

Kansas State University

Social Work Program

Field Education Manual

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## Field Faculty

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## KSU SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL

### **The Capstone Experience**

Students in the KSU Social Work Program complete their undergraduate education by spending their final semester in a block field placement (also referred to as a practicum or internship). Block placements are "full time" placements done over the course of one semester, after all academic coursework has been successfully completed. Social Work Professional Seminar (SOCWK 564) must be taken concurrent with Field Experience (SOCWK 562) and should be the only other class a KSU social work student takes during the practicum semester. Many social work programs use a concurrent field placement model, wherein students attend skills or practice classes while they are in field placements for two or three days a week for two consecutive semesters. The KSU social work faculty has found the block placement model to be successful for two primary reasons: it provides more consistency for the agency, the student and clients, since the student is in placement at least four days each week; and students enter the field placement well-prepared to work with clients because they have already learned basic social work skills and used them with practice clients (usually other students).

The field placement consists of **430 hours** in the field, which translates into approximately 12 to 16 weeks in the agency. The scheduling of specific days and hours is left to the student and field instructor.

### **Foundations of the KSU Social Work Program Mission, Themes, and Competencies**

The mission of the Social Work Program at Kansas State University is to graduate competent and ethical social workers who espouse the values of the social work profession and who have the skills necessary to enter the job market as generalist practitioners who serve state, national and international communities.

The social work program goals are to:

1. Prepare students for beginning generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in a diverse society and international community.
2. Provide students with the academic foundation for further study and professional development needed to provide competent and ethical services to clients.
3. Use social work values, knowledge, and skills in service to the practicing social work community and the people of Kansas, nation and international communities.

Faculty of the KSU Social Work Program will:

1. Contribute to the social work knowledge base through publication and presentation at professional meetings.
2. Participate in the life of the university and local communities.
3. Engage in consultation, evaluation, and development of social and related services in Kansas.

Four overarching program themes are infused throughout the curriculum:

1. *Strengths perspective* within a problem-solving practice approach  
 The human condition is characterized by strengths and challenges.  
 Social work practice is about identifying and capitalizing on client strengths while recognizing challenges and applying a problem-solving process to come to optimal resolutions.
2. *Ecological systems perspective*  
 Everything is connected to everything else, and there are understandable relationships among those connections that help us to understand people and their social environments.  
 Goals of practice are to identify and maximize the positive forces within clients and their environments to minimize obstacles to problem resolution.
3. *Social justice and social change*  
 Informed by conflict perspective, we acknowledge the effects of social injustices such as racism, ageism and sexism, economic inequalities, and oppression of many kinds. We recognize that social realities and social welfare institutions are social constructs, made by people and therefore amenable to change by people. As social work professionals, we are bound to our Code of Ethics to engage with the community in efforts to bring about social justice.
4. *Embracing diversity*  
 We celebrate diversity and believe that we are all richer for differences.  
 We acknowledge historical realities in the social evolution of this country that have resulted in embedded inequalities based on various categories of diversity and seek to be continually cognizant of those issues and to address them with sensitivity and perseverance.

**Program Core Competencies and Behavioral Indicators**  
Established by the Council on Social Work Education (2022)

Graduates of the KSU Social Work Program will be able to:

*Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior*

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- Manage personal and professional value conflicts and effective reactions;
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior; and
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.

*Competency 2 – Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice*

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

*Competency 3 – Engage Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Practice*

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

*Competency 4 – Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice*

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

*Competency 5 – Engage in Policy Practice*

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

*Competency 6 – Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities*

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

*Competency 7 – Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities*

- 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; and
- demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing mutually agreed-on goals.

*Competency 8 – Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities*

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidenced-informed interventions to achieve mutually agreed-on plans and increase the capacities of clients and constituencies; and
- incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate, with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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

- select and use culturally appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

## **The KSU Social Work Program Curriculum**

The social work program at Kansas State University delivers a curriculum that stems from its mission and goals and reflects the mission of the university and is also designed to reflect the standards for baccalaureate social work programs accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The curriculum is developed around the premise that students progress along a learning continuum from knowing, to understanding, to doing and this is reflected in the way that the courses are sequenced. More specifically, faculty assume that (1) there is a hierarchy of learning that begins with the ability to recognize and describe knowledge, values, and skills, (2) students can best incorporate new information by examining it in terms of their own life experiences, (3) students are capable of examining their own values, beliefs, and experiences within a context of support and acceptance, and (4) as students progress through the curriculum they are able to demonstrate skills, clarify their values, and apply knowledge by direct application to actual problems and situations.

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.

In order to fulfill our program's mission to graduate competent and ethical social workers students must have a strong foundation in generalist practice. Generalist social work practice in the Social Work Program at Kansas State University is defined as engaging individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations for the purpose of enhancing transactions between them and their social environments. Students who enter the program move through a series of courses and experiences designed to enable them to assume entry-level professional social work roles in a variety of settings and locations and with diverse clientele. Generalist social work practice assumes a value and ethical stance consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

We further define a generalist practitioner as a social worker who is able to assess clients and their situations while recognizing that the human condition is characterized by both strengths and limitations. The ecological systems perspective frames the "lens" through which the generalist practitioner views clients and their environments and makes these assessments. The basic skill set of the generalist practitioner includes the ability to recognize social injustice and engage the client and community in ways to ameliorate the effects of this injustice. Generalist practitioners are able to both assess and appreciate diversity among their clientele, recognizing that the diversity among us creates both challenges and opportunities for individual and societal growth. (See Appendix A for full list of courses and descriptions)

Each competency is measured at least twice in classes throughout the curriculum and all competencies and practice behaviors are measured in Field Experience (see Appendix F and G).



## **The Placement Process**

During the semester prior to the field experience, students take Field Practicum Preparation (SOCWK 550) taught by the field faculty member on each campus. The primary purpose of this class is to identify and secure a mutually-satisfying field placement for students for the following semester. Students become familiar with a variety of types of social service agencies and social work settings as well as gain information about processes and resources used in providing social work services. This course is intended to inform and enhance the transition from classroom to field.

Early in the semester, each student will provide the field faculty with information regarding his/her desire to be placed in a particular geographic area and any tentative requests regarding agency, client population or area of concentration. The field faculty contacts potential agencies to assess the agency's and field instructor's willingness and ability to offer a field placement opportunity. Once the potential match of student and agency is made, the student arranges for an interview. Taking into consideration the student's desires and the faculty's assessment of the student and his/her "fit" with the identified agency and field instructor, the faculty makes the final decision regarding the student's placement.

### **Criteria for selection of Field Agencies and Agency Field Instructors**

#### Criteria for selection of Field Agencies:

1. Administration, board members and staff are interested in and committed to the value of professional social work education, as demonstrated by a willingness to commit agency resources to the social work field practicum process.
2. Provisions are made for the allotment of staff time, for supervision, reimbursement to students for expenditures involved in rendering services (such as mileage) and professional development of staff involved in field instruction.
3. Agency administration makes possible the creation and maintenance of a situation favorable for learning that is compatible with the educational objectives of the school.
4. The agency has the ability to offer opportunities for a variety of educational experiences such as direct service delivery to clients as well as learning experiences working with and through other agencies, community resources and community groups.
5. The agency is willing to maintain good communication with the field instructor and the university.
6. The agency has an available qualified field instructor (individual with a bachelors or masters of social work with 2 years post-degree social work experience) or will agree to the student receiving field instruction from a qualified off-site instructor chosen by the social work program.
7. The agency agrees to allow access to the field liaison for site visits with student and field instructor to monitor student progress and field activities.
8. The agency agrees to schedule field hours considering the student's seminar class times.
9. Employment-based field opportunities MUST be approved by the school in advance, must ensure that student learning is central, and must provide learning activities and field instruction that is separate from employment duties. See Appendix B for application.

Criteria for selection of Agency Field Instructors:

1. The field instructor must hold either a baccalaureate or master's degree in social work and have two years of post-social work degree direct practice experience.
2. If an agency is utilized for practicum placement that does not employ a social worker with two years of post-social work degree experience, the Social Work Program will arrange for field instruction to be provided by a qualified social worker outside of the agency and the agency will assign a task supervisor to oversee the activities of the student. The task supervisor to whom the student is assigned should possess an understanding of and commitment to the purposes and values of social work and social work education.
3. The field instructor has an interest in teaching and willingness to invest in developing ongoing teaching skills through reading, workshops and meetings sponsored by this or other accredited social work programs.
4. The field instructor has knowledge of the community, the agency and its relations to other local services.
5. The field instructor has the ability to help students translate theoretical knowledge into professional practice.
6. The field instructor is able to respond imaginatively and creatively in developing field experience relating to the school's educational objectives.
7. The field instructor has available time and enthusiasm to carry on the responsibilities of field instruction.
8. The field instructor agrees to provide meaningful direct service activities for the student's learning that include learning opportunities with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
9. The field instructor understands his/her role as gatekeeper and agrees to work with the field liaison to address any issues of concern with the student's work, develop a plan of action for enhancing the student's practice opportunities and professional growth, and evaluate the student's progress and demonstration of competencies.

**The Gatekeeping Role of the Field Instructor**

The team approach to field instruction requires that the field instructor not only take on the role of mentor and teacher, but also places him/her in the position of acting as a "gatekeeper" for the profession. The NASW Code of Ethics compels social workers to "act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work". KSU Social Work Program faculty interpret that to mean preventing students who cannot demonstrate the ability to provide quality social work service provision and comply with the Code of Ethics from earning the social work degree and eligibility for licensure. In the event that a student has, during placement, failed to perform social work duties adequately or has acted in a way that is prohibited by the Code of Ethics, the field instructor must be prepared and willing to deal with such infractions in a frank and open manner. While these occurrences are rare, it is important that the field instructor understand that his/her responsibility to the profession is primary.

### **Mutual Expectations of Student, Agency and University**

A field placement is finalized after faculty has approved the match and the student and agency practicum instructor have interviewed each other. Then the student, agency field instructor and school's field liaison act as a team to create the best practicum experience possible for all concerned. Toward that end, the following Field Standards have been adopted by the KSU Social Work Program.

#### **Responsibilities of the Student in Field:**

1. A student's behavior reflects on Kansas State University, the field placement agency and the social work profession. Students are expected to act responsibly and professionally.
2. Students are expected to abide by the same agency rules applied to agency staff members.
3. Students are expected to complete 430 clock hours in field placement, over a minimum of twelve weeks, during the agency's normal business hours.
4. Students are to dress appropriately and be prompt in meeting the schedule that is agreed upon between the student and the field instructor.
5. Students are bound to maintain the confidentiality of the agency and the clients served: their names, identifying information and circumstances. Any information, changed to protect client confidentiality, shared in the journal or the seminar class is also treated according to the standards for confidentiality put forth in the NASW Code of Ethics. (Appendix J.)
6. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow agency policies and HIPAA guidelines regarding use of information from case records.
7. Students are expected to be at the placement agency when scheduled except for absences approved by the field instructor. Regular university holidays and breaks may be observed during the field placement.
8. Students are responsible for all commitments made to clients, colleagues and other persons in relation to the provision of services.
9. Students should be able to openly discuss with the agency field instructor such matters as too much or too little work, conflicts with respect to any part of the field experience or matters concerning special learning needs experienced by the student in the agency.
10. Students are expected to prepare clients in advance of periods of absence from the agency and have field work assignments completed in a timely manner so that a replacement can take over job tasks when necessary.
11. Students must carry professional liability insurance for the duration of the practicum, with a minimum coverage of \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000. Students may not begin practicum until the Certificate of Liability Insurance has been submitted to the office of field education.
12. Students are expected to comply with social media policies set forth by the agency and the program.
13. Students must have reliable transportation to get to and from the practicum agency.
14. Students are expected to practice safety measures learned in courses prior to practicum and to familiarize themselves with and follow the safety standards utilized by their practicum agency.

Responsibilities of Agency Field Instructor:

1. Field experience is teaching through practice. This requires a commitment to the teaching role and delineation between "student supervision" and "fieldwork instruction". The agency field instructor should be willing and able to set aside time to guide the student in his/her professional growth.
2. The agency field instructor provides opportunities for a variety of experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations and community and offers support and guidance through which students can demonstrate their understanding of social work knowledge, values and skills.
3. The agency field instructor is familiar with the educational philosophy of the school and has general knowledge of content of courses the student has taken.
4. The agency field instructor is willing to attend sessions or workshops provided through the school and related to the field placement experience, and may serve on professional committees relating to the field.
5. The agency field instructor sees that preparations are made in the agency, prior to the student's arrival, for access to the building and technology, workspace, assignments, selection of learning opportunities, and orientation to office culture, processes and policies.
6. The agency field instructor maintains open communication with the field liaison to discuss progress and needs of the student in placement. Contact should be initiated **immediately** in the event of any concerns or problems with the placement or the student.
7. The agency field instructor reviews agency safety policies with the student at the beginning of the practicum semester.

See Appendix C for the Memorandum of Understanding that delineates these mutual expectations.

KSU Social Work Program Responsibility to Agencies and Field Instructors:

The school's responsibility rests primarily in the area of coordinating and supporting field instruction. Thereby, the Social Work program will:

1. Match student interest, goals and educational objectives with the agency and instructor most suited to meet those needs.
2. Keep in close communication with agency field instructors via telephone, email and personal contact during the semester.
3. Inform agency field instructors of specific needs of the individual student identified by faculty during prior semesters in the program and any accommodations needed for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
4. See that students have secured financial, housing and travel resources to carry through the program.
5. Assist the student in the resolution of learning challenges that may develop as the placement progresses.
6. Take responsibility for informing agency administration and agency field instructors of significant curriculum changes occurring at the school.
7. Seek feedback regarding curriculum content and student preparation for social work practice.

## **Practicum Policies**

### **Hours**

The 430 hours required for practicum should be completed during the agency's regular business hours. Most agencies are open during typical business hours of 8:00 to 5:00 Monday through Friday, but some after-hours social work activities are required in some settings. Practicum hours should be scheduled primarily when the agency field instructor or designated professional mentor is present. Students are entitled to all university holidays, but may choose to go to the agency if it is open on those days. Students will also observe agency holidays not observed by the university. Only hours directly related to practicum may be counted toward the 430 total. Traveling to and from practicum, lunch and other breaks, holidays or any other time the student is absent from practicum do not count toward practicum hours. Students are expected to be excused from practicum activities to attend the Professional Seminar class taken concurrent with Field Experience. Documentation of practicum hours, signed by the student and field instructor, is kept on a form provided by the program and submitted when requested by the field liaison. (See Appendix E)

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

All students in field placements must carry professional liability insurance for the duration of the practicum, with a minimum coverage of \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000. Students may not begin practicum until the Certificate of Liability Insurance has been submitted to the Office of Field Education.

### **Social Media and Technology Policy for Practicum**

While at field practicum, students must refrain from using their personal phones and electronic devices for emails, phone calls, text messages and internet sites that are personal in nature and from conducting personal internet browsing from agency computers, except as explicitly allowed by the agency. Use of social media including personal text messaging, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook postings should **never** reference information, events or people related to field placement. Practicum-related electronic documents that may be confidential in nature should not be downloaded or saved onto personal or home laptops, computers, or devices. Every precaution should be taken to ensure personal /professional boundaries and to protect the safety and privacy of clients and the agency as well as the privacy of the social work student.

Students should be cognizant of sharing practicum-related information with each other outside the classroom setting. Group texts and group messages related to practicum, even if they are only available to the students in the class, not only may violate confidentiality and exclude the seminar instructor, but detract from the information shared in the Professional Seminar.

### **Employment Based Practicum**

Employment-based practicum placements are an option for students already employed at social service organizations who wish to use their current employment position as their practicum site. Student assignments and employee tasks may qualify as field hours when directly linked to social work competencies and level of practice. These criteria can also be met by having students take on additional and/or new opportunities at the agency outside of their employment position.

The purpose of an Employment Based Practicum (EBP) is to allow the student to use his/her place of ongoing employment as the site for the field practicum. Students may **apply** for an EBP if the following criteria are met:

- The employing agency must qualify as a practicum site under requirements established by the Office of Field Education as outlined in the Field Practicum Manual.
- CSWE guidelines relevant to employment-based practicum placements must be adhered to by the student and the employing agency. This policy states that practicum tasks, clients, and assignments can be the same as their employment position as long as tasks have clear linkages to the nine social work competencies and their associated behaviors.
- Students must have an identified supervisor (field instructor) that oversees their practicum hours. The designated field instructor must be approved by the Office of Field Education. The field instructor must have an MSW or BSW from a CSWE-accredited institution with two (2) years of post-MSW or post-BSW social work experience. Field education supervision may be provided by the same supervisor if field education supervision is distinct from employment supervision.
- Agency must be willing to allow the student/employee to attend weekly Field Seminar.
- Agency must be willing to facilitate educationally-focused field placement experiences and connect the student to learning opportunities within the agency to fulfill all nine (9) required competencies.
- The student is required to complete 430 hours of practicum. The learning experiences assigned for the student must meet the requirements of the Kansas State University social work program and the nine (9) social work competencies.

Any student who wishes to apply for Employment Based Practicum must submit application materials supplied by the Field Education office by 60 days prior to the start of the practicum. (Appendix B)

Agencies that offer paid practicum opportunities to students may do so without being considered Employment Based Practicum. However, students should be made aware of any restrictions or obligations this creates for their practicum placements.

## **Safety**

Students' orientation to the practicum agency should include a thorough explanation of safety standards and protocols employed by the agency. Students should review and be prepared to employ the safety tips they have been provided in courses prior to and during practicum and incorporate any additional agency-specific protocols. Any agency safety training provided to staff should be made available to students as early in the practicum as possible. Students should be knowledgeable about the agency's weapons policy, in accordance with relevant state laws, relative to their own or others' right to carry weapons, their use, and response to the use of weapons.

Situations that pose threats to students' health and safety may include work with clients who are angry or feel mistreated, clients with high-risk factors such as substance use, history of violent behavior, resistance to authority, and unstable mental conditions; non-clients in the agency area or neighborhoods; biohazards and toxic materials; animals and pests such as roaches, bed bugs and scabies.

Standard practices to reduce risk in the agency or on home visits include:

- Wearing comfortable, washable, clothing and shoes that are easy to move in.

- Wearing little or no jewelry that could be used to cause harm, e.g. long earrings, necklaces. Sitting on wood or plastic furniture without upholstery or standing.
- Leaving bags and purses in the car or office; carrying only a notebook and cell phone.
- Positioning oneself close to the door.
- Being aware of one's surroundings, including sounds, smells, and location of people.

Preparation for home visits should include:

- Knowing the client by reading case information, talking with workers/supervisor.
- Knowing the environment and what to expect, including the neighborhood, house and pets. Using a reliable vehicle with sufficient gas, valuables locked in the trunk, and parked where exit is not blocked
- Communicating clearly with colleagues and/or supervisor one's whereabouts and expected time of return.
- Carrying agency or personal cell phone, concealed but easily available.

Constant assessment of the situation and safe responses include:

- Paying attention to feelings of uneasiness or fear
- Avoiding escalation of contentious conversations by softening one's voice, changing the subject, diverting the agitated person's attention, or leaving.

In addition, any student who works with individuals who may have communicable diseases/infections should use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Standard Precautions for All Patient Care](#).

### **Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Violence and Stalking**

Kansas State University prohibits and will act upon any actions that constitute discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or stalking as described in the KSU Policy and Procedures Manual. This Policy covers employees, students, applicants for employment or admission, contractors, vendors, visitors, guests, and participants in University-sponsored programs or activities. Supervisors and administrators must report complaints to the Office of Institutional Equity ("OIE") immediately upon notification (including by email if after regular business hours), keep complaints confidential, protect the privacy of all parties involved in a complaint, and prevent or eliminate discrimination, harassment or retaliation; failure to do so is a violation of this Policy. Students who experience any of these behaviors in or related to the practicum setting should contact their field liaison immediately.

### **Change or Termination of Placement**

A student, agency field instructor, or the faculty field liaison may initiate discussion to review the circumstances in the placement setting. A student or field instructor who believes that a placement is not working out should first attempt to discuss issues directly with the field instructor or student in an effort to resolve them. When there is concern that the placement is in jeopardy, the field liaison should be contacted immediately, at which time the parties involved will be consulted to determine the feasibility of a plan for corrective action on the part of any or all of the parties. Such discussion may result in a mutually agreed upon plan to modify and continue the current placement or in termination of the placement.

A substitute placement of a student removed from a practicum setting will be determined based on the circumstances of the removal. Removal from a practicum based on the student's violation of the NASW Code of Ethics, inappropriate behavior, danger of harm to him/herself or others, or egregious violation of standard work ethics may trigger the student review process and the student may be terminated from the social work program. Placement in another setting may be explored when the reason for termination is less extreme. Depending on the circumstances and timing of the substitute placement, some of the hours accrued in the initial placement MAY be credited to the student in the second placement.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation of student performance is an ongoing process that begins with assessment of the student's knowledge and skills entering practicum, designing the learning agreement to provide for meaningful learning opportunities with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, scheduled and impromptu instructional meetings and completion of formal mid-semester and final evaluations.

### The Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement (see Appendix E) provides the basic plan for the student's learning activities throughout the practicum experience. The agreement should be completed by the student and field instructor within the first three weeks of placement. Students are instructed to work on the initial draft of the Learning Agreement as they are oriented to the agency and learn what tasks and activities they will be doing. Those tasks and activities, which relate to learning opportunities with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, are then placed in the learning agreement under the competencies the student will demonstrate when completing them. Then the student and field instructor should complete the agreement together. It is not a static document and should be modified throughout the practicum as needed. It should act as a tool to identify, explore and categorize learning opportunities. It should be consulted regularly in order to evaluate completed assignments and plan for next steps and serve as the point of discussion in instructional conferences and evaluations.

### Mid-semester Evaluation

The purpose of the mid-semester evaluation (see Appendix F) is to review the student's performance and professional development during the first half of the social work practicum and to plan for tasks and activities that will allow students to demonstrate their competency by the end of the placement.

The student and the Agency Practicum Instructor should complete the evaluation separately and then meet to compare/discuss their responses and arrive at a rating for each item. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Agency Practicum Instructor's rating is submitted. If the student has disagreements with the ratings or comments, those should be submitted with the evaluation form.

The mid-term evaluation narrative focuses on a formative evaluation of the student's needs for further development and includes plans to address those needs during the remainder of the practicum experience.



### Final Evaluation

As with the mid-semester evaluation, the student and the Agency Practicum Instructor should complete the final evaluation (see Appendix G) separately and then meet to compare/discuss their responses and arrive at a rating for each item. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Agency Practicum Instructor's rating is submitted. If the student has disagreements with the ratings or comments, those should be submitted with the evaluation form.

The final evaluation narrative focuses on a summative evaluation of the student's accomplishments during the practicum and any continuing practice challenges post-graduation.

It is extremely important to be honest and accurate in this final evaluation as it becomes part of the student's permanent record and is sometimes requested for review by graduate schools of social work or by the Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board to clarify issues in applications for admission or licensure.

The field instructor will be asked for a reference to the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board for any student who applies for licensure in the state of Kansas. Any student who is rated satisfactorily on the university's field evaluation should reasonably expect to be recommended for licensure.

### Student's Evaluation of Practicum and Agency Practicum Instructor

Students are asked to evaluate their practicum experience and their agency practicum instructors at the end of the practicum semester. (See Appendix H) These evaluations are used by the Field Education Office to identify strengths and areas for improvement or concerns in practicum settings. While problems in the agency or with the practicum instructor are likely to become known and are addressed during the placement, these written evaluations are used in the aggregate by the Field Education Office to guide placement decisions for future students.

## LINKS TO APPENDICES

- A. [KSU Social Work Program Course List](#)
- B. [Employment-Based Practicum Application](#)
- C. [Memorandum of Understanding](#)
- D. [Orientation to the Agency: A Checklist](#)
- E. [Field Learning Agreement](#)
- F. [Mid-semester Practicum Evaluation](#)
- G. [Final Practicum Evaluation](#)
- H. [Student Evaluation of Field Placement/Field Instructor](#)
- I. [NASW Code of Ethics](#)

Appendices and additional resources for field instructors are available on our website:

<https://www.k-state.edu/sasw/social-work/academics/practicum.html>