



Department of Social Work

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

BEAVER COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

BSW

Field Education Manual

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The Appalachian State University *BSW Field Education Manual* is intended for information purposes only and does not constitute a contract between the University and the student. While this handbook presents policies and programs as accurately as possible at the time of publication, the department reserves the right to revise any section or part without notice or obligation. Changes in degree requirements do not affect students already enrolled in a degree program, although adaptations may be needed. Degree requirements can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin and Program of Study for the student's year of admission to the university. Changes in departmental and academic policies become effective for all students on the date approved for implementation, therefore all Social Work students are subject to those policies as posted herein. **Last revised June 30, 2023.**

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Welcome to Field Education

I want to welcome you to the Social Work Field Education program. I know you have worked hard to complete all of the requirements to apply to enter field placement and field seminar. The field placement semester is an exciting time in your BSW Social Work education that offers you the opportunity to integrate theory and practice on your journey to become a professional social worker. BSW students will be in agencies serving a variety of populations and reaching competencies in order to graduate from the program and be ready for your next step on the journey-your first social work position after graduation or graduate school. The field faculty join me in welcoming you and look forward to working with you to obtain your field placements.

Best Wishes!

Heather Thorp, Ed.D., LCSW, REAT
Field Director

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Overview of the BSW Program

The Department of Social Work is part of the Beaver College of Health Sciences at Appalachian State University. The department offers both the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits each of these programs. In addition, the department also offers a minor in Social Work.

BSW Mission Statement

The BSW Program's mission is to prepare generalist professional social workers. Our students partner with Appalachian and global communities and engage in inter-professional collaboration to advance the health and well-being of individuals, families, groups, and communities. Our graduates understand the complexity of social problems, challenge systems of oppression, and advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

BSW Program Goals

- Provide educational opportunities to assist undergraduate students in gaining the competencies necessary for generalist social work practice.
- Extend learning opportunities to students on the main campus as well as to those living in the High Country and surrounding communities of western North Carolina.
- Provide classroom, community, and practice opportunities which reflect the needs of the High Country of North Carolina, and that facilitate knowledge and skills, which are transferable to national and global contexts.
- Provide a learning environment, which promotes personal development, scientific inquiry and the professional values of the social work profession.
- Provide a curriculum that is preparatory to graduate level social work education.

Inclusive Excellence

The Department of Social Work is committed to promoting a more inclusive and equitable society, beginning with respectfully engaging diversity and difference within our learning environments. Our goal is to prepare social workers who are intentional and reflective in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work.

This effort is grounded in our Department's mission to educate professional social workers who will promote the well-being of the vulnerable and oppressed, and will advance social, economic, and environmental justice for all people. Social workers aim to reduce marginalization based on, but not limited to, age, (dis)ability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, and religion. Our Department's efforts are also grounded in the National Association of Social Workers' values of social justice and dignity and worth of the person, and its cultural awareness and social diversity standard. Finally, we see our work in this area as an embodiment of ASU's Inclusive Excellence Initiative, and the Beaver College of Health Sciences' core values of diversity, equity, and community.

Our work is ongoing, and we are all learners. We encourage an ongoing dialogue among students, faculty, and staff about this commitment. Your participation and feedback in the process is valued.

Field Education: Social Work's Signature Pedagogy

The BSW Field Education Program within the Department of Social Work provides an opportunity for students to integrate their curriculum knowledge with real-life experiences in a variety of field practice settings. Students are supervised by experienced Field Instructors at human services agencies where they refine their social work skills and begin their lives as social work professionals.

The field placement is a vital part of the professional development of the student. Through our collaborative efforts the Department of Social Work and human service organizations will continue to offer field education of the highest quality to enhance human well-being and meet the basic human needs of people within this area of North Carolina. The BSW students complete one-semester block placements in the last semester of their senior year. Our BSW program covers three campus sites, Boone, Hickory, and Morganton.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has set 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for Field Education. This area of the curriculum is considered the "signature pedagogy" of the program. Field education is considered the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner, connects the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting, and is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies.

Organization and Sequence

Senior social work majors enter field placement with a liberal arts background. Building on a strong general education program and a carefully designed set of cognate courses, social work students prepare for generalist practice by completing a set of five pre-professional foundation courses. After successful completion of these, students apply for admission to the social work Professional Sequence. Once admitted, students then complete their remaining social work courses, including practice courses.

The Social Work field practicum (SW 4650: *Social Work Field Instruction*) is initiated only after students have successfully completed all coursework (social work courses, cognates, General Education courses, electives, Departmental Honors coursework, University Honors coursework, remaining Associates Degree or other coursework for distance education/App State Online students). Students must receive at least a C in every required social work course and cognate course, and maintain at least a **2.5 GPA** in social work and a **2.5 GPA** overall. Students may apply for Field Placement while they are completing the requirements for an Incomplete (I) in a course or if coursework at other institutions is still underway. However, at the Field Director's discretion, Field Placement may be delayed or suspended until all coursework is documented in DegreeWorks as successfully completed. Students are required to submit a request in writing to the Field Director to request an exception.

Students must complete the Field Application and the Field Placement Process during the semester prior to entering the field experience, excluding summer semester. Applications must be submitted by February 1 in order to be considered for a placement in the following Fall semester or by September 1 in order to be considered for a placement in the following Spring semester. The Field Director is not obligated to place students who have not submitted their applications by the due date.

The Field Director will communicate the names of the students who are requesting to enter field to the entire faculty, giving faculty the opportunity to express any strengths or concerns about students' readiness for field. The Field Director will then present the list of students to the field committee to discuss concerns and approve students to enter field. In this way, the Department of Social Work attempts to assure that only students with the requisite level of professional knowledge, identity, and skills will begin their field education.

While in the field education course, students also complete the capstone course, SW 4690: *Senior Seminar: Issues and Ethics for Field and Profession*. This seminar is specifically designed to accompany the field placement experience and explicitly coordinates the integration of classroom learning with the field practice component. As the name suggests, students also concentrate on refining their abilities to make ethical decisions even when ambiguity exists.

Field Education Course Requirements

Field education is an integral part of the educational experience of a social work major. The purpose of field instruction is to provide the student with a concentrated, supervised, practical experience that will afford the opportunity to apply, integrate and critique theories and skills acquired from the social work curriculum. As the student functions within a professional role and agency, course content is translated into professional competence. Field education also expands the students' knowledge of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. After successfully completing the senior field experience, the student pursuing a baccalaureate social work major is prepared for entry-level social work practice.

It is important to reflect on the activities the student will engage in during their field education course. In 2015, CSWE defined their *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* based on nine competencies. These competencies form the overall student objectives for the BSW Program. And, while all aspects of the curriculum have been working towards assisting students to develop these competencies, we recognize that students must have actual practice experiences in order to consolidate, integrate, and refine their knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes and demonstrate the competencies and behaviors required for generalist practice. Providing these practice experiences is the role of the field education course.

Below, we outline the competencies for the BSW Program at ASU. These competencies also serve as the objectives for the field education course.

BSW Competencies and Behaviors

By the end of the BSW curriculum, students are expected to demonstrate the following competencies and behaviors, which reflect a foundation in generalist practice:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior

- 1.1 Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.
 - 1.2 Use self-reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.
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1.3 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and oral, written, and electronic communication.

1.4 Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.

1.5 Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

2. Engage diversity and difference in practice

2.1 Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

2.2 Present themselves as learners and engage client and constituencies as experts of their own experience.

2.3 Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

3.1 Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and systems levels.

3.2 Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice

4.1 Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.

4.2 Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.

4.3 Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

5. Engage in policy practice

5.1 Identify social policy and the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.

5.2 Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.

5.3 Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

6.1 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.

6.2 Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage diverse clients and constituencies.

7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

7.1 Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies

7.2 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.

7.3 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges with clients and constituencies.

7.4 Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

8.1 Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.

8.2 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multi-disciplinary frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

8.3 Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.

8.4 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.

8.5 Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

9.1 Select and use appropriate methods of evaluation of outcomes

9.2 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment,



person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes

9.3 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes.

9.4 Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

The Department of Social Work Field Education Program provides a list of behaviors that have been developed to operationalize the generalist social work competencies. It is these behaviors that define the “doing” of generalist social work. It is important to note that students will be provided with opportunities to practice in ways that are most likely to achieve the outcome goals of promoting individual and community well-being, preventing social and economic injustice, resolving problems, and providing services as needed. Generalist social work is characterized by this integration of services.

In accordance with the CSWE 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, we expect that BSW students will engage in generalist social work practice activities. Students can expect to engage in a variety of agency activities, as outlined in the Learning Contract and Evaluation, which allow them to refine and extend their abilities to demonstrate the competencies and behaviors. While specific field activities vary according to agency, student, Field Instructor, and focus of the work, the following guidelines are applicable to all placements.

If possible, students are to be assigned cases for which they have primary responsibility. In some agencies students must have an agency employee with them at all times. In such cases a student will still need opportunities to demonstrate competence by completion of tasks indicated on their Learning Contract and Evaluation form. The type and number of cases assigned should be consistent with the general objectives of the field experience, and with the specific learning needs of the student in mind:

- Students must have the opportunity to develop skills in strengths-based direct services as well as promotion of individual and community well-being;
- Cases should be assigned as soon as the field instructor and student determine student readiness, typically in the first few weeks of placement;
- Completion of process recordings for educational purposes is required of all students.
- Field activities are to include weekly conferences with the Field Instructor, staff conferences, attendance at selected meetings of the agency Board of Directors or Advisory Council (if listed in the Learning Contract and Evaluation), community contacts, and involvement with policy issues.

Development of the Learning Contract and Evaluation

The Learning Contract and Evaluation guides the student’s work in their field experience. This document outlines specifically what the student will do throughout their field education. While many of the learning activities are pre-populated, students and field instructors may add activities to reflect student or agency goals. The student and Field Instructor should do this collaboratively. The Field Instructor may delineate the work that is conducted within the agency, put it into context in

terms of generalist practice, and outline a number of opportunities for student learning. The student may seek opportunities within the agency setting and suggest activities, as well.

The Learning Contract and Evaluation is also designed to assist the student in progressing in skills across the time that they are in placement. For instance, students likely will start their field education by observing social workers, reviewing agency policies and developing the specific knowledge necessary for conducting the work of the agency. They will then progress to closely supervised assessments, interventions, evaluations and developing a macro project. The student will then move to a level of supervised independent practice reflective of their student status and their level of competence.

The Learning Contract and Evaluation is designed to provide the format for the student's midterm and final evaluation. It begins the process of an ongoing evaluation. As activities are completed or as the agency needs and plans change, there may need to be changes made in the Learning Contract and Evaluation.

Field Seminar

Students are required to take SW 4690 Senior Seminar: Issues and Ethics for Field and Profession concurrently with the field placement. This seminar is designed to integrate classroom learning with field experiences and is the Social Work Capstone writing course. The Senior Seminar is conducted by a social work faculty member and is conducted online asynchronously with three synchronous meeting times. Specific seminar content accommodates input from students as well as standard program expectations relevant to the integration of the field experience, the curriculum, and the competencies. Seminar assignments may vary according to instructor; however, all assignments are designed to enhance the integration of classroom and field learning. Seminars elicit student reflections on their field experience and provide a forum for the exploration of field-based practice and policy issues. The seminar also focuses extensively on reinforcing social work values, practice frameworks, diversity, and an understanding of the Appalachian culture and other cultures where services are provided. Commitment to human rights and social and economic justice are also emphasized.

Field Education Roles and Responsibilities

In order to facilitate understanding of the policies and procedures, it is useful to define key critical roles of the Field Director, Seminar Instructor and Field Instructor. Please refer to the definitions below.

Field Instructor

The Field Instructor is the agency employee who supervises the day-to-day activities of the BSW student. The Field Instructor meets with the student one hour weekly, assists in developing the Learning Contract and Evaluation, reviews process recordings and completes the midterm and the final evaluation based on the Learning Contract and Evaluation. It is preferred that the Field Instructor is two years post BSW or MSW degree from an accredited program and at least one year of experience in the agency or an agency assigns a BSW/MSW supervisor within the agency. If no supervisor is available that has the stated requirements then a faculty member will provide the social

work supervision if available. The Field Instructor should be the person that has the most direct knowledge of the student's demonstration of competencies and practice behaviors.

Seminar Instructor

The Seminar Instructor is the faculty member who is responsible for integrating the field education experience with classroom learning. The Seminar Instructor also performs the role of the Field Liaison, acting as the link between the university and the agency. Seminar Instructors will hold an MSW degree.

Field Director

The Field Director is the full-time faculty member who is responsible for oversight of all aspects of the field education program.

Quality field instruction requires the close collaboration of the agency, Field Instructor, Seminar Instructor, student, and Social Work Program. Each has a distinct role and specific responsibilities in field instruction. To enhance the coordination and execution of those roles, the responsibilities of each are identified below.

Responsibilities of the BSW Field Director

The ASU Department of Social Work Field Education Program recognizes the critical role of field instruction in the educational experience of our majors. The Program values the significant contributions that field agencies and Field Instructors make to the development of the generalist practitioners who successfully complete our curriculum. It is the responsibility and intent of the Program to provide the support and information field placements required to effectively meet their obligations to students and professional social work education.

The Field Director is administratively responsible for the design, coordination, and guidance of the field instruction component of the social work curriculum. In collaboration with agencies, Field Instructors, Seminar Instructors, students, and members of the social work faculty, the Field Director is responsible for:

- Developing policies and procedures according to the goals of the Department of Social Work and the educational policies and accreditation standards of CSWE;
 - Chairing the Field Education Committee at Appalachian State University;
 - Developing and maintaining the *BSW Field Education Manual* which provides context and guidance for field instruction;
 - Selecting agencies appropriate for field placements and approving agency staff members as Field Instructors;
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- Coordinating and finalizing assignment of students to field agencies;
 - Orienting Field Instructors and Field Supervisors to the design and objectives of field education and the overall social work curriculum;
 - Disseminating updated information related to changes in the Social Work Program or accreditation standards to Field Instructors and Field Supervisors;
 - Providing consultation to agencies on the development of their field instruction programs;
 - Assuring that field education policies and procedures are correctly implemented and that the educational objectives of field instruction are not compromised;
 - Working with the Chair of the Department of Social Work to select faculty members to serve as Seminar Instructors and Field Liaisons to field agencies;
 - Assessing and evaluating the quality of the field education program along with the BSW Program Director, Field Education Committee, and departmental Evaluation Committee;
 - Serving on the departmental administrative team also comprised of the Chair, the BSW Program Director, and the MSW Program Director;
 - Being available as a consultant to faculty teaching field education seminar;
 - Serving on departmental committees to represent the impact of all other aspects of the program on field education;
 - Collaborating with the Program Specialist to assist students who are interested in completing the requirements of the Child Welfare Education Collaborative;
 - Participating in the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) collaboration to ensure students have the opportunity to obtain the SBIRT certificate of completion;
 - Collaborating with the Program Specialist to assist students who are interested in completing the requirements for school social work licensure;
 - Oversee the Program Specialist regarding field duties, including her coordination of the Internship Inventory and other Field Education Management Systems;
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- Oversee graduate assistants assigned to the Field Director; and
- Participate in university-wide, college-wide, and statewide forums for internships.

Responsibilities of the BSW Seminar Instructors

Seminar Instructors assume an important role in the quality of the field experience. The seminar instructor is responsible for:

- Making contact with the student and the Field Instructor twice during the field semester, by Zoom or in person to: (1) identify appropriate learning opportunities for the student; (2) consult with the student and Field Instructor on the progress of a placement; and (3) review student records;
- Integrating field education experiences with classroom learning via the field seminar course;
- Consulting with Field Instructors and students regarding field related issues when they are not being resolved between the Field Instructor and the student, and following departmental procedures for resolution;
- Reinforcing the social work perspective as applicable to each student's field site;
- Evaluating the student's performance and assigning a grade for seminar;
- Providing evaluative information on the quality of agency field instruction to the Field Director and recommending revisions in the Field Education Program; and
- Communicating with the Field Director on any issues of concern about student interns, agencies, and field instructors.

Responsibilities of the Agency

An agency's decision to provide a placement for a BSW student includes obligations to invest agency resources and time necessary for quality field instruction. Field agencies are responsible for:

- Structuring the workload of Field Instructors so that sufficient time is available for supervision of students;
 - Developing assignments and adhering to expectations that are appropriate to the educational objectives of social work field education;
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- Providing students with necessary space, resources, and support services;
- Accepting students for placement without regard to race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, or disability status;
- Allowing students to explore and experience all aspects of agency structure, policy, and program relevant to student learning objectives;
- Orienting students to agency policies, procedures, and programs, and informing students of significant revisions in each;
- Supporting Field Instructors to attend orientations sponsored by the ASU Social Work Program;
- Providing clear procedures to ensure the safety of the student, and implementing a process to support the student if safety issues arise; and
- Assisting in providing students with resources to contact to complete background checks and drug screens if required by the agency.

Responsibilities of the Field Instructor

The primary role of the agency Field Instructor is that of educator. This is both a demanding and rewarding role that involves the following varied responsibilities:

- Identifying and creating opportunities for BSW students to obtain and demonstrate competencies for generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, or communities;
 - Selecting activities that support the student's learning needs, including but not limited to: (a) appropriate types and number of cases; (b) inter- and intra-agency meetings and community task groups; (c) assigned readings, including grant proposals and agency policy documents; (d) agency projects; (e) group and community interventions; and (f) educational conferences;
 - Assuring that the student is properly oriented to agency policies, procedures, norms, and organizational structure;
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- Interpreting the competencies required of the student to other agency personnel, and eliciting support for meeting those competencies and behaviors;
- Accepting the student as a beginning level professional social worker;
- Providing weekly one hour supervisory conferences and as-needed consultation for students focused on identified learning needs and objectives;
- Providing ongoing assessment of student performance relative to beginning level generalist competencies and providing clear, direct, constructive evaluative feedback to the student and Faculty Liaison, including completion of the Learning Contract and Evaluation form;
- Notifying the Seminar Instructor **immediately** if any issues arise in the field placement related to personal issues manifesting in behavior that negatively impacts the student's ability to perform adequately in a field placement (for example, mental health, substance abuse, health concerns, family matters, legal), supervision issues, attendance issues, ethical issues, issues of safety for student or clients, change in agency supervisor, students in danger of being dismissed by the field placement agency, or insufficient progress towards completing the Learning Contract and Evaluation within a timely manner;
- Attending orientation sessions and field instruction seminars, institutes, and workshops sponsored by the ASU Department of Social Work;
- Providing information and agency policies to the student regarding safety. Providing the student with supervision and support, if safety issues arise;
- Reviewing and signing all necessary forms including but not limited to, the Learning Contract and Evaluation, supervision log, time log, and process recordings; and
- Consulting with other staff or supervisors involved in student learning to complete the mid-year and final evaluation.

Responsibilities of the Field Education Committee

The Field Education Committee is composed of full-time and part-time Social Work field faculty members and is chaired by the Field Director. The purpose of the Field Education Committee is to advise the Field Director and the faculty and staff about curriculum, policies and guidelines, and student issues related to the Field Education Program. Additional roles for this committee are to offer feedback about the Field Director's recommendations for students' employment-based applications for the field if requested and administrative review when issues or concerns arise in the field. In addition, the Field Education Committee will offer feedback related to policy or guideline changes, which may be passed on to other departmental committees as appropriate and/or included in the *BSW Field Education Manual* and communicated to the Social Work Department faculty and students. The Field Education

Committee members act as a departmental advisory committee for the Field Education Program.

Responsibilities of the Student

Academic Standards Expectations

BSW students are expected to abide by ASU's *Code of Student Conduct* and *Academic Integrity Code*, the National Association of Social Workers' *Code of Ethics*, the BSW Program's *Competencies*, and the following departmental *Academic Standards for Retention*, which are more fully described in the *BSW Student Handbook*: 1) Scholastic Performance; 2) Professional Identity and Self Awareness; 3) Ethical Behavior; 4) Interpersonal Relationships; and 5) Commitment to Diversity, Social Justice, and Human Rights. Failure to meet the standards may result in dismissal from the program. Please note that these standards apply to student's behaviors in both the classroom and the field placement site.

Field Expectations

A productive field experience requires that the student actively participate in the design and implementation of field education. Students assuming a passive approach to the experience risk poor evaluations and lack of competence upon completion of the placement. To maximize the opportunity presented by field education, the student should fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Collaborating with the Field Instructor and Seminar Instructor in identifying learning needs and specifying learning activities;
 - Actively exploring learning opportunities within the agency, and participate with the Field Instructor in the selection of appropriate learning materials and activities;
 - Complying with agency and field placement policies, procedures, and standards. This includes background checks or drug tests, if the agency requires them;
 - Using supervision and supervisory conferences appropriately, including participating in selecting content for conferences and using supervision to openly address needs, concerns, issues, and progress toward meeting competencies;
 - Attending and participating in agency staff meetings and professional meetings or conferences recommended by the Field Instructor;
 - Attend and participating in supervisory conferences recommended by the MSW Supervisor if applicable;
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- Integrating field and classroom learning by applying knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes to field assignments and thoughtfully participating in Seminar;
- Arranging for and actively participating in meetings with seminar instructor, field instructor and student;
- Notifying the Seminar Instructor **immediately** if any issues arise in the field placement related to personal issues manifesting in behavior that negatively impacts the student's ability to perform adequately in a field placement (for example, mental health, substance abuse, health concerns, family matters, legal), supervision issues, attendance issues, ethical issues, issues of safety for student or clients, change in agency supervisor, students in danger of being dismissed by the field placement agency, or insufficient progress towards completing the Learning Contract and Evaluation within a timely manner; and
- Continually assessing the quality of the field experience and field instruction, and keeping the Field Instructor, Social Work Supervisor, and Seminar Instructors informed of concerns regarding the placement.

Policies and Procedures

Criteria for the Selection of Field Agencies and Instructors

The availability of quality field agencies and Instructors is crucial to the success of the field education program and the effectiveness of the social work curriculum. In effect, the agency serves as the laboratory in which the student may ultimately develop and test their demonstration of the required competencies under the guidance of the Field Instructor. Because field agencies and Instructors do hold vital roles the social work program maintains certain standards for agencies and Field Instructors. Criteria for the selection of each are specified below.

Selection of Field Agencies

A field agency and/or the Field Director may initiate the discussion of developing a field placement for students. Prior to approval the Field Director and agency representatives explore the feasibility in detail. The Field Director will schedule a site visit prior to approval as a field placement agency. Based on the program's commitment to the High Country and surrounding region, field agencies are located within approximately 150 miles of Boone, NC. Selection of agencies as placement sites is based on the following criteria:

- Functions of the agency include those considered to be within the purview of the social work profession;
 - Social work is identified as a discrete profession by the agency, and members of the social work staff are given professional status;
 - Generalist practice opportunities are available for the student;
 - Policies and procedures governing the delivery of agency services are clearly defined;
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- Agency policies adhere to non-discriminatory service delivery;
- Professional climate is conducive to learning and to student identification with the profession;
- A qualified staff member is available to serve as the Field Instructor;
- The Field Instructor is provided with adequate time to provide supervision;
- Adequate support services and facilities are provided for students;
- The agency demonstrates a willingness to allow students to participate in agency programs and activities that are relevant to student learning needs;
- The agency is willing to assign substantive cases to students;
- There are written policies to address work situations that may entail risk and risk management policies and a process for supervision and support, if safety is compromised; and
- Opportunity exists for a student to demonstrate completion of expectations noted in the Learning Contract and Evaluation of all nine competencies and associated behaviors.

When an agency wishes to accept Appalachian students for field placement and it is determined that the agency satisfies the above criteria, a letter of confirmation is sent to the Field Instructor which also serves as an invitation to the field orientation. Prior to the start of the semester that the student is in field placement, the student obtains the necessary signatures on two agreements, the Internship Contract and the Confidentiality Agreement. If the agency requires other contracts or affiliation agreements, the Field Director will assist in facilitating communication between the university and the agency to obtain the documents.

Selection of Field Instructors

Primary considerations in the selection of field agencies include the qualifications of the Instructor and the willingness to serve as Field Instructors. It is difficult to overestimate the significant role Field Instructors assume in the educational experience of the BSW student.

All Field Instructors must have either a BSW or MSW degree or a degree in an allied human service profession. It is strongly preferred that Field Instructors have a social work degree from a CSWE accredited program, but in some instances, it may be necessary to consider an on-site Field Instructor with a degree from a related discipline. It is also required that all Field Instructors have a minimum of two years of practice experience with at least one year in the agency in which a student is placed.

Approval of Field Instructors is based on the following criteria:

- Familiarity with the competencies required of the generalist social work practitioner;
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- Experience with the populations served by the agency;
- Identification with the social work profession;
- Adherence to the values and ethics of social work;
- Ability to conceptualize and illustrate principles for generalist social work practice;
- Ability to assist students in incorporating professional values and ethics in their practice activities;
- Ability to present material clearly and to design learning experiences appropriate to a student's educational needs and interests;
- Familiarity with agency policies and procedures and their implications for service delivery;
- Ability to provide structured, planned supervision, including weekly conferences with students and consistent, clear, direct, evaluative feedback to students; and
- Ability to provide supervision and support to students regarding safety issues.

When meeting with a potential field placement site, the Field Director discusses expectations, assignments and supervision needs. The Field Director assesses if the site and experiences that a student could receive there would satisfy a student being able to meet competencies. Potential Field Instructors are introduced to the competencies and associated behaviors through dialogue and written materials. They are also directed to the Social Work Department website to review the Field Manual and other required forms. The Field Director also reviews the assignments that the students will be required to complete in seminar while the student is at the agency, which include process recordings, an agency presentation, and self-assessment. The Field Director requests a resume and Field Instructor Information Sheet to be completed for each Field Instructor. Field Instructors are encouraged to attend the orientation and new Field Instructors are required to attend.

The Placement Process

Appalachian State University complies with all provisions of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* of 1974 (FERPA). Students complete a BSW *Request for Placement* application by September 1 if entering field placement in the following Spring semester and February 1 if applying to enter field in the following fall semester. They have the opportunity to consent to the Field Director disclosing information contained in the *Request for Placement*, feedback from faculty members, and contents from the Field Director's or Field Coordinator's interview, with potential field agencies for purposes of placement. Agencies are encouraged to ask students for background information, as they would with a new employee.

1. The Field Director and other field faculty will meet with students in SW 3000 to provide an overview of the process for field placement readiness. The Field Director will also visit a class in the semester before a cohort will be entering field to provide instructions for applying to field.
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2. Students will complete a BSW field placement application while attending SW 4600 located in the field management system, Tevera. Students will complete this by the dates noted above. **Do not contact agencies until after you have met with the Field Director or other designated Field Faculty and have their approval to move forward.**
 3. Students will upload the field application and resume to AsU Learn during the course SW 4600. A member of the field faculty will contact students to schedule an individual meeting to discuss placement interests and concerns, whether a student plans to apply to graduate school, and hopes for future professional practice.
 4. For employment-based requests students must indicate that they are requesting to complete a field placement at their place of employment in the BSW field application. A student must have a social work supervisor and be able to demonstrate all of the competencies in their current place of employment or an affiliated agency.
 5. After meeting with the field faculty member, field faculty will contact agencies that have been discussed and inquire about openings for an intern.
 6. The field faculty will then contact students to give them agency contact information including, name, email and or phone number in order to set up a time to interview for the field placement.
 7. In planning for a student's field placement, please note that most hours for field placement will be during the day and Monday through Friday. There are very limited placements for evening and weekend hours. In obtaining the **approximately** 32 hours a week (required total 440) students are encouraged to plan accordingly.
 8. The student is expected to check in weekly with the field faculty to communicate about the interview date and if the agency has offered the student an internship.
 9. Once the internship has been approved by the Field Director or her designee and they have received all of the contact information, a contract will be emailed to the student by the Program Specialist. Students and their Field Instructors will need to sign the contract and return it to the Program Specialist by the date indicated. **Students will not be registered or be able to start field placements until the contract has been signed by the student and Field Instructor and received by the Program Specialist by the date indicated. In addition, students will not be registered until the results of the CBC are received and, if applicable, a meeting has occurred with the Field Director to discuss any concerns.**
 10. **Students will not register themselves for the field education courses.** We complete our part of the process, forward student records to the Dean's office, which subsequently forwards student records to the registrar.
 11. The Social Work Department does not require drug tests, although some agencies do require these. Most agencies that require these tests also absorb the cost of the tests. However, some agencies will conduct the tests but require you to cover the cost. If your agency requires you to obtain the drug test independently, please contact the Field Director and she will refer you to a resource offered by ASU. It is the student's responsibility to follow up
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and pay for the test. Students may not start their field placements until the required drug tests are completed and results have been returned.

12. Criminal background checks (CBCs) are required by the Beaver College of Health Sciences (BCHS). The BCHS policy can be found [here](#). Students must complete a CBC annually, prior to each field placement. Students are responsible for paying the minimal fee (usually \$10-20). BCHS typically uses Certiphi as a CBC provider. Our departmental Program Specialist will submit your name to BCHS and send an email to you to let you know that Certiphi will be contacting you. **Students entering the field will receive an email from Certiphi at *studentedition@certiphi.com* and will be required to follow the instructions listed in the email to complete their Criminal Background Check prior to starting field placement.** If you have not received an email from Certiphi within two weeks of the email notification from the departmental Program Specialist, please check your spam first, then notify the Field Director. If you have received the email from Certiphi, complete your CBC within two weeks of receiving the email. If you are unable to do so, please let the Field Director know. Based on the CBC results, students may be required to meet with the Field Director and/or the BSW Program Director in order to be permitted to move forward in the placement process. Some agencies also require CBCs, and they may or may not agree to accept the CBC that was required by BCHS. Most agencies that require these tests also absorb the cost of the tests. However, some agencies will conduct the tests but require you to cover the cost. It is the student's responsibility to follow up and pay for the required CBCs. **Registration for the field placement will not occur until the CBC is completed and concerns are addressed or resolved.** Please see the BSW Student Handbook for additional information.
13. Field placements typically start on the first day of classes. Students are permitted to count up to 32 hours prior to the start of the field placement for orientation or training required by the agency.
14. The Field Education Program will email students about a field orientation and the start date for field placement.

Employment Based Field Placements

It is recommended that students be placed in agencies where they have not been employed. The familiarity of the student's work often creates issues for students who are in a placement to learn new skills while trying to satisfy employers and work demands. Policies have been made to aid employment-based placements. In those circumstances where it is decided that it is in the best interest of the student to do this, there are certain criteria that must be met.

- The student may have an assignment in a unit or program of the agency that is his /her employment.
 - The Field Instructor must be a BSW or MSW with at least two years experience post graduation in the agency and one year in their current position where they will be supervising. If the supervisor for employment is a BSW or MSW then the student may have the same supervisor for employment and field instruction however they must meet at two different times to distinguish between the two.
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- It is recommended that the student be employed for at least 3 months prior to the start of the field placement.
- The placement must have an educational focus. The student must be able to demonstrate competencies within the role of employee. The student must complete the placement hours with the goal of both education and work.
- An agency that is providing a field placement for an employee must meet the same criteria as other field agencies.
- Once the field application is received. The Field Director will schedule a meeting with the student, the student's work supervisor, and proposed Field Instructor. After reviewing the application and the agency, the Field Director will seek consultation from the Field Education Committee or Department Chair as needed.

Specialized Field Opportunities and Placements (SBIRT, Child Welfare Education Collaborative, and School Social Work)

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)

The Department of Social Work provides training to students, field instructors and community members in the universal screening tool, SBIRT. In addition, the Nursing and Public Health Departments in the Beaver College of Health Sciences and the Psychology Department in the College of Arts and Sciences also participate, affording students the opportunity to be involved in interprofessional learning. Each student will receive substance use disorder content in the BSW curriculum (*SW 4000*), which will include the first module of the three-module SBIRT program.

Students may then choose to complete modules two and three and receive a certificate of completion from the Beaver College of Health Sciences. Module two consists of asynchronous online work and a two hour synchronous role play workshop which occurs in August and January. Module three consists of practicing SBIRT at your field placement site, our interprofessional clinic or other approved site, receiving feedback from your supervisor or other SBIRT-trained employee and completing assignments on AsULearn. Upon successful completion of all three modules, students will receive an electronic copy of their certificate.

Department of Social Services Child Welfare Placements (North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative)

Emphasizing public child welfare practice, the [North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative](#) provides educational opportunities to BSW and MSW students who are interested in careers in child welfare. As North Carolina grows in both population and diversity, the changing social landscape highlights an increasing need for professionally-trained child welfare workers to

help our children. Recruiting students who are new to child welfare as well as seasoned professionals who want to move forward in their careers, the Collaborative aims to ensure safe, permanent and nurturing families for North Carolina's most vulnerable citizens.

The NC Child Welfare Education Collaborative is the overall initiative working to strengthen public child welfare services by increasing the number and diversity of well trained and highly committed BSWs and MSWs in local Departments of Social Services (DSS). Emphasizing public child welfare practice, the Collaborative provides educational opportunities and/or financial support to students who are interested in careers in child welfare.

All students interested in completing a field placement within a North Carolina Department of Social Services Child Welfare Unit must participate in the CWEC and must also complete the following courses **prior to** beginning a CWEC field placement:

- *SW 4002: Competencies for Child Welfare*, offered in fall semester for on campus students and when needed in the summer for Distance Education students.
- *SW 4365: Social Work Practice with Children and Families*, offered in the spring for on campus students and in Distance Education cohorts as needed.

Students should take these two courses in the semester just before, or the semester close to entering field to prepare for DSS Child Welfare placements.

Students typically are notified about the CWEC through meetings with the BSW Academic Advisor and announcements in class and via student email lists from the Program Specialist. Applications to the Collaborative are open March 1st through June 1st for field placements beginning in a fall semester and October 1st through December 1st for field placements beginning in a spring semester. Applications must be submitted and approved before the student begins their placement.

Following submission of the field application for a DSS Child Welfare placement, students will be asked to meet with a member of the Field Faculty to review the application, discuss short and long term interests and specifics for the placement. **If approved to proceed in the Collaborative, the Field Faculty member will assist in locating the placement site. Students will need to complete all components of the Collaborative, including meeting all ASU requirements and Faculty approval to receive the certificate of completion and pre- service training credits.**

Beginning in the fall of 2023, North Carolina is reinstating its IV-E stipend program for the CWEC. If a student is interested in participating in the CWEC stipend program, they will undergo a screening and interview process which will include faculty and staff from Appalachian State University, as well as social workers and leadership team members from local NC DSS agencies. If

selected, students will move forward to complete an orientation and supplemental CWEC trainings in addition to the already required coursework and field placement. There is a limited number of spots available for the stipend program and students that are chosen to participate are expected to commit to working in a NC DSS Child Welfare Unit for two years post-graduation.

All students completing the Collaborative program will be pre-certified to work in DSS, increasing their marketability and improving services to families and children. Students are not required work in a state DSS following graduation.

School Social Work Licensure

The BSW student who desires to receive North Carolina School Social Work licensure to work as a school social worker should plan to complete the school social work elective (*SW 4270*) and complete a field placement in a public school system. In addition, two education courses (*EDU 2100: Foundations of Educational Equity* and *EDU 3000: Diverse Learners: Teaching and Learning*) will be required for licensure completion and may be counted as general electives towards the required credit hours for graduation. Students will need to contact Program Specialist, Kayla Warren, to set course permits for *EDU 2100* and *EDU 3000*. **Note, students interested in school social work practice in North Carolina should discuss their interest with Ms. Ginny Asma, the Social Work Academic Advisor, when initially meeting with her in order to include the school social work elective and education courses in their course plans.**

Following completion of these three course and internship requirements, and subsequent awarding of the BSW, graduates who wish to be licensed as a school social worker must send an email request to the Program Specialist asking for licensure application information. The Department of Social Work, along with the Reich College of Education, has been approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) to be a recommending body for social work school licensure. Once an application has been submitted to NC DPI, they will contact the Reich College of Education to recommend the eligible graduate for licensure. After the application has been submitted the process is managed by NC DPI.

BSW students who plan to earn an MSW degree and seek school social work licensure at the graduate level, may be eligible to take the graduate level school social work course, (*SW 5270*), so they only have to take one school social work course between the two degrees. Undergraduate students who wish to enroll in *SW 5270* must have senior standing (90 or more earned credit hours) and a 3.0 or higher GPA. Note that BSW students who choose to take *SW 5270* cannot transfer that course to earn elective or graduate credit toward their graduate degree, as the course has been applied to their undergraduate degree. Students must complete the Graduate School's Senior Undergrad Request Form, on the Graduate School's website, and submit it to the Graduate School when they register. BSW students can only take

undergraduate level education courses, so when completing their MSW program, the students would need to take one of the required Special Education courses at that time.

In some cases, individuals who may or may not have completed all the requirements may wish to seek school social work licensure at some point in their future. For additional and current information related to school social work licensure, please contact Kayla Warren, Program Specialist, at warrenka@appstate.edu or office phone (828) 262-8210.

Insurance

Appalachian State University participates in a student insurance program with other constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina. Most, if not all, internship hosts require professional liability insurance prior to a student's participation in an internship or practicum. ASU requires coverage for all students enrolled in internship or practicum courses. The insurance policy is issued by Peerless Insurance Company. The premium for this coverage (\$17 per semester) is charged to each student's account along with other registration fees. A certificate of insurance will be furnished to each student or internship host upon request. Insurance only covers a student for the semester that they are in their field placement.

Orientation to Field Placement

When meeting with a potential field placement site, the Field Director discusses expectations, assignments and supervision needs. The Field Director assesses if the site and experiences that a student could receive there would satisfy a student being able to meet competencies. Potential Field Instructors are introduced to the competencies and associated behaviors through dialogue and written materials. They are also directed to the Social Work Department website to review the manual and other required forms. The Field Director also reviews the assignments that the students will be required to complete in seminar while the student is at the agency, which include process recordings, an agency presentation, and Capstone Final Project. The Field Director requests a resume and *Field Instructor Information* sheet to be completed for each Field Instructor.

Upon the decision to place a student in a particular agency a letter of confirmation is sent to the Field Instructor, which also serves as an invitation to the field orientation. Included in that letter is information related to student start and end dates, seminar instructor assignment, and notification if orientation will cover changes in the program or curriculum, such as the adoption of 2015 CSWE competencies. All BSW students are required to attend this orientation. New field instructors are required to attend; experienced field instructors are strongly encouraged to attend. Continuing education credit may be awarded to field instructors who attend. The orientation occurs just prior to or at the start of the semester. During the orientation, Field Instructors and students have the opportunity to socialize and to obtain information related to field placement policies outlined in the *BSW Field Education Manual*. In addition, the Competencies are discussed, and a presentation/discussion ensues regarding the Learning Contract and Evaluation. In addition, the students may have the opportunity to meet with their Seminar Instructors and the Field Instructors have an opportunity to meet with the Field Director to review topics such as supervision, BSW generalist tasks to fulfill competencies outlined in Learning Contract and Evaluation, and potential student issues.

If a Field Instructor is unable to attend orientation, the seminar instructor is informed of the possible need to present and reinforce materials that were presented at the orientation. Field instructors are communicated with by email to receive general information, changes, or instructions for student evaluations. Field instructors are also given the opportunity to complete a survey at the end of the semester to evaluate the Seminar Instructor, the Field Director and the Field Education Program in general.

Field Schedules

The nature of the field experience varies according to the characteristics of the agency, the client population, the Field Instructor, and the student. However, field instruction is conducted within certain guidelines set by the ASU Department of Social Work. These guidelines are reflected in the field-related policies stipulated below. They are intended to maintain reasonable standards for field education, and to inform the actions of agencies, Field Instructors, and students while allowing for creative, individualized field experiences.

Successful completion of the BSW degree culminates with the student's field education instruction. The prerequisite SW 4600 must be completed and successfully passed prior to entry into the field placement semester. This instruction is fulfilled by completing SW 4650: *Social Work Field Instruction*, which is a 12 credit hour required course. The course must be taken concurrently with SW 4690: *Senior Seminar: Issues & Ethics for Field & Profession*, 3 credit hours. The field education instruction is completed during one semester in which a student is placed in a social work agency for approximately 32 hours each week, for a total of 440 hours per semester. The Department may make a temporary reduction in hours for any given semester based on changes in policy and /or the academic calendar due to unforeseen circumstances.

In order to understand the ways in which social work concepts and activities impact populations, students are expected to be in placement during regular agency business hours when professional social workers and administrators are most likely to be available for coordination, collaboration and supervision. Additionally, it is expected that all assignments and clock hours be completed at the field practicum site (the defined field practicum site may include multiple agencies and/or community home visits). Evening and weekend hours can be negotiated between the agency and the student but only with proper supervision on site.

Students are expected to be in the field according to the schedule developed with their Field Instructor. There is little flexibility within this time framework for sick leave, personal emergencies, etc. Students must make up all absences due to personal reasons. Students are expected to be in the field placement the entire semester. Students cannot "bank" hours to finish early. Exceptions will be reviewed by the Seminar Instructor and the Field Director.

Students are entitled to take holidays in accordance with university and agency schedules. However, students placed in the public school system will take the holidays that the school system takes, in order to provide consistency with the children and adolescents that the BSW students are working with. Students may also be excused from their agency for the observance of religious holidays and for participation in professional meetings. Excused absences must be negotiated by the Field Instructor, student, and Faculty Liaison according to the needs of clients, agency, and student. NOTE: Even though these are considered excused absences, the number of hours spent in the field is not reduced. Students must complete 440 hours in the field regardless of excused absences.

While students are expected to have a plan for completing the required hours, there are sometimes unexpected and unavoidable circumstances that prevent the completion within the semester. When this occurs, students may make a request to the Seminar Instructor to complete hours in the time between the end of the semester and prior to grades being turned in. If a student is still unable to complete their hours an Incomplete may be given, if the situation meets university guidelines regarding Incomplete grades. The student will be expected to obtain approval of the Seminar Instructor, agency, and Field Director. The student will create and submit a written plan to complete the necessary hours to the Field Director.

Some agencies require an orientation or training prior to the start of the semester. The student is permitted to attend this orientation/training, however only the equivalent of one week or 32 hours may count toward the 440 hours. Students are not permitted to complete tasks with clients prior to the start of the semester. All requests for these hours must be made in writing to the Field Director. Because the Field Education is primarily educational in focus and activity, students are not expected to put in additional hours to meet the needs or requests of the agency.

Evaluations

BSW field students receive grades of “satisfactory” (S) or “unsatisfactory” (U) for SW 4650: *Social Work Field Instruction*, the 12 credit hour course. However, students are evaluated on an ongoing basis, through their weekly supervision and their day-to-day interactions with the Field Instructor. Students receive clear, direct, and constructive feedback to assist them in their professional development. The student is responsible for using this feedback and supervision for their own development.

The basis for evaluation is the Learning Contract and Evaluation, since this plan was purposely designed to designate the activities and opportunities for the student to demonstrate their competence in the nine competencies and in each of the behaviors. A midterm evaluation conference is held by the Field Instructor, student, and Seminar Instructor. At this time, formal grades are not given but rather the student’s progress is closely examined in relation to each of the competencies and behaviors. If any inadequacies are noted a remediation plan is developed to assist the student in meeting all the course requirements.

Final grades of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory are assigned by the Field Director for SW 4650 at the end of the semester. The Learning Contract and Evaluation sets out not only the activities that the student will complete during the semester, but also indicates how the student will demonstrate competence in each of the competencies.

The Field Instructor meets with the student to review the student’s performance. Students are to actively participate in the completion of the formal evaluation report. Students must read and sign the report before it is submitted to the Seminar Instructor. Students who disagree with aspects of the report may file an addendum noting those areas in which there was disagreement.

The Field Instructor provides ratings of each of the behaviors, which are associated with the competencies, using the following Likert scale:

1. **Not Competent** - Student **does not demonstrate** command of essential knowledge and/or does not demonstrate application of knowledge to practice. The student is practicing well below a satisfactory level.
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2. **Limited Competence** - Student demonstrates **limited and/or inconsistent** understanding of essential knowledge and/or the application of knowledge to practice. More than the usual amount of supervision may be required. There is significant concern about the student's knowledge and/or practice level. A remediation plan is required.
3. **Emerging Competence** - Student understands the skill and demonstrates a **beginning or growing ability** to apply knowledge to practice. The student predominantly functions semi independently with appropriate supervision and support.
4. **Competence** - Student consistently understands the skill and its applicability and **effectively and routinely** demonstrates the skills in practice. The student shows an ability to function independently with appropriate supervision and support.
5. **Superior Competence** - Student adapts the skill to the setting and demonstrates **mastery of the skill in novel, diverse, and difficult contexts.**

Students receive scores for all behaviors and the average score for behaviors within each competency is calculated. While these scores do not directly equate with the course grade, they do receive considerable weight in determining the final grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

The completed evaluations are submitted to the Seminar Instructor for review and comments. The Seminar Instructor makes a recommendation to the Field Director regarding grades (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory) based on information gathered during field visits, midterm and final evaluations, input from Field Instructors and/or Supervisors, observations from the seminar class, and materials submitted by the student. The Seminar Instructor or Field Director can ask for input or obtain consultation from the Field Education Committee if necessary. The Field Director assigns the final grade.

Students receive a letter grade of A to F in SW 4690: *Senior Seminar: Issues & Ethics for Field & Profession*. The seminar grade is assigned by the Seminar Instructor. Students must make a C or better to successfully pass the course.

If a student receives an Unsatisfactory in SW 4650: *Social Work Field Instruction* or lower than a C in SW 4690, the student must re-take both of the co-requisite courses to graduate, if the student is eligible and approved to repeat the courses.

Resolving Field Education Concerns

The Field Education Program is committed to assisting students to develop their competencies for a generalist practice in the BSW curriculum. Care is taken to ensure that the student is ready for field education, the field agency is a suitable environment for the educational experience, and the Field Instructor is prepared to supervise a BSW student; issues and concerns may nonetheless arise.

These issues must be identified and addressed in a professional and timely manner. Every effort is made to assure that the student's rights to due process are protected, as well as assuring the appropriate protections to client and agency interests.

While the majority of student placements do not result in concerns for students, seminar instructors or field instructors, issues do arise at times that need collaborative action to resolve. The following issues need to be addressed in order for students to have the best opportunity to demonstrate competencies: personal issues manifesting in behavior that negatively impacts the student's ability to perform adequately in a field placement (for example, mental health, substance abuse, health concerns, family matters, legal), supervision issues, attendance issues, ethical issues, issues of safety for student or clients, change in agency supervisor, students in danger of being dismissed by the field placement agency, or insufficient progress towards completing the Learning Contract and Evaluation within a timely manner. Please note this list is illustrative not exhaustive.

The severity of the concern will influence the level of intervention and steps followed.

In extreme circumstances, a student may be immediately suspended or terminated from the field agency. These may include but are not limited to a) danger of harm to clients, to students, to other professionals, b) breaches of client confidentiality, c) behavior that violates appropriate professional boundaries, d) impairment, or e) agency request. The Field Director will consult with Social Work Department administrators to determine the appropriate course of action. Engaging in conduct that results in dismissal from the field may also result in immediate dismissal from the program or an Academic Performance Review (APR). Given the professional nature of the BSW program, such action may be taken even if the behavior occurs close in time to what would otherwise be the student's graduation.

When other concerns are identified, the following steps are strongly recommended.

Issues in the seminar:

1. The Seminar Instructor and student should attempt to resolve concerns as soon as possible through open discussion of the issues. Possible solutions will be identified, implemented, and documented. Documentation may include email summaries of meetings and/or the *Academic Standards Concerns Form (BSW Student Handbook)*. The Field Director may serve as a resource to assist the student and the Seminar Instructor in resolving concerns.
 2. If a satisfactory solution is not reached and/or if another issue arises, the BSW Program Director and Field Director should be contacted. The Directors may consult with the Department Chair. The faculty member and Directors may use a variety of documented methods including joint and individual meetings to assist in resolving the problems. Documentation may include email summaries of meetings and/or the *Academic Standards Concern Form (BSW Student Handbook)*.
 3. If agreeable solutions are not found, the problem is not remedied, or a new problem occurs, the Field Director should be notified as soon as possible. The Field Director should consult with Social Work Department administrators to determine the appropriate course of action. The Department Chair will decide the course of action, in consultation with appropriate University and Department personnel. Possible actions may include but are not limited to the following:
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- a) Gather more information which may include contact with the student, faculty members, agency, or others
- b) Conduct a meeting to resolve issues
- c) Consult with Field Education Committee
- d) Develop a written performance contract
- e) Remove the student from the field agency
- f) Conduct an APR
- g) Suspend/dismiss the student without an APR

Issues in the field placement:

1. The Field Instructor and student should attempt to resolve concerns as soon as possible through open discussion of the issues. Possible solutions will be identified, implemented, and documented. Documentation may include email summaries of meetings and/or the *Academic Standards Concerns Form*. The Seminar Instructor and the Field Director may serve as resources to assist the student and the Field Instructor in resolving concerns. Students who feel uncomfortable talking to the field instructor should consult with the seminar instructor.
1. If a satisfactory solution is not reached and/or if another issue arises, the seminar instructor should be contacted. The Seminar Instructor may consult with the Field Director and may use a variety of documented methods including joint and individual meetings to assist in resolving the problems. Documentation may include email summaries of meetings and/or the *Academic Standards Concerns Form*.
1. If agreeable solutions are not found, the problem is not remedied, or a new problem occurs, the Field Director should be notified. The Field Director should consult with Social Work Department administrators to determine the appropriate course of action. Possible actions may include but are not limited to the following items. The Department Chair will decide the course of action, in consultation with appropriate University and Department personnel. Possible actions may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Gather more information which may include contact with the student, faculty members, agency, or others
 - b. Conduct a meeting to resolve issues
 - c. Consult with Field Education Committee
 - d. Develop a written performance contract
 - e. Remove the student from the field agency
 - f. Conduct an APR (see *BSW Student Handbook*)
 - g. Suspend/dismiss the student without an APR

Exceptions to Field Decisions

If a student requests an exception to any of the above policies, the student is required to write a detailed email to the Field Director and provide a rationale for the exception. The Field Director may consult with the Field Committee, BSW Program Director, or Chair of the Social Work Department as needed. Exceptions will not be granted if the learning experience of the student is in jeopardy or the departmental resources cannot support the request.

Department of Social Work Policies for Students

Safety Policy

In the event of concern of immediate danger, witnessing a crime, or observing suspicious activity, do not hesitate to call 911 and contact Campus Police (828-262-8000). Non-urgent concerns can be reported to 828-262-2150 or using the online report form: <https://police.appstate.edu/report-crime>

Please notify your instructor, program director, or department chair immediately if there are any incidents or concerns regarding your safety or the safety of others.

Please see the following link for additional information:

<https://emergency.appstate.edu/basic-emergency-responses>

The policy regarding Distance Education/App State Online Emergency Preparedness Information can be found here:

<https://distancestudents.appstate.edu/sites/emergency-preparedness-information>

Safety in the Field

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with the safety policies and procedures of their field placement agencies. In addition, each student should have a conversation with their supervisor related to these policies and the method to reach your supervisor, including a plan for coverage if the supervisor is not available.

If a safety issue occurs with a student, the student or Field Instructor should contact the Seminar Instructor immediately using the contact information shared at the beginning of the semester. If the student or Field Instructor cannot reach the Seminar Instructor, then they should contact the Field Director (cell: 828-406-9686) or the Department Chair (office: 512-429-4983).

Snow/Inclement Weather Policy

Appalachian State University reserves the right to cancel classes during inclement weather. Information regarding weather cancellations, closings, and delays can be found at <http://www.appstate.edu/> and will be the primary source for information should the university's operating schedule change. In addition, a recorded message announcing a change in normal operation will be available at (828) 262-SNOW. When considering travel to your classes, seminar, field placement, and other required course or field placement activities, please consider your personal safety as your first priority. Each course instructor will determine individual course attendance and participation requirements and how these will be impacted by adverse weather.

Instructors will address their planned responses to adverse weather in their "Course Policies" section of each syllabus. Students will be responsible for making up any hours, missed activities, assignments, and field hours, when possible. In the event of extended inclement weather or in situations in which activities cannot be made up, the course instructor, field instructor, or field director, as appropriate, may work with students to develop alternative assignments to meet course requirements.

Expectations for Professional Development

In order to meet our responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that our graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the Department of Social Work has set forth additional standards for students in the BSW and MSW Programs. The

department carefully evaluates the performance of admitted students in five general areas: 1) Scholastic; 2) Professional Identity and Self Awareness; 3) Ethical Behavior; 4) Interpersonal Relationship Skills; and 5) Commitment to Diversity, Social Justice, and Human Rights exemplified through the Academic Standards for Retention for each program. Failure to meet these academic standards may result in dismissal from the program. Additional information on these standards can be found in the *BSW Student Handbook*.

Use of Technology

All faculty, staff, and students are expected to adhere to the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers (2017):

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English> and the NASW, ASWB, CSWE, and CSWA *Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice* (2017): https://www.socialworkers.org/includes/newIncludes/homepage/PRA-BRO-33617.TechStandards_FINAL_POSTING.pdf. Note that faculty may have different expectations regarding the use of technology and devices in the classroom and students are expected to abide by those expectations.

Except in the event of an emergency, in no case should students send or receive personal communications during class, nor should they leave the classroom to do so.

If there are any course or classroom activities regarding actual clients (individuals, families, groups, communities, or organizations), students, or other individuals, extra care should be taken to ensure that all ethical, professional, and departmental standards are adhered to in order to protect confidentiality and privacy.

Please note that the Department's AsULearn template includes a course "netiquette" policy, under Course Policies and Resources.

Use of Social Media

All faculty, staff, and students are expected to adhere to the *Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers* (2017):

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English> and the NASW, ASWB, CSWE, and CSWA *Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice* (2017): https://www.socialworkers.org/includes/newIncludes/homepage/PRA-BRO-33617.TechStandards_FINAL_POSTING.pdf

These standards specifically reference the use of social media. The Department will not routinely seek information regarding students through the use of social media, search engines, or other online resources without students' informed consent, but may do so for compelling reasons such as concerns regarding safety and well-being or when there are concerns about compliance with our *Academic Standards for Retention*. The Department reserves the right to take action on any misuse of social media that comes to our attention.

NASW-NC provides excellent resources for Social Media and the Social Worker:

<https://www.naswnc.org/page/320?&hhsearchterms=%22social+and+media%22>

Confidentiality

It is anticipated that students will interact with communities, organizations, and clients through service learning, volunteer experiences, and courses. In preparation for this, students are informed of the need and requirements for confidentiality. If there are any course or classroom activities in which personal information regarding actual clients (individuals, families, groups, communities, or

organizations), students, or other individuals, is shared, extra care should be taken to ensure that all ethical, professional, and departmental standards are adhered to in order to protect confidentiality and privacy. Prior to entry to the Field Practicum students are required to read and sign the *Confidentiality Requirements* document. Students are reminded that as they share experiences in the classroom setting it is important to be aware of and conform to agency policies regarding confidentiality. Faculty and instructors are not able to guarantee that they can keep information students disclose to them confidential. Under certain circumstances, faculty, instructors, and staff are required to disclose information to University and other authorities.

Mandatory Title IX Reporting

All faculty, instructors, and staff are mandated to report to the Title IX Coordinator any information disclosed by a student that suggests the student has been the victim of sex- or gender-based harassment, discrimination, or violence. Faculty, instructors, and staff cannot keep the disclosing student's identity private. Once disclosed, the information must be reported within 72 hours. The Title IX Coordinator determines whether Title IX applies to the alleged offenses. The Title IX staff will work with the student to determine the next steps. Some alleged offenses may not be related to Title IX but may be relevant to the student's membership in a protected class. For additional information about the forms of harassment and discrimination addressed by Title IX, see: [https://policy.appstate.edu/Discrimination and Harassment](https://policy.appstate.edu/Discrimination_and_Harassment). For information about Reporting see: <https://titleix.appstate.edu/reporting>.

Mandatory Reporting to NC Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services

In North Carolina, all permanent and temporary residents are considered mandated reporters for maltreatment and abuse towards children and elderly or disabled adults. Additionally, professional social workers and social work students have a clear professional obligation to report.

In social work classes students may reveal personal information related to their families that indicates that maltreatment and/or abuse and/or neglect is occurring (or has occurred) by a caregiver toward children, seniors, or disabled adults. In such situations, it is important to maintain confidentiality appropriately, but to recognize that state laws require that a report of suspected maltreatment be made to the appropriate protective services program. Students becoming aware of maltreatment concerns should discuss the situation with their instructor, the BSW or MSW Program Director, or the Department Chair, unless the disclosed information would suggest immediate harm, in which case students should make a referral immediately to the local Department of Social Services. Instructors, faculty members, academic advisors, and faculty mentors who become aware of concerns students disclose individually or in class are similarly obligated to make appropriate referrals in accordance with state statutes, consulting with the BSW or MSW Program Director and/or the Department Chair unless immediate reporting is warranted. Students are encouraged to seek appropriate assistance for difficulties and stressors in their families that could be/are contributing to maltreatment and should be aware of the potential outcomes of disclosing information that suggests or indicates maltreatment, abuse, or neglect. See NC State laws regarding the mandatory reporting of suspected child and elder abuse and neglect.

For suspected child abuse or neglect:

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/child-welfare-services/child-protective-services>.

For suspected elder abuse or neglect:

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/adult-protective-services>.

Also note that, per [Appalachian State University's Policy 111.2 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect](#), section 4.1.1 Adults have a mandatory duty to report child abuse to the Appalachian Police Department. Reports must be made immediately if the adult reasonably believes that child abuse has occurred.

Grievances

Students who are dissatisfied with decisions regarding course concerns, final course grades, Professional Sequence applications, Academic Performance Reviews, or termination from the BSW Program are expected to follow University-wide and Departmental grievance procedures as outlined in the *BSW Student Handbook* and *Field Education Manual*. See the university's grade appeal process at: <https://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/resources/final-grade-appeal-procedure>.

Students may have concerns in a course that are not related to a final grade but may be related to grades on assignments in a course or other aspects of the course. When these concerns arise, students are encouraged to address their concerns directly with the faculty member, in accordance with both University procedures and the Programs' *Academic Standards for Retention*. If the concerns are not addressed to the student's satisfaction, then the student may address these concerns with the Department Chair. (See the *BSW Student Handbook* and *Field Education Manuals*).

Please note: The Appalachian State University Department of Social Work website, student handbooks, and field manuals are intended for information purposes only and do not constitute a contract between the University and the student. While the departmental website presents policies and programs as accurately as possible, the department reserves the right to revise any section or part without notice or obligation. Changes in degree requirements do not affect students already enrolled in a degree program, although adaptations may be needed. Degree requirements can be found in the Undergraduate or Graduate Bulletin and Program of Study for the student's year of admission to the university. Changes in departmental and academic policies become effective for all students on the date approved for implementation, therefore all Social Work students are subject to those policies as posted herein.

