



University of Montana School of Social Work BSW_MSW Generalist Year Learning Agreement

Learning Agreement Purpose Statement

The Learning Agreement outlines the framework for the student's educational journey at the practicum agency. With support from the Agency Field Instructor (AFI), students are tasked with crafting specific, personalized learning activities that align with competency areas. These activities should incorporate four key dimensions: knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. The formulation of these tasks is influenced by the opportunities the agency offers, the student's learning needs, interests, and aspirations, as well as the practice competencies mandated by the School of Social Work and the [2022 CSWE Educational and Policy Standards](#). The activities should be measurable, tailored to the site, and aimed at fostering the student's mastery of various professional competencies.

Students should complete their Learning Agreement through their Sonia account **by the fourth week of the semester**. The Agreement undergoes review by the AFI, the Field Liaison, and the student during the practicum's three site visits. It is an essential tool for evaluating practicum performance and progress throughout the academic year and is pivotal in determining the student's final practicum grade (credit/no credit). Progress towards individual competencies is evaluated mid-term and at the end of the term. Therefore, students are encouraged to consistently revise and update their Learning Agreement and activities to mirror any new learnings or opportunities.

Rating Scale:

5 – Demonstrates Competency: The student exhibits competence and initial independence in handling complex situations with this behavior.

4 – Emerging Competency : The student shows early-stage competence in this behavior but needs continued opportunities for mastery demonstration.

3 – Developing Competency with Assistance: The student displays inconsistent competence in this behavior, necessitating assistance or coaching.

2 – Minimal Competency: The student rarely demonstrates competence in this behavior.

1 – No Competency: The student does not exhibit competence in this behavior.

Attention

This document offers guidance and ideas to students as they develop their learning agreements. **It is NOT acceptable to copy and paste these examples into the learning agreement**, and the field education team will not approve them.



Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the NASW Code of Ethics with the supervisor • Discuss agency policies and how they fit with the NASW Code of Ethics • Apply the ethical decision-making model to work through a situation that presents an ethical dilemma; discuss in supervision. • Discuss with other agency professionals how they deal with ethical dilemmas. • Review and discuss additional ethical or governing policies that may impact service delivery at the agency (i.e., agency policies, HIPPA/FERPA guidelines, SSI/SSDI, TANF, SNAP, etc.) • Review and discuss UM's IRB process if applicable to the practicum context.
<p>b. Demonstrate professional behavior, appearance, and oral, written, and electronic communication.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress according to agency policy. • Discuss appropriate roles and boundaries of a practicum student with the supervisor and other agency staff. • Give a presentation at a staff meeting or community event (in person or virtual) • Use professional language (verbal/nonverbal) when dealing with clients and other professionals in the workplace. • Engage in effective communication, including notes, emails, letters, and other written correspondence, as well as verbal and non-verbal communication. • Maintain accurate, respectful, and professional written client records (as appropriate) • Inquire and be open to feedback from the supervisor or other staff about documentation, oral and written communication
<p>c. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the ethical and appropriate use of online technology at the agency and in practice with the client's supervisor and other agency staff. • Ensure proper training for online tools, telehealth models, and interventions. • Discuss technology etiquette at the agency with the supervisor



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research and familiarize yourself with potential challenges to the use of technology in social work practice
d. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend weekly supervision meetings and reflect on professional behavior• Prepare topics to discuss with the supervisor (areas for growth, personal and professional boundaries, ethical dilemmas, professional communication, clinical interventions, etc.)• Consult with supervisor regarding issues arising in practice• Integrate feedback into practice• Utilize seminars to consult with peers and field liaisons.



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

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarize yourself with current political events and their impacts on social issues and clients. • Identify forms of oppression/ discrimination against clients/ populations and discuss them with the supervisor. • Identify economic barriers to social services and care; discuss with the supervisor. • Identify and discuss institutional and systemic barriers to a client’s progress with the supervisor. • Advocate for client access to agency, community, state, and national services.
<p>b. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your elected officials to support/ oppose harmful policies and legislation. • Join and attend local, state, and national coalition meetings. • Attend a public hearing or organizational meeting focused on increasing social and economic justice. • Develop professional relationships with advocacy organizations serving the agency population. • VOTE! Engage in voter outreach and education • Identify and review key concepts of social empowerment strategies. • Demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills by finding potential solutions and discussing the same with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, and/or peers in practicum seminar.



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

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand different forms of diversity and how they influence work with clients. • Discuss barriers to services faced by clients. • Review, understand, and apply anti-racist principles in a practicum setting. • Research and apply knowledge related to diversity to enhance client well-being. • Strive to be assigned a diverse caseload of clients. • Attending agency, local, and national workshops, or trainings. • Research and apply knowledge related to diversity to enhance client well-being. • Explore and utilize different perspectives and practice models when working with diverse clients. • Treat all clients with respect and courtesy regardless of personal bias, and ensure equal and just treatment for all clients at the agency. • Use assessments that include sections of diversity/culture/spirituality as identified by the client. • Review evaluative tools utilized by the agency and evaluate with an ADEI lens. • Compare the agency's practice methods with ADEI methods discussed in various classes. • Discuss ways to engage and improve ADEI in practice with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, and/or peers in the practicum seminar.
<p>b. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts in their own lived experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize journaling, or some other method of reflection, to record personal beliefs or values regarding clients/staff who may be different than me (age, gender, race, religious affiliation, orientation, color, cultural background, marital status, family structure, class, physical ability, etc.). • Reflect on how personal beliefs/values impact interactions with various clients. • Discuss possible value conflicts/ biases/ blind spots with the supervisor, Field Liaison, and peers during seminar class.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify client differences using a strengths perspective.• Discuss and document ways you engage in cultural humility within your practice setting.• Outline and discuss the challenges and opportunities of practicing in rural and indigenous communities.
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Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze and discuss evidence-based methods and evaluative tools utilized by the agency. • Discuss theories and perspectives utilized when working with clients and their effectiveness. • Research evidence-based policies informing agency practice and client population; discuss with the supervisor. • Read professional journal articles relevant to clients served by the agency. • Discuss with the supervisor effective forms of intervention utilized with the client population. • Interview treatment team members for varying perspectives on practice and various models/approaches used. • Discuss specific cases with the supervisor, including problem, proposed solution(s), proposed plan of action, and/or proposed measurable outcomes.
<p>b. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the evaluation process used in the practicum. • Review research to learn various ways to evaluate practice in a particular context and suggest possibilities for change as appropriate. • Review professional literature related to best practices from various sources and perspectives. • Compare the agency's evidence-based methods with methods discussed in various classes. • Discuss questions with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, and/or peers in the practicum seminar.



Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
a. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research and discuss laws/ current bill proposals that affect agency and client populations; discuss with the supervisor.• Track legislative initiatives relevant to your agency's client population.• Research specific policies that directly affect the well-being of the client population.• Discuss the impact of policies on your clients and policy change ideas with the supervisor.• Identify relevant organizational and informational websites and online resources that provide social policy information relevant to your agency/ client population or serve as clearinghouses for legislative issues.• Research how one applies for social support services in your community, e.g., SSI/SSDI, SNAP benefits, TANF, etc.
b. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend and participate in community/ state advocacy events and/ or attend city council/ county commissioner meetings in your community.• Attend NASW MT or other advocacy and lobbying days and meet with legislators regarding policy issues.• Attend policy conferences and trainings to learn about relevant agency and population policies.• Write a letter to an elected official about a social policy affecting your client population.



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

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Apply knowledge of human behavior, person-in-environment, and interprofessional conceptual frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the developmental stages of the client population/integrate this into the assessment process. • Practice using systems theory/strengths perspective • Utilize specific interventions to increase understanding of the client in the environment. • Identify and discuss various theories about human behaviors (biological, social, cultural, psychological, and/or spiritual) with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, or peers in the practicum seminar. • Engage with and interview clients/families to determine strengths and challenges. • Take notes and discuss personal/ ethical/ value dilemmas and blind spots with the supervisor and reflect on how they influence work with clients. • Treat all clients with respect and courtesy regardless of personal bias, and establish initial goals with the client/patient to ensure self-determination. • Attend interprofessional events held on campus and discuss with AFI.
<p>b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop skills to build rapport/trust with clients. • Seek feedback from the supervisor about ways to build rapport and trust with clients. • Review literature on rapport-building/ interpersonal skills and practice applying concepts in practice. • Engage in active listening with clients, colleagues, peers, and others. • Demonstrate the ability to empathize and use appropriate interpersonal skills with clients. • Research and apply knowledge related to diversity to enhance client well-being. • Observe the supervisor and others in their interactions with clients. • Identify areas of comfort and discomfort in client engagement and discuss them in supervision.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with and interview clients/families to determine strengths and challenges.• Treat all clients with respect and courtesy regardless of personal bias, and establish initial goals with the client/patient to ensure self-determination.
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Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Apply theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks when assessing clients and constituencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the developmental stages of the client population/integrate this into the assessment process. • Become familiar with different assessment tools and the strengths/limitations of each tool. • Do a family genogram/Eco map after completing the assessment. • Practice using systems theory/strengths perspective • Utilize specific interventions to increase understanding of the client in the environment. • Identify and discuss various theories about human behaviors (biological, social, cultural, psychological, and/or spiritual) with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, or peers in the practicum seminar. • Engage with and interview clients/families to determine strengths and challenges. • Observe client assessment and write/organize/interpret client data. • Develop a written assessment of the client, including the client’s strengths and weaknesses. • Critically examine assessment tools and processes, and complete comprehensive, strengths-based, bio-psycho-social-spiritual or Just Practice assessments. • Discuss the potential for bias in the assessment process with the supervisor if utilizing the DSM. Work with clients to identify DSM diagnoses, goals for treatment, and interventions.
<p>b. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed upon plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss intervention strategies in the practicum seminar. • Collaborate with a client or client system and develop an appropriate intervention plan. • Monitor clients’ progress toward goals. • Research and illustrate knowledge of planned change processes, including assessment and planning, as may be appropriate at the micro, mezzo, or macro levels.



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

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
<p>a. Apply theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks when assessing clients and constituencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mutually agreed upon focus of work and goals and objectives for clients. • Empower clients to identify and work on specific achievable goals. • Utilize appropriate interpersonal skills with clients. • Facilitate a support group or psycho-educational group. • Research and illustrate knowledge of planned change processes, including intervention and termination, as may be appropriate at the micro, mezzo, or macro levels. • Analyze and/or acquire evidence-based methods being utilized within the agency. • Utilize specific interventions to increase understanding of the client in the environment. • Facilitate a support group or psycho-educational group • Identify and discuss various theories about human behaviors (biological, social, cultural, psychological, and/or spiritual) with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, or peers in the practicum seminar.
<p>b. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed upon plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect client to community resources. • Utilize specific interventions to increase understanding of the client in the environment. • Maintain communication/follow-up with client outcomes and potential success. • Determine commonly used resources for clients and the most effective referral process. • Attend and participate in community, state, and federal advocacy events (e.g., city council hearings and legislative lobby days). • Research and illustrate knowledge of planned change processes, including intervention and termination, as may be appropriate at the micro, mezzo, or macro levels.



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

Behaviors:	Suggested Learning Activities:
a. Apply theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks when assessing clients and constituencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review evaluation and data collection tools/methods used at the agency.• Evaluate assessments/data collection and intervention practices during supervision.• Research and illustrate knowledge of planned change processes, including evaluation and follow-up, as may be appropriate at the micro, mezzo, or macro levels.• Integrate research coursework into practicum learning.• Identify and discuss various theories about human behaviors (biological, social, cultural, psychological, and/or spiritual) with the supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, or peers in the practicum seminar.• Apply a strength perspective in the evaluation process and review of outcomes.
b. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed upon plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate assessment/data collection/intervention practices with the supervisor.• Review client files to determine progress toward goals.• Follow up with client after termination to determine client outcomes and potential success.