written data, opinions, recommendations and/or evaluations from appropriate sources that may assist it in reaching a decision.
6. The Committee shall deliberate and reach a decision in private and transmit its advisory written recommendations to the Coordinator promptly. The MSW Program Coordinator shall consider the committee's recommendation and notify the student and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies of his decision within *one week* of receipt of the committee's report.
7. A graduate student shall be terminated following reinstatement if he or she receives any grade below "B" in class or "F" in fieldwork.

Students who do not request reinstatement within the time limits outlined above or who are not reinstated by the MSW Program Coordinator following termination and who subsequently wish to be considered for readmission following termination, must follow regular procedures for admission to the program, but may not be readmitted for at least one year. If students wish to appeal the Program's recommendation, they may submit a written appeal to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will submit graduate student petitions to the Graduate Education Council for review. The Graduate Education Council consists of representatives from the University's graduate faculty, administrators and graduate student body.

Grade Appeals

The BSU Student Handbook states that if students believe that a mistake was made in the original grade recorded for a course, they may petition instructors for a change of grade no later than the last day of final exams in the academic semester following that in which the grade was recorded. A change of grade will not be considered after this time.

Medical, Psychiatric and Eating Disorders Policy

BSU strongly urges students with severe health problems to seek help. A student may be required to seek professional help if physical or psychological health problems place that student's life in potential danger; impairs her or his ability to maintain an academic program; or when his or her behavior is a serious disruption to others. If a student does not agree to participate in medical or psychological treatment, his or her ability to continue in all University programs will be jeopardized. Please see the BSU Student Handbook for greater detail.

In addition to the BSU MSW program and NASW codes of conduct and ethical behaviors, the BSU code of conduct can be found at: http://handbook.bridgew.edu/docs/BSU_Student_Code_of_Conduct_2016_2017.pdf. Additionally, in March, 2015, BSU, along with Fitchburg State University, Framingham State University, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Salem State University, Westfield State University, and Worcester State University implemented the EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, DIVERSITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN which among other things, provides policies for discrimination, discriminatory harassment and retaliation as well as for sexual violence, including, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. Finally, the universities have developed sexual violence policies which along with the relevant policy responses, include definitions for sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic and dating violence, stalking, and retaliation. These policies can be found at: http://www.bridgew.edu/sites/default/files/Sexual%20Violence%20Policy%20for%20BSU%202015%203%204.pdf.

Neither the university nor the MSW program supports discrimination, sexual violence, and / or harassment in way shape or form. If you think that you may have experienced a situation such as described in the above policies, please consider speaking with someone you trust. Please be aware that it is possible that the responsible faculty member, Director, Chair, or Coordinator or faculty member to whom the student revealed a sexually traumatic event may have to report the information you share. For greater detail, please see the policy at this link.

Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities may request reasonable accommodations for their classes and/or field placement through the Disability Resource Office (https://my.bridgew.edu/departments/DRO/SitePages/Home.aspx) where they register for disability verification and determination of reasonable academic accommodations. The Disability Resource Office is located in the Academic Achievement Center, which is located on the lower level of Maxwell Library. The office can be contacted by phone at 508-531-1294 or TTY: 508-531-6113. Students who may need an accommodation for their field placement experience should identify this need on the *Application for Placement* and with the Administrator of Field Education so that necessary arrangements can be facilitated in a timely fashion (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI). Students are encouraged to take charge of how they present their disability to the prospective placement agency, especially if accommodations are required. Faculty members are available to discuss appropriate accommodations that students may require. Requests for academic accommodations should be made during the 'add/drop' period, unless there are unusual circumstances, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students seeking accommodations for details, please refer to the University Catalog.

SECTION IV: FIELD EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Introduction to Field Education

Field education is an important part of the MSW program. Students are provided opportunities to integrate classroom knowledge; to practice social work in different settings and to build relationships within the profession. The experience is closely monitored/supported by professional staff, as well as members of the agencies participating in field instruction.

The primary purpose of field education is to provide students with a setting outside the classroom where they can develop the competencies necessary to provide professional social services to a range of clients and communities in a theory informed, ethical manner. The field education experience is intended to complement MSW program goals and to result in the demonstrated competencies required to practice professional social work.

Field Education Objectives

Foundation Year Primary Objective:

- Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice with the goals of professional development, service to clients and accountability to the agency.

Supporting Objectives:

- Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work.
- Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles and act accordingly.
- Practice without discrimination, with affirmation and with respect, knowledge and skills related to clients' age, class, race, culture, (dis)ability, ethnicity, family structure, sex, gender, gender identity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation and income.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the forms and mechanisms of prejudice, oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
- Apply the knowledge and skills of a strengths-based generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.

- Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the lifespan and the development and behavior of families, groups and communities, in interaction with one another and in the context of the wider community.
- Engage productively with "at risk" clients, understanding the principles of trauma and psychosocial stress.
- Assess human needs, analyze, formulate and influence social policies and work within political institutions with the aim of strengthening individuals, families and communities.
- Use assessment and communication skills differently across client populations, colleagues and communities.
- Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek organizational change necessary to promote effectiveness, positive client and colleague relationships and social justice.

The first year of field education is meant to provide a foundation in generalist social work practice. Generalist social work practice refers to the knowledge base, professional values and practice skills which enable the social work practitioner to intervene with various size systems (individuals, groups, organizations and communities) at whatever level is most efficient to bring about the desired social change.

The generalist social worker is one who is able to assess, within the framework and ethical guidelines prescribed by the *NASW Code of Ethics* and based on that assessment, identify and intervene at whatever systemic level is most efficient and effective. Areas for change that are identified by the worker may require intervention with more than one system and the worker may play several roles (e.g. facilitator, advocate, broker, enabler, counselor, educator, coordinator, activist, mediator, etc.) in an effort to bring about the desired change. A basic principle of generalist practice is that the knowledge and skills necessary to create positive change are transferable from one setting to another. Upon completion of the foundation year, placement students will demonstrate the following competencies:

- Recognize the influence and support that administrative process and policy have on the delivery of services.
- Understand agency staff functions, roles and services.
- Understand the broad social issues facing the agency and the community, showing sensitivity and cultural competence.
- Apply knowledge and skills with competence in generalist social work practices across a range of practice settings and with client systems of various sizes.
- Provide a strengths-based perspective, e.g. taking account of a person's or group's strength in coping and adapting while formulating either an assessment or an intervention.
- Demonstrate an understanding of what is appropriate and what is not appropriate to share with those outside the agency, as well as what is helpful/not helpful to share with clients.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the biopsychosocial approach to assessment.
- Engage clients and identify problems or concerns accurately.
- Clarify purpose and role, establish a mutual contract as appropriate and involve the client in evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention(s).
- Effectively use supervision and consultation.
- Practice in a manner congruent with the *NASW Code of Ethics* that validates and enhances competencies of diverse clients and communities.
- Develop/increase self-awareness by exploring professional and personal biases (e.g., in relation to ethnicity, culture, class, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious differences, etc.)

In the specialized year of field education, students are expected to perform on a level that gives evidence of their conceptual growth, enhanced and additional skills and knowledge as well as their increasing understanding of practice interventions. Students focus their interventions through the lenses of resiliency theory, strengths-based practice models and a biopsychosocial, culturally competent understanding of clients and client systems. Students' ability to select appropriate strengths-based interventions and to assess their efficacy is a key indicator of the specialized students' beginning mastery of the strengths-based bio-psycho-social approach to social work practice. Integrated with a strength-based approach, the specialized student is expected to understand

differential diagnosis and treatment strategies with clients and systems. Using supervision, they are expected to have the competency to work effectively with a variety of complex client situations, including but not limited to those who are traumatized, mentally ill and severely distressed.

Specialization Year Primary Objective:

- Under professional supervision, demonstrate an ethically-anchored, biopsychosocial, strengths-based practice designed to achieve the goals of client communities, families and individuals, while promoting social and economic justice.

Secondary Objectives:

- Evaluate, select and implement culturally competent theories and practices, founded on social work values and ethics that incorporate strengths-based, biopsychosocial approach to social work practice that enhances resilience in diverse communities, families and individuals.
- Form a treatment strategy that integrates risk assessment and encompasses a thorough understanding of client's challenges and resources.
- Base the selection of interventions on those theories that enrich the biological, social, cultural, psychological and spiritual dimensions of communities, families and individuals across their lifespan. .
- Utilize and apply research findings in the selection and evaluation of clinical and policy practices as well as programs designed to strengthen the functioning of communities, families and individuals.
- Employ financial, organizational, administrative and planning processes in order to enhance students' ability to identify and implement public organizational policies and procedures that support the resilience of communities, families and individuals.

Upon completion of the Specialization year placement, students will demonstrate the following competencies:

- Awareness of how a strengths-based, biopsychosocial model of practice honors difference and diversity.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how societal structures and oppressive behaviors can undermine the natural resilience of communities, families and individuals.

- Demonstrate an understanding of how a strengths-based, biopsychosocial model affirms the basic dignity, resourcefulness, resilience and adaptability of people and systems, as well as their capacities for transformational growth and change.
- Understand the intra-psychic, biological and interpersonal underpinnings to human behavior and be able to apply knowledge and skills to interventions with at risk populations.
- Under professional supervision, demonstrate ethically anchored, biopsychosocial, strengths-based practice designed to achieve the goals of client communities, families and individuals while promoting social and economic justice.
- Enhance the resilience of communities, families and individuals through the skillful use of assessment, intervention and advocacy skills in order to maximize client access to resources.
- Respect the unique life experiences of people they serve and recognize the creative and supportive potential of heterogeneous communities.
- Demonstrate adherence to ethical social work practice as set forth by the *NASW Code of Ethics* for professional conduct with clients, colleagues and communities.

Definition of Terms

Specialization Year: Following successful completion of the foundation level curriculum, the Specialization year has a specialized curriculum and a field education experience that focuses advanced level clinically informed practice areas of individuals, families, groups and community.

Agency Agreement: A formal letter of agreement between the Field Education Agency and the Program specifying the terms of the placement and the responsibilities of each party (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual,* Section VI*).*

Administrator of Field Education: The Administrator of Field Education is responsible for the management of the field education component of the MSW program. This includes selection of agencies, selection and training of field supervisors, management of the placement process, preparation of the Field Manual, all field related forms (i.e. learning agreement and evaluation

instruments). S/he is the program's representative to the New England Consortium of Field Educators (NECON) and other community agencies and field events. In addition, there are two Field Education Specialists, who are knowledgeable about placements and assist with matching students and a Field Administrative Assistant who supports all administrative functions of the Field Office.

CSWE: The Council on Social Work Education is the national professional organization of the faculties of colleges and universities which offer degree programs in social work. CSWE sets the academic standards for all programs at the bachelor and master levels and accredits those programs. The CSWE website, http://www.cswe.org, is an excellent resource for social work students and field supervisors.

Field Education Practicum: A term used to describe the field placement often used synonymously with the terms "field education" and "internship". The field education practicum is a graduate level course designed to give students supervised practical application of previously or concomitantly studied theory. A learning agreement, written by the student and approved by the field liaison and field supervisor assures an educational focus and activities that address the practice behaviors of the MSW program.

Field Evaluation: This becomes a major part of the assessment of the student's professional competency and is completed twice per year by the field supervisor and discussed with the student and his or her field liaison. A copy is kept in the student's permanent file in the School of Social Work and the student should also keep a copy in her or his portfolio (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI).

Field Liaison: A faculty or staff member who serves as the link between the student, the agency and the social work program. This may involve clarification of expectations, explanation of roles and maintenance of educational focus of field education activities, through use of the learning agreement as well as a minimum of two on-site visits in the agency of the placement. The faculty field liaison is responsible for assigning the final field grade for fall semester and spring semester and facilitates the Field Seminar.

Field Supervisor: An agency-based practitioner who meets CSWE standards and supervises and evaluates the social work student in their field placement. CSWE requires field supervisors to be graduates of an accredited MSW program. In addition, a minimum of two years of professional, post-graduate experience and a stated interest in social work education is required.

Field Seminar: A seminar-structured course taken concurrently with the field experience that provides for the integration of social work theory with actual social work practice through readings, discussions, journaling and written assignments. The field seminar is a required part of the curriculum and is listed as SCWK 590, SCWK 591 at the foundation level and SCWK 592 and SCWK 593 at the specialized level.

Journal: There are journal assignments required for students in both foundation and specialized levels of field education. The focus of each assignment is described on the syllabus. The journals are the student's reflections, thoughts and feelings in summary form about a particular aspect of their internship. They are submitted to the field liaison for feedback and should be written and edited clearly, though they are read primarily for the quality of reflection.

Learning Agreement: A written contract between the student and the field placement agency that specifies what the student plans to learn and the activities or tasks the student will perform to achieve his or her learning objectives. The learning agreement is developed in the first weeks of placement, is reviewed regularly and revised at least once at the start of the second semester. It becomes the compass for the students' learning and reflects progressive goals and objectives (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI).

Process Recording: The process recording is a required verbatim account of the verbal and non-verbal communication between the client and the social work student. It includes content about the students' feelings and thoughts regarding the interaction with the client and the supervisor's

comments and suggestions. **One process recording per week (at a minimum) is required and will be reviewed regularly by the field supervisor and as requested by the field liaison**.

Portfolio: This is a binder where the student keeps all relevant materials related to the field placement and field seminar material. It should hold, at minimum, weekly process recordings, journals assignments, time sheets and a biopsychosocial assessment completed by the end of the year. It is the student's responsibility to have the materials available for review by the field liaison.

NASW: National Association of Social Workers is the professional group that represents social work standards of ethics and practices and organizes social workers in a national organization. NASW is organized according to state Chapters. Chapters are organized by several active committees representing a range of social work activities and interests. NASW also provides certain member benefits, including access to professional liability insurance, including coverage for students. The NASW website, http://www.naswdc.org/, provides a range of information and services of the organization.

Time sheet: A monthly account of internship hours should be compiled at least monthly, signed by the supervisor and be available at or before the field site visit. These are submitted monthly to the field liaison and filed in the student's permanent record (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I know when field applications, orientations and meetings are held?

All specific information regarding deadlines, orientations, and interviewing schedules are communicated via the students' BSU email. Check it often and regularly.

2. How many hours are spent in field placement?

Specialization year students spend a minimum of 16 hours per week in placement. Students are required to complete a minimum of 464 placement hours in their foundation year. It is not unusual for students to complete more placement hours than the minimum required.

Specialization year students spend a minimum of 20 hours per week in placement. Students are required to complete a minimum of 600 placement hours in the specialization year. It is not unusual for students to complete more placement hours than the minimum required. Some placement agencies, such as hospitals, require a minimum of 24 hours per week. It is important that the student understand and commit to this additional requirement prior to interviewing.

3. Can I complete an internship that is evenings and weekends?

It is expected that all students are prepared to complete field hours during weekdays and usual work hours. This range is typically Monday-Friday, 8-6 pm, depending on agency internship hours.

4. Can I interview at several agencies before selecting my placement?

The field education staff will work with you to arrange an interview at an agency that meets your learning needs. If that interview goes well and both you and the field supervisor think it is a good fit, the placement will be confirmed. If either party has reservations, another interview will be arranged. It is not possible to interview at multiple agencies concurrently given the demands of supervisor's time and the importance of securing a placement within a reasonable amount of time.

5. Should I reach out to agencies and attempt to identify my own internship site?

No. Agencies must first be approved by the Administrator of Field Education and commit to an agreement prior to a student's placement. If you have suggested agencies other than those already in partnerships with the School of Social Work, please share this information with the field staff.

6. What types of agencies might be possible field placement sites?

There are typically field placements available in agencies that specialize in youth and families, child welfare, schools, health and mental health, aging, forensics, criminal justice and addictions related work. Within these areas, there are government agencies, private organizations, and community based centers that provide a vast range of training opportunities. The agencies in partnership with the school may change from year to year, but there are always ample agencies involved in training BSU social work students.

7. What if I am only interested in one type of placement?

Since social work is a broad field with many opportunities, you are urged to keep an open mind about the competencies you will need to start your career and the challenges that might serve to strengthen your abilities. Every field placement is designed to help you develop the skills and confidence you will need to specialize as you continue to grow in the field. This will be discussed in your placement interview.

8. Can I modify my schedule in order to travel or attend family events?

The field internship is designed to be completed according to the schedule provided, commencing in September and ending in May with approximately three weeks of vacation, (two weeks during the University's Winter Break and one week for Spring Break). [See Holiday Policy, page 89.]

Changes in schedules can be disruptive to agencies and to clients. It is the expectation of the MSW program that once students commit to a placement schedule with their supervisor, they will abide by that schedule. In rare cases where students need to modify their field placement schedule in a significant way, the student will need to fill out a Request for Modification of Field Internship

Schedule form. [See Section VI for form.]

The request for any modification must first be approved by the agency supervisor before any plans are finalized. The supervisor must protect the consistency of services to clients and may choose to maintain the contract as stated. If the supervisor approves the request, it should then be forwarded by the student to their Faculty Field Liaison and the Administrator for Field Education, for their review and consideration of the request. The Faculty Field Liaison and the Administrator for Field Education, in consultation with the agency supervisor, may approve or deny the modification of schedule request.

9. Are there any paid field placements or stipends available?

Social work agencies rarely pay stipends and there are no paid placements. Small stipends are sometimes offered for special skills, or through a funding opportunity to train within a specialization.

10. How far will I have to travel to get to my placement?

Every effort will be made to plan a reasonable commute. However, students should allow up to one hour of commuting time to the agency.

11. How much responsibility will I be given?

The amount of work assigned to students in field placement varies with the prior experience and maturity level of the student. In most agencies, it takes time to build a caseload. In addition to managing their own caseload, students may assist with intakes; participate in case conferences and staff meetings accompany other staff on home visits or to community meetings. Each internship is developed with the goal of providing increasing opportunities for experience and autonomy.

12. What are the requirements for supervision?

A field supervisor should be accessible within the agency where you are placed and should establish a regular time each week to meet with you. Supervisory meetings are expected to be weekly for at least one full hour. An additional one half hour can be allotted to teaching conferences, staff meetings,

team meetings or other forums that provide learning and opportunity for discussion with the supervisor. It is important to be prepared for supervision with focused topics of discussion and written work as requested by supervisor. Proper use of supervision includes a willingness to engage in professional conversation and to convey an openness to evaluative feed-back.

13. What should I do if things are not going well in my field placement?

Most issues of concern can be addressed and resolved without the need to disrupt a placement, but it is important to communicate concerns in a productive manner. Too little work early in the experience is a common issue that typically improves with time. Too much responsibility is also an issue of concern that can be addressed. For a new field placement to occur, a serious and uncorrectable issue(s) that compromises the student's ability to learn and gain competence must exist. The termination of a supervisor and an agency unable to provide a substitute, or funding losses that result in the closing of an agency are other examples of reasons that may lead to a placement disruption.

The MSW program respects the right of students to raise and pursue issues regarding their field education placement. The following process should be followed:

1) Concerns should first be brought to the attention of the field supervisor and faculty field liaison for appropriate resolution. The first step in most cases involves the field supervisor or field liaison coaching the student on possible ways to resolve the problem him/herself. The MSW program believes that the process of problem solving on one's own behalf can be an important part of professional development.
2) The field liaison can intervene to support a resolution by visiting earlier than planned, or having a phone conversation with the supervisor if the student's attempts are not successful.
3) If the situation persists, the student, field supervisor, field liaison and/or Administrator of Field Education can initiate a joint meeting to further assess and enact problem resolution strategies.
4) Field placements are made after a thoughtful pre-placement process that includes active student and agency participation (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI). Field placements, once confirmed, are not disrupted lightly. However, if the field education staff,

faculty field liaison and agency representative/supervisor reach the conclusion that a placement should be discontinued, an assessment will be made jointly by the Administrator of Field Education, faculty field liaison and, if necessary, faculty advisor about whether a student should be reassigned to another field supervisor in the same agency or to another agency setting.

5) If a new placement is deemed the most appropriate course following the above steps, it is the responsibility of the field office to identify a new placement.

14. Can I end my internship early if all my hours have been completed?

No, the internship is expected to span the stated number of weeks and follow the field calendar.

Field Orientation

New Full-time Students

When the newly admitted full-time student confirms intent to enroll, the student is provided with an *Application for Foundation Year Field Placement* (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual, Section VI)*. Students complete the *Application for Foundation Year Field Placement* and submit it to the Administrator of Field Education. An in-person interview is scheduled shortly after.

Part-time Students entering Foundation Year Placement

Part-time students enter field in their second year. Late in the Fall Semester of the first year, the Field Education office contacts students with information regarding planning for field placement. Students are required to attend a field education orientation session. They are directed to complete the *Application for Foundation Year Field Placement,* (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI) and to schedule an appointment with the Administrator of Field Education. The designated staff person must be in receipt of the student's *Application for Field Placement* and a current professional résumé prior to the time of interview.

Advanced Standing Students

Students admitted to the Advanced Standing Program will be placed at the advanced year level in the second year of their program. Students in this category will be contacted in late fall of the first year and will be asked to complete an *Application for Specialization Year Field Placement* (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI). Students are also notified of a general group orientation geared toward preparing them to seek the best educational match for field placement and for interviewing. Students complete the *Application for Specialization Field Placement* and submit it to the Administrator of Field Education with a current professional résumé. Students schedule an individual interview with the Administrator of Field Education, or a designated staff person.

Specialty Year Students

The specialty year placement allows for additional time planning for their field education experience. Late in the fall semester, the Administrator of Field Education contacts students with information regarding planning for field placement. An orientation is planned for December. They are directed to complete the *Application for Specialization Year Placement* and to schedule an appointment with the Administrator of Field Education in January. The Administrator of Field Education must be in receipt of the student's *Application for Specialization Year Field Placement* and a current professional résumé prior to the time of the interview.

Identification of Field Education Site

Following orientation and individual interviews, the field staff identifies one setting for potential placement. Efforts are made to place students in an area of interest, however, due to a variety of variables (agency requests, hours of availability, geography, etc.) this may not be possible. The foundation year practicum is a generalist practice placement which will provide each student, regardless of setting/population, with basic foundation skills that are transferable from one setting to another. Students are notified (via email and/or phone consultation) of the selected location(s). A résumé is sent to the potential agency with a cover letter from the field education office introducing him or her as a student in the MSW program who is interested in being considered for a potential field placement. The student is then responsible for scheduling interview(s) with the identified field

placement site(s). Following the interview, a final placement decision is made by the mutual consent of field supervisor, student and the Administrator of Field Education. Placement is considered finalized when the field supervisor receives the *Confirmation of Placement Form* (see Section VI for forms).

Preparing for the Agency Interview

Placements require a preliminary interview and occasionally written references. The student is responsible for setting up the initial interview. If the student calls the contact person and cannot reach him or her, the student finds out when that person will be available and calls back at that time. Students should also leave their names, a return number and the best times to be reached by the contact person. Students should also mention that they are enrolled in the MSW program at BSU.

The student and the agency contact person set up a date and time for the interview. Placement interviews should be handled like job interviews, which require appropriate professional attire. It is also recommended that students review the phone message they have recorded on cell phones and answering machines and consider, if necessary, revising it to accommodate professional communications.

The MSW program provides students' résumés to the agency. However, **students should take additional copies of their résumés to the interview**. Students should also review the *Student Handbook and Field Manual* prior to their interview.

Suggested Questions to Ask During the Field Placement Interview

1. What is the mission of the agency?
2. How can I, as an intern, make a positive contribution?
3. Describe a typical day at this agency.
4. Is there an opportunity for individual, family, group intervention and/or community outreach?
5. Does this agency have a particular orientation or philosophy that you feel students should know?
6. How will my orientation to this agency occur?
7. Who will be my direct supervisor?
8. What is the format of supervision?
9. How are students and supervisor expected to prepare for Supervision?
10. What is the frequency and type of supervision?

11. What is your supervisory style?
12. What qualities are good matches for a successful internship at this agency?
13. In addition to scheduled supervision times, are there other ways for me to have access to my supervisor? (Phone, e-mail, informal consults, lunch, etc.)
14. Whom should I contact in case of an emergency?
15. Are there other people at the agency who can be resources for me during my fieldwork?
16. Will there be additional opportunities for me to meet my particular educational goals?
17. May I attend staff in-service activities, workshops, conferences or quest speakers that directly relate to my learning goals?
18. If I feel my educational needs are not being met, or I am uncomfortable by something related to the internship, would you be willing to sit down with me to address my concern?

Policy for Students Interviewing with Potential Field Placements

Occasionally, a student is not accepted for placement after the initial interview because the agency does not think that a good match exists between the agency and the student in terms of student and/or agency needs. Other reasons which may impact whether a student receives a certain placement may include but are not limited to: arriving late for an interview or not showing up at all; disinterest in the type of work done at the agency; unprofessional behavior, dress or language during the interview; or unsuitable affect during the interview.

If after interviewing at two potential placement sites, a student is refused placement at both placement sites for reasons of perceived inappropriateness, the student will <u>not</u> be reassigned to another field setting until a meeting occurs between the student and the Administrator of Field Education. The student's field liaison and/or faculty advisor may be asked to attend the meeting between student and Administrator of Field Education.

The purpose of the meeting will be to assess the student's strengths and resources, to address the problematic behaviors and assist the student in correcting them. The goal of the meeting with the Administrator of Field Education includes the establishment of deadlines by which the student can secure another placement interview and begin a field placement for the semester. However, if the

third interview is also unsuccessful, the student will be referred to the MSW Program Coordinator. The MSW Program Coordinator may bring the matter to the Academic Review Committee, which reviews students in academic difficulty, or may choose to confer with other relevant individuals (i.e. field liaison, faculty advisor, Administrator of Field Education) before making a recommendation regarding the student's field status. If a student is not placed by mid-term, the student may need to withdraw from the field seminar for that semester. In that field and practice classes are to be taken concurrently, the MSW Program Coordinator will review the student's academic status and will decide whether changes will need to be made in terms of their progress through the program.

Placement in Place of Employment

Only students who have been employed at an approved agency for one year at the time of field application can submit a proposal. Students considering placement in their place of employment must meet with the assigned BSU Field Education staff to discuss learning needs and objectives and the MSW program objectives. The challenges of a placement in one's place of employment are reviewed and other available options are discussed. Once it is determined that a placement in a student's place of employment is the best option for the student, the student completes a detailed written proposal of the plan for their placement and submits it to the Administrator of Field Education. The proposal must be completed by the student and the agency and approved by the Administrator of Field Education. Students in the part-time program must submit proposals. Newly admitted students must submit proposals. The written proposal must include the following:

- A description of the student's current job, including name of immediate supervisor and location of the student's current place of employment.
- A detailed description of the proposed placement and the learning objectives.
- A description of the perceived differences in the student's current job and the proposed placement.
- The name, degree and license level of the proposed field supervisor.
- The specific days and hours the student plans to work in the field as an intern and the days and hours the student plans to work in their place of employment as an employee.

- A letter from the student's employer (immediate supervisor and director of the agency) agreeing to this placement proposal. The supervisor/director will agree to protect the student's placement hours and state a plan for how the student's current job duties will be covered during their placement.

The proposed field education site must meet the following minimal conditions:

1. The agency employs full-time social work staff and is able to provide the student with fieldwork hours in a different department with a different caseload.
2. An individual with an MSW and at least two years post-MSW experience must be available as field supervisor, subject to the approval of the MSW program. The field supervisor may not have supervised the student as an employee in the past.
3. The proposed field instruction assignment must differ significantly from the student's previous employment or field education experiences in the agency.
4. The proposed field instruction assignment must meet curriculum requirements (i.e. generalist practice opportunities).

   Students may request that both of their field placements occur in their place of employment, though each placement will need to meet the conditions outlined above.

Agency Requirements

CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information)

Most agencies require background (CORI) checks on students. Agencies that serve children and adolescents require CORI checks on employees and students. Information obtained in a CORI check includes registered home address, driving status, criminal history, (including drug possession arrests and driving under the influence) and any restraining orders held against the student. Students who have a criminal conviction need to be aware that this may affect acceptance for placement and/or future ability to become licensed in some states. It is useful to inform the field staff working with you of any CORI issues, so that you can problem solve prior to an interview. If an agency requests, but does not process CORI requests for prospective interns, it becomes the student's responsibility to request the information for the MA Criminal History Board. In this case, the fee of $25.00 is paid by the student.

Liability Insurance

Liability insurance is provided by BSU for all students in approved field sites and for the specific time frame in which the students is considered a social work intern with the approval and knowledge of the University. The student can also buy additional insurance through the NASW.

Policy on Transportation

The student is responsible for travel expenses to and from the field site. Some agencies are able to reimburse for mileage for home visits, meetings and other related activities. Whether or not reimbursement is possible is a question to ask prior to accepting the placement. Driving clients in private autos or agency vehicles is prohibited for social work students. Students are able to accompany and assist with client needs in vehicles driven by agency staff. It is expected that students conduct home visits as requested by the agency and use either private auto or public transportation to do so.

Safety Policy

1. It is important to ask the agency supervisor about the safety policy in the agency and, to become fully acquainted with the policy and practice of the agency.
2. Students are not allowed to participate in physical restraints of clients, but can participate in training.
3. Students should follow the agency protocol when making home visits, or conduct sessions in the office. If the student feels uncomfortable or concerned about their own safety, they should develop an emergency plan with the supervisor.
4. In addition to agency policies, students are urged to be vigilant and value their own concerns about safety. Having a cell phone, carrying minimal personal valuables and being aware of one's surroundings at all times are basic and essential to safe practice.
5. Any concerns that the student has which have not been addressed by the supervisor should be raised with the Field Liaison.
6. If the student is involved in an incident that results in injury to anyone involved, or is involved in an incident where the police or other law enforcement become involved, the following steps should be taken:

- Contact the Field Liaison or Administrator of Field immediately.
- Within the next twenty-four hours complete an Incident Report form (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI) and return it to the Field Liaison, or Administrator of Field Education.

Agency and Field Supervisor Information

Selection of Agencies and Field Supervisors

The selection of agencies for field education is an important part of the MSW program. It is the responsibility of the Administrator of Field Education to determine an agency's suitability for student training and to work closely with interested agencies in this process.

Potential field education sites may be identified in a number of ways. Agencies may request students, students and/or faculty may suggest an agency faculty member, as may alumnae/i or community

representatives. An agency assessment is conducted by the Administrator of Field Education or a field specialist. The assessment covers such topics as: the function and service of the agency, possible student assignments and availability of resources for the student, level of practice competence and special requirements for student placement. The agency is also provided information pertaining to curriculum, field requirements and expectations regarding assignments, supervision and evaluation. The following general criteria are used in the selection of agencies:

1. The agency's philosophy, goals, programs and policies are compatible with professional social work standards.
2. The agency is in good standing in the community.
3. The agency is large enough to maintain and develop its basic program without reliance on students.
4. The agency's training program must be compatible with the MSW program's educational objectives.
5. There should be a correlation between the agency and the program's practice perspective so as to provide an integrated class-field curriculum and a consistent learning experience for the student.
6. The agency is committed to the field instruction program, its goals and objectives and due process protection of the student.
7. The agency will support staff time availability for effective supervision and professional learning, including participation in the MSW program's orientation, field instruction trainings and liaison visits. It is expected that students receive at least one full hour of weekly supervision.
8. The agency should provide a range of assignments on an ongoing basis that are appropriate to the student's educational needs. The student workload should reflect opportunity for involvement in varying modalities of service as well as exposure to diverse populations.
9. The agency must attempt to provide the necessary space and facilities, including privacy for interviewing, desk and the technology necessary to successfully meet expectations.

The following criteria are used in the selection of field supervisors:

1. Field supervisors must hold an MSW degree from an accredited social work program and demonstrated expertise in the work to be supervised.

2. Field supervisors who are supervising specialization year students must be licensed at the LICSW level.
3. Field supervisors must be committed to the teaching function of social work education.
4. Field supervisors must have an interest in and time to fulfill, the responsibility of teaching social work students.
5. Field supervisors who have not previously supervised should make every effort to attend a Seminar in Field Supervision "SIFI" training. SIFI trainings are offered at most schools of social work including BSU.

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

Administrator of Field Education

Responsibilities:

1. Establish criteria for the selection of qualified field agencies and supervisors.
2. Develop policies, procedures and objectives of the field program for review.
3. Administer the social work field education program.
4. Evaluate and assess the field education program and recommend policy changes to the graduate committee.
5. Coordinate the development of field placements for graduate students and evaluate the quality of those programs.
6. Coordinate the placement process for graduate students.
7. Communicate information to students about potential placement agencies.
8. Plan, schedule and conduct fall field supervisor orientation sessions.
9. Develop a continuing program of education for field supervisors to develop the quality of field teaching and strengthen the performance of field supervisors as educators and practitioners.
10. Maintain ongoing communications with social work practitioners concerning field policies, procedures, requirements and standards and issues affecting field education.
11. Coordinate the process for review and revision of the Field Manual and all forms.
12. Work with student issues or concerns as appropriate and as indicated in this manual.

13. Delegate tasks to other members of the field staff.

Field Liaison

1. Orient field supervisors to the MSW program's curriculum and participate in orientation workshops.
2. Help field supervisors plan individualized learning experiences for students in accordance with the objectives of field.
3. Facilitate concurrent field seminar groups on campus for students in field.
4. Meet with the field supervisor and the student in three-way conferences at least once during the semester in which the student is in placement (e.g. during the first semester conference and final evaluation conference).
5. Be available as a resource person for the student; consult with students on field experience and progress toward achieving field education objectives.
6. Consult with field supervisors on field experience and progress toward goals.
7. Consult with the students and their field supervisors regarding field-related issues as they arise.
8. Assist students with difficulties in learning and mobilize appropriate resources on behalf of students and meet individually once per semester.
9. Review the student's portfolio, including process recordings, learning contracts and other materials regularly and prior to a field visit.
10. Assign students' grades in collaboration with the agency field supervisor.
11. Assess the quality of field instruction and opportunities provided each student and make recommendations to the Administrator of Field Education regarding continuing participation in the Program.
12. Attend meetings related to the position of field liaison in order to share positive experiences and concerns, develop strategies and discuss issues related to the fulfillment of field education goals.

Field Supervisor

1. Attend program orientation sessions held by field faculty and staff at the beginning of the academic year.

2. Attend seminars, workshops and other special activities arranged by the Administrator of Field Education.
3. Select appropriate assignments and, with the student, create a learning education agreement that reflects the learning objectives, opportunities and expectations; review a minimum of one process recording every week.
4. Provide the student with an orientation to agency and job/tasks.
5. Provide at least one full hour of weekly supervision for Specialization year students in order to provide feedback and act as an educator and role model. Up to 30 minutes of supervision time required per week can be covered through group supervision, clinical meetings and teaching case conferences.
6. Provide on-going supervision and evaluations of students throughout the placement.
7. Participate in evaluation meetings with the student and field liaison throughout the field placement, usually two per academic year.
8. Complete and submit requested materials to the MSW program, (e.g., field supervisor form, student evaluations, etc.).
9. Notify the faculty field liaison of any problems or questions as soon as they become evident.
10. Plan for any absences as diligently as possible, including the assignment of an alternate supervisor for the student.
11. Provide a training environment that adheres to the NASW Code of Ethics and is responsive to training needs of students.

Student

All students who enter the MSW program are adult learners who are expected to take an active role in planning and implementing their learning experiences in the field practicum. The following responsibilities, though not exhaustive, are basic for carrying out active participation in learning:

1. Follow established procedures for selection of a placement agency.
2. Familiarize his or herself with and abide by agency policies and regulations as well as with those of BSU and the MSW program.

3. Perform in a responsible, professional manner, keeping commitments to the agency, to the agency field supervisor, to clients and to the field liaison.
4. Take the initiative in seeking advice and consultation or help from the agency field supervisor or the field liaison.
5. Use the relationship with the field supervisor in the advancement of knowledge, therapeutic skills and techniques and self-awareness.
6. Communicate educational needs and interests to the field supervisor; this includes communicating that they have too much or not enough work, or are interested in learning about and being involved in other services which their field placement offers.
7. Discuss areas of disagreement, dissatisfaction, or confusion in respect to any part of the field learning experience with the field supervisor and/or field liaison.
8. Keep appointed conference times with the field supervisor and prepare for such conferences by adhering to recording deadlines and formulate questions relating to assignments. The student who cannot keep the designated time will advise the field supervisor accordingly and take the initiative to discuss an alternative conference time.
9. Develop a learning agreement that specifies learning goals and assigned tasks designed to accomplish those goals.
10. Complete a minimum of one process recording per week. Process recordings are submitted to the field supervisor for review and comment. The field liaison will also review process recordings.
11. Complete all documentation requested by the supervisor on time.
12. Participate with the field supervisor and field liaison in the first semester conference and final evaluation conference.
13. Maintain a portfolio of all materials related to the internship, including completed process recordings with supervisor's comments, journal entries, time sheets, etc. This should be made available to the faculty field liaison when requested.
14. Notify agency field supervisor of proposed vacation plans, unavoidable absences and tardiness in advance, as is expected in professional employment.

15. Abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Standards of Professional Conduct, and BSU Academic Integrity Policy at all times and in so doing, protect confidentiality of clients when required to present case material from the practicum in class.
16. Complete the required practicum hours within the time frame of the contract.
17. Complete all required evaluation forms.

Evaluation and Grading Policies

Evaluation of Student Performance

Evaluation of student performance in field education is a continuing process and is an integral part of the educational program. Field supervisors are encouraged to give students frequent feedback. Students and field supervisors discuss mechanisms for evaluation when they are developing the learning agreement. Examples of suggested evaluation activities include: presentations by the student in supervision, at case conferences or team meetings; field supervisor and field liaison review of written materials such as case notes, process recordings, reports, logs and journals; and field supervisor review of video/audiotapes of client interactions, presentations or role-plays.

The MSW program requires two student evaluations during the year. However, it is expected that any concerns be discussed in a timely fashion and shared with the student. Field liaisons are reachable and should be contacted about any concerns that transcends a usual learning process. The evaluations are written and shared with the student for discussion and refinement of learning goals. They are due in December for the fall semester and in April for the spring semester to the field liaison. A course grade cannot be assigned until the evaluation is received. (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI, for *Evaluation of Student Performance in Field Education*).

Evaluations are a mutual effort of student and supervisor, with the supervisor taking responsibility for the final version submitted to the MSW program after the student has read it and points of difference have been noted. It is important that evaluations be balanced in presenting both competencies of the student and areas needing further development. Ideally, the evaluation is an evolving process and

nothing should appear in it that has not already been discussed with the student in regular supervisory conferences. The MSW program recommends that prior to the completion of the evaluation, at least one supervisory conference is set aside for discussion of the student's overall response to and use of the fieldwork experience. Students are required to prepare written self-appraisals for this purpose (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI). It is helpful to refer to the learning objectives in this manual and to review the Learning Agreement while assessing the student's progress.

Field Instruction Grading Policy and Basis for Grading

Student performance in the field placement is formally evaluated by the agency field site instructor via written *Field Evaluation* (see *Student Handbook and Field Manual*, Section VI), midway through the placement (December) and at the completion of placement (May). Students also complete written self - evaluations as well an evaluation of their field agency, field supervisor, field liaison and the Administrator of Field Education.

Student evaluation (grade) is on a scale of Pass, Fail and Incomplete and is accomplished through both verbal and written evaluations. The student's final grade for field education each semester is based on field performance as indicated by field instructor(s) evaluation, the learning agreement, journal entries, process recordings, seminar attendance, participation in seminar discussions and agency and case presentations. The student should have a portfolio of completed process recordings, learning agreements and other information relevant to the field placement available for review as part of the field visit. The field supervisor's written evaluations of the student's performance, along with verbal assessments of specific aspects of the student's performance are provided by the field supervisor. The faculty field liaison is responsible for assigning the final grade each semester. **The seminar is designed to be a two semester, full academic year course of study and training resulting in competencies that are addressed over that time period.**

The final grade is based on the following criteria:
"Pass" indicates that the student has attended seminars, participated productively and has completed the required hours and performance expectations of the internship.

"Fail" is given when a student has not attended the seminar regularly, has not demonstrated productive participation and /or has not met the hours or expectations for performance of the internship.

"Incomplete" can be given at the discretion of the instructor and is based on an exceptional circumstance that has been communicated by the student to the instructor in advance of the grading period. An Incomplete must be requested by the student in cases where the internship was disrupted due to a personal emergency or other situation that explains the lack of completed time and or evaluative materials. The field liaison can approve or disapprove the request in consultation with the Administrator of Field and Program Coordinator if approved; there must be a plan to complete the requirements within a designated period of time in concert with established deadlines and policies.

Concerns in Field Instruction

It is the responsibility of the faculty of the MSW program to grant academic credit only to students whose coursework meets or exceeds minimum acceptable standards. Performance in field instruction is a critical indicator of the student's readiness to assume professional responsibilities, as well as an essential part of the MSW program requirements. It is therefore imperative that students earn a grade of "P" for each semester in field instruction in order to successfully complete the MSW program. The MSW program has developed guidelines for handling situations in which the student's field instruction performance deficiencies bring into question the student's ability to meet minimally acceptable standards. Obvious examples are erratic attendance patterns, failure to keep appointments or other obligations to clients or colleagues, punitive or otherwise inappropriate behavior in the professional role, violation of the ethics of the profession and refusal or failure to carry out policies or procedures that are vital to the agency's functioning. It is especially crucial that

any performance deficiency be brought to the student's attention as soon as it has been observed. Only in this way do the student and the field supervisor have a full opportunity to initiate timely corrective steps.

The MSW program respects the right of the student to raise and pursue issues regarding his or her field instruction placement. Such concerns should be brought by the student to the field supervisor, field liaison and the Administrator of Field Education for appropriate resolution. The first step in most cases involves the field supervisor or field liaison coaching the student on possible ways to resolve the problem him/herself. The MSW program believes that the process of problem solving on one's own behalf can be an important part of professional development. If this fails, the student, field supervisor, field liaison and/or Administrator of Field Education initiates a joint meeting to further assess and enact problem resolution strategies. Field placements are made after a thoughtful pre-placement process that includes active student and agency participation. Field placements, once confirmed, are not disrupted lightly.

If the conclusion is reached by the Administrator of Field Education, field liaison and the agency representative that a placement should be discontinued, an assessment will be made jointly by the Administrator of Field Education, field liaison and, if needed, faculty advisor whether a student should be reassigned to another field supervisor in the same agency or to another agency setting. Students who disrupt a placement without prior approval of the Administrator of Field Education risk receiving a grade of Fail. All decisions regarding re-placements are made in consultation with the student, faculty liaison and possibly others, including the MSW Program Coordinator. If the student is to change internships at any time, the field office is responsible for the new contact and process. These arrangements usually require that the placement be extended beyond the required minimum placement hours.

Unacceptable Performance in the Field Placement

Students are expected to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics*, to follow agency policies and procedures and to otherwise conduct him or herself in a professional manner. Definitions and examples of professional conduct can be found in the Professional Standards of Practice section below. Failure to meet these expectations will be reflected in fieldwork grades and/or may result in other action being taken by the MSW program, including termination at any time from a field placement. A failing grade in field may result in termination from the program.

Guidelines for Handling Performance Issues in Field Education:

1. It is the responsibility of the student and field supervisor to identify any problematic behavior pattern or a major issue in the practicum. The field liaison must be contacted when this occurs. The student and field supervisor should document their attempts in the learning/teaching experience to address these difficulties.
2. The field liaison will set a meeting with the field supervisor, student and other appropriate persons such as the Administrator of Field Education to review the situation.
3. The meeting will cover the following:
    - A clear identification of problems in learning and teaching. The field liaison will establish: a) whether there is sufficient evidence of the student's practice (e.g., tapes, reports, records) to arrive at an evaluation; and b) whether regular procedures have been followed in field instruction as specified in the learning agreement (e.g., number and nature of assignments; field instruction sessions; nature of specific feedback given to the student).
    - Specification of learning objectives to be achieved and behavior changes expected.
    - Any necessary actions and procedures to be taken in field instruction.
    - A timeframe for a review meeting and a schedule stating when a sample of the student's practice (selected by student and field supervisor) is to be reviewed by the field liaison.

4. The field liaison will document the process and outcome of the meeting. A copy will be given to the student, field supervisor and Administrator of Field Education. A copy will also be placed in the student record.
5. The review meeting will assess the degree to which the student has met the objectives set out in the previous meeting, the extent to which any activities in the field instruction have been useful and any other relevant issues. Further specification of issues, objectives, actions and a timeframe may take place if necessary. The field liaison will document the process and outcome of the meeting. A copy will be given to the student, field supervisor and the Administrator of Field Education.
6. Should the student not meet the competency expectations, a failing grade will be *recommended* by the field supervisor in consultation with the field liaison.

If student performance in field education is unsatisfactory, the field liaison, the Administrator of Field Education and the academic advisor will review the student's performance in field work and may request that the MSW Program Coordinator assign an Academic Review Committee.

Appeal Process

Appeals of any adverse action are to be heard by the University's appeal process. Students are advised to apprise themselves of the grievance and appeals procedures as identified in the BSU Student Handbook.

Professional Standards of Practice

The following standards apply to all MSW students enrolled in the BSU MSW program. These standards are broader than academic performance noted in Section III of this document. These standards are important given the nature of social work practice and the expectations of a professional program. All MSW students are required to comply with the *Behavioral Standards of the MSW Social Work Program*, *NASW Code of Ethics* as well as related policies outlined herewith.

Faculty regularly evaluate academic and professional performance in several areas including, but

not limited to, the demonstration of basic professional practice skills, stress management and emotional self-awareness, professional judgment and scholastic performance. Criteria defining each of these four primary areas are identified below.

Basic Professional Practice Skills

Communication: practices using effective oral and written skills; uses existing technologies as appropriate; employs effective interpersonal skills including the ability to take appropriate responsibility for one's own actions and decisions and their potential impact on others; and possesses the ability to identify and acknowledge limitations.

Ability to Exercise Critical Thinking: demonstrates the ability to plan, monitor and evaluate practice interventions and overall practice; articulate the problem solving process.

Stress Management and Emotional Self-Awareness

Effective Self Care and Coping Skills: handles stress appropriately by use of self-care techniques and supportive relationships; recognizes personal needs and plans accordingly.

Emotional Maturity: demonstrates understanding of appropriate self-disclosure; maintains respectful relationships with peers, colleagues, faculty and others; demonstrates empathic support to peers; and uses assertive problem solving strategies rather than aggressive or passive actions. Seeks professional help for medical or emotional issues that interfere with professional and scholastic performance.

Self-Awareness: demonstrates awareness of one's own attitudes and beliefs (economic status, age, ethnicity and lifestyle differences) and their impact on professional practice; acknowledges when personal values interfere with professional practice and client relationships and makes appropriate referrals or takes appropriate action.

Professional Judgment

Comprehension of Ethical Behavior: demonstrates adherence to the *NASW Code of Ethics*, state licensing laws and practicum site policies and procedures; practices within the competencies and limits of a generalist practitioner in foundation year practicum or a clinical practitioner in Specialization year practicum.

Committed to Professional Learning: takes responsibility for learning and seeks feedback and/or supervision from field supervisors, faculty, peers and colleagues; participates in classroom discussions and stays engaged in learning; holds self-accountable for work assigned.

Holiday Policy

Generally, it is expected that students in fieldwork follow the University calendar relative to holidays and recesses. Students are entitled to a two-week winter break and a one-week spring break. Students are expected to work with their field supervisor to minimize disruption to client care. *Exceptions:* Students who have fallen behind in the required number of hours of fieldwork for a given semester are required to complete the hours and may do so during holiday breaks, if the agency is able to accommodate the student. Other exceptions are negotiated with the faculty liaison, the agency field supervisor and the program.

Weather Policy

On field days, it is expected that students adhere to notifications regarding weather related changes, if any, of the agency, not BSU. Any missed time needs to be completed when it meets client needs and is accepted to the agency and student.

Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory reporting refers to statutory language that obligates social workers to report suspected incidents of abuse or neglect to children and other protected populations (elderly and other dependent persons). Students who suspect abuse or neglect must immediately report their concerns

to their field supervisor and/or other agency supervisory staff and follow agency policies regarding reporting of abuse and neglect. If the field supervisor or other agency supervisory staff is not available, the student should contact their field liaison. The field supervisor or field liaison will then decide whether to file a report with the appropriate state agency.

Confidentiality and Use of Client Information

The School of Social Work requires all students to comply with agency policies and procedures related to confidentiality of client information. Students may not use any individually identifiable information about clients in any papers, reports, class discussions, etc. Students who use information about clients for MSW program related work are required to mask all identifying information. A student's orientation to their field placement will include the agency's policies and procedures on confidentiality and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including HIPAA Privacy Standards, related to confidentiality of individually identifiable health information.

Bridgewater State University Campus Resources

Bridgewater State University Campus main number: 508.531.1000

Resource	Location	Phone
Academic Achievement Center	Maxwell Library	508.531.1214
Athletics and Recreation	Tinsley Center	508.531.1352
Bookstore	East Campus Commons	508.531.6198
Career Services	Rondileau Campus Center	508.531.1328
Center for Multicultural Affairs	Rondileau Campus Center 101	508.531.6166
Children's Center	Burnell 135	508.531.1244
Clement C. Maxwell Library	Circulation Services	508.531.1392
	Library Hours	508.531.1749
College of Graduate Studies	Maxwell Library 021	508.531.1100
Computer Labs	Rondileau Campus Ctr. 007	508.531.2819
(Computers available for student use)	Moakley Center 130	508.531.2555
Counseling Center	Weygand 1110	508.531.1331
Disability Resources	Academic Achievement Ctr.	508.531.2194
Financial Aid Office	Welcome Center 209	508.531.1341
GLBTA Pride Center	Rondileau Campus Ctr. 109	508.531.1408
Human Resources and Talent Mgmt.	Boyden 103	508.531.1324
IT Support Services	Moakley 130	508.531.2555
Learning Assistance Services	Academic Achievement Ctr.	508.531.1214
Media Services	Maxwell Library 011	508.531.2020
MSW Writing Fellows	Burrill Office Complex	508.531.1465
News and Events	Institutional Communications	508.531.1335
Office of Institutional Diversity	Boyden Hall 211	508.531.2729
Parking Services and Connect Card	Hunt 001	508.531.2897
Police Department	Campus Police Station	508.531.1212
Print Shop	Rondileau Campus Center 200	508.531.2267
Registrar's Office	Boyden Hall 003	508.531.1231
Second Language Services	Academic Achievement Ctr.	508.531.3830
Student Accounts	Boyden Hall 107	508.531.1225
Student Involvement and Leadership	Rondileau Campus Ctr. 103	508.531.1273
Transit Shuttle	Operations Center	508.531.1383
Wellness Center	Weygand Hall 1110	508.531.1252

Field Forms

Field Forms can be found at the website below:

https://my.bridgew.edu/departments/SocialWork/SitePages/MSW%20Program.aspx