



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK



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# **Field Education Manual**

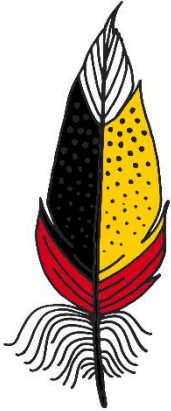
**Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)**

**Master of Social Work (MSW)**

*Updated April 2022*

## Field Education Manual

The Field Education Manual includes essential information about social work field education (practicum) for the University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work. It was created by the provincial field education team. Students, field instructors, and faculty liaisons are encouraged to become familiar with the information covered in this manual. It is our hope that this manual supports your success in field education.



### **The Faculty of Social Work Land Acknowledgement**

Our students, staff and academic staff are located across Alberta, Canada, and other locations on Indigenous lands. In Alberta, we are on the traditional territories of the people of 48 First Nations in three treaty areas Treaty 6, 7, and 8. In the Calgary area, we acknowledge and thank the traditional territories of the Blackfoot and Treaty 7 peoples of Southern Alberta. The city of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. In our Southern Alberta Region and at our Lethbridge Campus we acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta which is in traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy. The city of Lethbridge is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. In our Central and Northern Region and at our Edmonton campus, we acknowledge the Treaty 6 region, the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4, and the surrounding Métis settlements. We also acknowledge the Indigenous communities of northern Alberta, including the people of the Treaty 8 region, the Métis Nation of Alberta Regions 1, 2, 5, and 6, and the northern Métis settlements. We thank our Indigenous peoples for the privilege of working, learning, and living on these lands. In the spirit of a collaborative movement towards reconciliation, we invite you to create space for meaningful reflection relevant to the traditional territory where you reside.

### **Faculty of Social Work Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization, and Anti-Oppression Statement**

#### ***Our Commitment to Equity, Racial Justice, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization***

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW), University of Calgary (UCalgary), is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, racial justice, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization. We align our work with the UCalgary's commitment to the [Alberta Human Rights Act](#), [Canada Employment Equity Act](#), [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#), [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action](#), [Scarborough Charter](#), Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada Charter, as well as related UCalgary strategies, including: the Canada Research Chair Program's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion [Awareness Strategy](#) and [Action Plan](#), [ii' taa'poh'to'p Indigenous Strategy](#), and [Campus Mental Health Strategy](#). Our work is guided by a number of [UCalgary policies and procedures](#), including: [Code of Conduct](#), [Employment Equity Policy](#), [Workplace Violence Policy](#), [Workplace Accommodation Policy](#), and [Student Accommodation Policy](#). In line with the [Eyes High Strategy 2017-22](#), [FSW Strategic Plan](#) and [Anti-Black Racism Action Plan](#), we affirm that diversity and uniqueness are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and community connections.

We, thus, state our intention to foster an inclusive, thriving, and equitable environment for our students, non-academic and academic staff, and community members. We take the stand that [equity](#) does not mean sameness in treatment of people, but rather requires measures and accommodations for diverse life experiences and circumstances to ensure that no one of a particular social group is disadvantaged, underrepresented or overlooked in all aspects of our work. We intend to address systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations, particularly for those who are members of racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, persons with disabilities, migrant groups (including refugees and immigrants), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, linguistic minorities as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, political, and/or cultural barriers to their education and employment. We also recognize, honour, and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, ways of knowing and doing, experiences, and strengths. An anti-oppressive lens, particularly intersectional, anti-colonial, ant-racist and decolonizing frameworks, will inform our work.

### **Mission, Vision, and Values**

The Faculty of Social Work is a local and global partner in transformative social work knowledge, education, research, and practice. Our vision is to support wellbeing, sustainability, and social justice. Our mission and vision are guided by the values of respect, integrity, equity, and collaboration.

*(The Faculty of Social Work continues to work on refining and modifying our commitments through the Land Acknowledgement, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion commitment and our Mission, Vision, and Values. As these evolve, they will be updated in the manual on an annual basis).*

### **Field Education Overview**

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program at the University of Calgary is accredited by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE). According to [CASWE Standards for Accreditation \(2021\)](#) the BSW curriculum “provides a balance of general education (at least 40%), and professional education (at least 50%), including 700 field education practicum hours” (Standard 3.1.1).

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program at the University of Calgary is accredited by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE). According to [CASWE Standards for Accreditation \(2021\)](#) the MSW curriculum includes the following field education requirements:

- For students with a BSW degree from a CASWE or equivalent accredited program, a field education practicum of at least 450 hours or a thesis or memoire, as defined by the program’s university, such as to provide an opportunity for the integration and demonstration of advanced social work skills in practice, and/or policy analysis and/or research (Standard 3.2.1).
- For students with a university baccalaureate degree in another discipline or from a nonaccredited social work program:
  - A foundational component equivalent to the content of the BSW curriculum including at least 6 one semester courses or equivalent and a field education practicum of at least 450 hours; and
  - An advanced component in accordance with the MSW curriculum as outlined in Standard 3.2.1 (Standard 3.2.2).

The Faculty of Social Work exceeds the minimum requirement of 450 hours for the advanced MSW field education practicum as found in CASWE Standard 3.2.1 by requiring a minimum of 500 hours.

The CASWE Standards (2021, pp. 13 -14) outline the following as core learning for all social work students: identify as a professional social worker and adopt a value perspective of the social work profession, critically reflect on the practice and regulation of social work in Canada, develop professional identities as practitioners whose goal is to advance social justice and facilitate the collective welfare and wellbeing of all people, acquire abilities to critical self-reflection as it relates to engaging in professional practice through a comprehensive understanding of their own social locations, identities, and assumptions, foster effective professional attributes such as caring, humility, honesty, integrity, passion, and empathy, consider their potential contribution to social work education through future services, such as becoming field instructors and understand the role of social work in combating racism and advancing equitable and just policies, services, and practices.

Field education practicum is fundamental to the social and skill development of future social workers through the intentional integration of theory, practice, and social work identity (Ayala et al. 2018; Wayne et al., 2010). Social Work field education offers students practical opportunities to engage in practice experiences and social work supervision guided by social work knowledge, values, and ethics. The field education team relies on relationships with affiliated agencies/organizations and professional social workers who provide practicum opportunities and educational supervision to University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work students across Alberta and beyond.

Learning in field education is conceptualized as encompassing knowing, understanding, doing, and being. These are considered the essential elements of knowledge-based and value-guided professional social work practice. Field education is an experiential form of teaching and learning through which students have opportunities to develop as professional social workers within supervised practice contexts. Learning in the field is a mutual responsibility shared among students, field instructors, and faculty liaisons. Students need to plan how they will make themselves available for the field component of their program within the scheduled timeframes; and are expected to be active, self-directed learners throughout their practicum course. In addition to developing professional knowledge and skills, students will prepare to be reflective and self-evaluating social workers. The Faculty of Social Work follows a model of field education that places primary emphasis on the practice objectives of the field practicum. This model focuses on linkages between academic learning and field experiences toward the goal of enhancing students' abilities to integrate theory and practice.

Each of our BSW and MSW programs has a designated field contact (Field Education Coordinator or Associate Field Director). Leadership for the field education team comes from the Director of Field Education. For information on how to contact the field education team members, please visit: <https://socialwork.ucalgary.ca/field-education-contacts>

## **Roles and Responsibilities Practicum**

### **Student**

The student completes practicum while enrolled in the corresponding practicum seminar courses. The student must follow the placement process established for their program. While in placement, the student is required to respect agency guidelines, University of Calgary practicum policies and guidelines, and all professional standards regarding ethical conduct for social workers. Each student is responsible for understanding and following both the provincial social work practice standards and the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice. In the province of Alberta, practice is also guided by Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) Standards of Practice which will have a provincial equivalent across Canada.

The student is responsible for participating in the pre-placement process which includes completing relevant paperwork, applying to practicum opportunities, attending compatibility interviews, providing required documentation, and replying to emails in a timely manner. This helps to facilitate matching the student to a suitable practicum opportunity and to ensure a successful start to the practicum experience. Each student is expected to communicate and act in a professional manner during the pre-placement process and throughout the practicum. Professional student conduct and full participation in all aspects of the practicum experience are critical.

### **Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education**

Field Education Coordinators/Associate Directors of Field Education work for the Faculty of Social Work to coordinate, administer, and implement field education opportunities. They support students, field instructors, faculty liaisons, and agency partners to provide field education experiences for students. They work collaboratively with community agencies to initiate, develop, and improve field education opportunities. Their work may include identifying and developing practicum placements, supporting students' search for practicum opportunities, consultation with agencies and field instructors before and during the placement, and supporting faculty liaisons who are teaching in the field. They ensure all practicum opportunities follow the procedures and protocols relevant to accreditation standards and professional social work practice.

### **Field Instructor**

This agency/research supervisor is a social worker that is directly connected to a practice setting in an agency context or via research projects. Typically, the field instructor is onsite or directly connected to the agency/research project. They will provide orientation for students, guidance as students develop their individual learning agreements, provide weekly and ongoing practicum supervision and individual support as needed. The work of supervision also includes completing the mid-term and final evaluations and required documentation for evaluating a student's progress in practicum. They also provide ongoing feedback and support to students (strengths-based and developmental feedback), encouraging students to come to supervision meetings prepared to report, ask questions, and contribute to the learning of peers. A key focus of the support provided by field instructors is on the development of professional social work competency and professional identity as a social worker.

In recognition for the time and commitment of field instructors, we offer the following recognition:

- 1) Field Instructors can request access to the UCalgary library database of electronic journal articles and resources.
- 2) Field Instructors may receive a discount on some professional development workshops offered by the Faculty of Social Work.
- 3) Field Instructors receive up to 20 ACSW Category A credits (continuing competence hours for other provinces) for supervising a practicum student. A letter will be sent at the end of the term to include in the field instructor's portfolio.

### **External Social Work Field Instructor/Supervisor**

Depending on the practicum context and the availability of social work supervision in the agency or workplace setting, there may be an external social work field instructor assigned to ensure compliance to accreditation standards and educational supervision for social work students. The external field instructor, as the educational social work supervisor (BSW/RSW or MSW/RSW), serves to compliment the onsite supervision provided. The external field instructor does not directly observe the students in practice or assign students roles or tasks in the agency. Key responsibilities include: communicate and consult with the on-site field instructor regarding student progress, host weekly student supervision sessions (individually or in groups), complete required documentation including the mid-term and final evaluations of the practicum, provide ongoing feedback and support to students (strengths-based and developmental feedback), encourage students to come to supervision meetings prepared to report, ask questions, and contribute to the learning of peers in the supervision group. The external field instructor's work and collaboration with students will focus on the development of professional social work competency and professional identity as a social worker.

### **Faculty Field Instructor**

The faculty field instructor serves as the educational supervisor for the supervised, self-directed practicum students in faculty-hosted practicums. They lead a group of self-directed practicum students through supervision, by virtually hosting the practicum and guiding the student's self-directed learning plan with ongoing social work supervision. Key responsibilities include orientation for students, guidance as students developing individual learning agreements and regular supervision meetings, responding to written activity summaries from students and providing individual support as needed. The supervision also includes completing the mid-term and final evaluations by attending the evaluation meetings and submitting required documentation for the student's evaluation progress in practicum. The faculty field instructor also provides ongoing feedback and support to students (strengths-based and developmental feedback) and supports students to actively prepare for and engage in supervision sessions. The faculty field instructor's work and collaboration with students will focus on the development of professional social work competency and professional identity as a social worker.

## **Faculty Liaison**

The faculty liaison is the teacher of record for the practicum courses. This role includes regular contact with students and field instructors, teaching the integrative seminar courses, and following student progress in practicum. The faculty liaison consults with students and their field instructors regarding students' achievements and progress and acts as a link between the agency and the Faculty of Social Work. The faculty liaison keeps in regular contact with students and field instructors and meets with their students and field instructors at least twice during the practicum, taking part in the student assessment process. These meetings are either face-to-face, or completed by telephone, Zoom, or MS Teams. The faculty liaison may also provide external social work supervision of a practicum when necessary.

## **Finding a Practicum**

### **Disclosing Conflict of Interest**

Before applying to a practicum agency or accepting an offer for practicum, students are encouraged to consider potential conflicts of interest and disclose any potential concerns to their Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education for consultation. Examples of conflict of interest include but are not limited to familial relationships with field instructors, previous dating or personal involvement with prospective field instructors, current employment with the agency, current involvement in services within an agency or a criminal record or child intervention check with data impacting the population served in the agency.

### **Placement Process for Students**

Students will engage with their Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education for an orientation to their practicum search process, including required paperwork, documentation and transitioning into field education coursework. The process will be specific to the program/region in which the student is seeking placement. In all programs/regions the placement process begins several months prior to the start of the practicum. Students will be notified of program/region specific timelines. Final approval of all placements is made by the local Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education.

While the practicum search and confirmation process are program/specific, there are common experiences students can prepare for including:

- Attend orientation and/or information sessions relevant to practicum.
- Understand and articulate areas of practice interest for practicum while demonstrating flexibility and adaptability based on the context in the community.
- Prepare a professional resume and cover letter for practicum.
- Become familiar with the format of professional interviews.
- Prepare and participate in placement interviews in a professional manner.
- Organize and submit pre-placement documents that are requested by the agency.
- If a practicum requires pre-placement training, including orientation sessions (faculty or agency hosted), please consult with your Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education about counting those hours for practicum.

- If agencies require an earlier start date than the beginning of the academic term students can seek special permission from their Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education to begin practicum. Approval is not guaranteed.
- International practicum placements are not available for undergraduate (BSW) students at this time.

### ***Out- of Town Placements for On Campus Students***

For students in face-to-face programs that require on campus attendance in classes, out of town field placements must be approved well in advance of the practicum by the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director. Student requests to complete an out-of-town placement will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Guidelines for consideration include:

- The placement meets the requirements of the model of field education.
- Accommodations may be made for faculty liaison contact (e.g., phone, Zoom) during the practicum.
- The student arranges to attend all scheduled Integrative seminars (in person, if required) related to their practicum.

### **Practicum in Agency Hosted Settings**

Social Work practice is diverse and occurs in a wide range of settings. Each area of social work practice upholds the values and guidelines of the social work profession, approaching the work to individuals, groups, and communities in unique ways. Consult with your Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education to explore options and understand the practicum search process which applies for your program (some agencies require your school to make the applications, others will accept directly from students).

Students are not typically entitled to receive a wage or salary from the agency hosting their practicum. The agency may reimburse expenses the student incurs while completing practicum responsibilities (e.g., travel) in accordance with the regular policies of the agency concerning reimbursement. Any other arrangements should be drawn to the attention of the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education.

Social Work practice takes place in many professional settings and understanding the various aspects of social work practice helps students plan for practicum. These resources offer an overview of social work practice:

- What is Social Work? | Canadian Association of Social Workers:  
<https://www.caswacts.ca/en/what-social-work>
- CASW Social Work Scope of Practice | Canadian Association of Social Workers:  
<https://www.casw-acts.ca/en/what-social-work/casw-social-work-scope-practice>



### **Practicum with Faculty Members**

Faculty members engage in ongoing social work research and publication to contribute to the social work knowledge base and enhance evidence-based practice. Students who want to gain academic research experience can explore and enhance their research and knowledge mobilization practice skills to help contribute to ethical, evidence-based practices in the field. To learn more about the research activities of the members of the Faculty of Social Work Research:

<https://socialwork.ucalgary.ca/research>. Students are advised not to engage in formal research activities during practicum placements unless ethics approval has been received from the appropriate research ethics committee.

### **Supervised, Self-Directed Practicums**

A self-directed practicum allows a student the flexibility to create a self-directed learning focus of their practicum including both applied and self-directed practice. Differing from a traditional on-site agency-based placement, the self-directed practicum is hosted virtually by a faculty field instructor. The self-directed practicum allows the student to prioritize areas of learning they desire to focus on within the five practice objectives (see page 26) for their practicum. Self-directed practicum includes applied practice and self-directed learning activities. The student will complete their learning under the supervision of a registered social worker designated by the Faculty of Social Work.

Applied practice can be described as activities in which the student will engage in a variety of approved social work practices. Self-directed practices can be described as activities where the student is focusing on learning about areas of practice. The self-directed practicum student will be required to complete a minimum 1/3 of their practicum hours as applied practice and the remaining hours can be completed by self-directed practice.

Students will be offered a menu of activities and can also propose other activities for approval. Applied practice activities can include but are not limited to volunteer service, creation of resources/guides, professional practice checklists or tip sheets, and social work research activities (literature review). Self-directed practice can include professional courses/certifications, workshops, webinars, podcasts, attending events such for social justice/change, participating in political events. Supervised, self-directed practicum offers opportunities to individualize learning and requires self motivation, strong organization skills, honest and accountable time management and the ability to work independently and actively engage in supervision.

Approval for self-directed practicums is dependent on individual circumstance and not guaranteed.

### **Practicum in the Workplace**

Workplace practicums provide opportunities for students to engage in new learning where they are employed. A practicum situated where the student is employed may be paid or unpaid. Students who engage in workplace practicum will have a dual role of employee and student. The focus of the practicum is on learning about professional social work practice. The workplace context will influence and impact the role of the learner. Student proposals to complete a practicum in the workplace will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Criteria for workplace practicums are that the practicum opportunity needs to:

- Consist of new learnings that are not part of existing responsibilities. This can include a new position or project that begins within 4 months of the practicum start date.
- Be relevant to the practice objectives (see page 26) for the practicum and align with the student's learning needs.
- Have social work supervision from a field instructor who is different than the student's work supervisor to create separation between the student and employee role.
- Include mutual understanding between the student and employer about the primary goals for the practicum focused on learning in the context of the practice setting.

The workplace practicum will be supervised by a qualified social work field instructor. To ensure separation between the employee and student role, the social work field instructor for the workplace must be distinct from the person they report to in their employment capacity.

### **Cautions Regarding Workplace Practicum**

- The student may feel pressure to allow agency needs to supersede their learning needs.
- Due to their dual role in the agency setting, the student's ability to think critically about the agency may be constrained regarding issues such as administrative structure, policies, mandate, and service delivery.
- Unless appropriately protected, a negative evaluation of the student's performance in one role (worker or student) may jeopardize their status in the other role.
- Issues related to managing conflicts or disputes at the workplace may create tension for the student.

### **Approval Process for a Workplace Practicum**

Each workplace practicum opportunity will be evaluated through a workplace practicum proposal. This document helps the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education ensuring that the learning activities are focused on the learning goals of the student. The proposal will include a:

- Description of the agency in which the proposed practicum would take place.
- Description of the student's current employment responsibilities.
- Description of the learning activities that will be included in the workplace practicum. With an emphasis on 1) how the proposed practicum differs from the students current/past work responsibilities, 2) how the proposed practicum fits with the student's learning needs and interests, 3) how the proposed placement allows the student opportunities to meet the practice objectives of the practicum.
- Specific contact information of the current employment supervisor and the proposed field instructor.
- Information demonstrating understanding of the potential for conflict of interest and arrangements made with the agency to address such conflicts should they arise.
- Agency affiliation and field instructor application confirmation paperwork.

### **Preparing for Practicum**

Many agencies require a current criminal record check, child welfare check, a drivers abstract, specific health requirements such as immunizations records, tuberculosis testing, proof of COVID-19 vaccination, a physical examination from a family physician and/or N95 Mask Fitting.

The student is responsible to make themselves aware of all requirements well in advance of the practicum start date. Students are usually responsible for all costs associated with any required documentation and they must ensure they have submitted all required documentation prior to the practicum start date (or by the specified deadline for that term). Students who do not fulfill these obligations may not commence their practicum until the requirements have been met.

### **Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation Coverage**

While in practicum in the province of Alberta, students are covered by liability insurance and may also be covered for Workers Compensation (WCB) through the University of Calgary. Please notify your faculty liaison or Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education immediately if you have an accident, injury, or other event in practicum which may need to involve insurance or worker's compensation.

Students who are residents outside of Alberta are covered for liability insurance and may or may not be covered by worker's compensation. Please consult with the field education team regarding coverage. The University's Risk Management and Insurance website also has additional information regarding coverage: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/risk-management-insurance>

### **Inability to Secure a Placement**

The field education team will work closely with all students in supporting and advising them through the process of setting up a practicum. There is no guarantee that a practicum placement will be found for every student. If a student is unable to secure a placement, they will be allowed to withdraw without penalty from the course (prior to the deadline set by the University) and be required to meet with the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education regarding their challenges securing a practicum placement. Together they will work to devise a plan to address gaps (e.g., in learning, preparation work, or professionalism) that will lead to a greater likelihood of success in securing a placement in the future and in completing the placement successfully.

## **Field Education Courses**

### **Practicum I (SOWK 410) - 300 hours**

The purpose of this first BSW practicum is to provide students with an introduction to professional social work practice in a specific setting. The student's time at practicum is spent according to the requirements of the setting and learning needs of the student. The placement objectives must include social work practice opportunities and a minimum 1 hour of educational supervision per 15 hours of practicum (generally, about two hours of educational supervision per week).

Students who are completing the post-diploma program pathway do not complete Practicum I. Students with significant social service experience may consider applying for practicum Credit by Special Assessment.

Practicum I is taken concurrently with the integrative seminar (SOWK 411) which provides students with structured and unstructured opportunities to reflect on linkages between theory and practice while discussing a variety of professional development issues. These seminar courses are a graded course with specific reading and assignment requirements. Time spent in the SOWK 411 seminars does not count towards practicum hours and students can tailor their seminar assignments to reinforce and supplement practicum learning.

### **Practicum II (SOWK 412) - 400 hours**

Completion of Practicum II is a degree requirement for all BSW students. The purpose of this practicum is to provide students with an intensive experience in the delivery of professional social work practice in a specific setting. The student's time at practicum is spent according to the requirements of the setting and learning needs of the student supported by a minimum 1 hour of educational supervision per 15 hours of practicum.

Students take Practicum II in their final, semester. The practicum is taken concurrently with the integrative seminar (SOWK 413) and provides students with structured and unstructured opportunities to reflect on linkages between theory and practice while discussing a variety of professional development issues. These seminar courses are a graded course with specific reading and assignment requirements. Time spent in the SOWK 413 seminars does not count towards practicum hours.

### **Foundational Field Practicum (SOWK 633) - 450 hours**

The Foundational Field Practicum is typically required of students with an undergraduate degree in a discipline other than social work who are in the MSW program. The purpose of the foundational practicum is to provide students with opportunities to develop, integrate, and reinforce social work competence through supervised practice in an agency setting. Students with significant social service experience may consider applying for practicum Credit by Special Assessment.

The foundational practicum course requires students to complete 450 placement hours. Students in the Calgary program are typically in placement 4 days per week during the winter semester. Students in the Edmonton program also typically complete the Foundational Practicum in the winter semester. Regular integrative seminars (facilitated by the faculty liaison) are part of the practicum course, and time spent in seminar counts as practicum hours.

### **Advanced Practicum (SOWK 660) - 500 hours minimum**

The Advanced Practicum is required of all students in the course based MSW program. The purpose of the course is to develop students' existing social work knowledge and skills to a specialized level. The practicum promotes integration of the theory and skills students learn in the classroom with their professional practice and social work identity. MSW students with a non-BSW undergraduate

degree must have completed all foundational year requirements prior to proceeding to the Advanced Practicum.

The Advanced Practicum (SOWK 660) course requires students to successfully complete a minimum of 500 placement hours. The integrative seminar (SOWK 662) (facilitated by the faculty liaison) is a separate graded course, and time spent in seminar does not count as practicum hours. SOWK 662 includes preparation of a capstone exit requirement. SOWK 660 and SOWK 662 must be taken concurrently.

### **Credit by Special Assessment**

As sanctioned by the accreditation standards of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), students may be eligible to receive some practicum credit for previous, relevant work experience that was supervised by a qualified social work professional (holding a BSW/RSW or higher). Only SOWK 410 (Practicum I) and SOWK 633 (Foundational Field Practicum) can be challenged through the Credit by Special Assessment process which allows qualified students to have their previous learning evaluated for possible practicum credit. Credit by Special Assessment is not available for BSW SOWK 412 or MSW SOWK 660.

### **Minimum Requirements**

To be eligible to request a review for Credit by Special Assessment, students must have at a minimum: five years of social work-related experience prior to admission into the program, including two years under direct social work supervision (by someone holding BSW/RSW credentials).

### **Overview of the Special Assessment Process**

The first step for students interested in the Credit by Special Assessment application process for SOWK 410 or 633 are to provide a resume outlining a minimum five years' experience and two years of social work supervision to their Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education. This will allow verification of eligibility and students will receive the complete information outlining the requirements in the application process.

1. After confirming minimum eligibility, the student submits the following:
  - 1) application for Credit by Special Assessment, 2) two supervisory reference letters (at least one from a qualified social work supervisor), and 3) a narrative documenting prior learning and relevant experience related to each of the five practicum objectives. Supporting documents may also be submitted as evidence of learning relating to specific practicum objectives.
2. The Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education forms a review committee with at least one other faculty member to appraise the student's submission for CSA. The committee also schedules a meeting with the student, which focuses on the student's application and their ability to demonstrate competence in relation to each the Practicum Objectives and requirements.

3. The student is notified in writing within seven days as to the outcome of the assessment. There are two possible outcomes: the student is granted the hours for SOWK 410/633 of practicum as completed; or student is not granted the hours. If the student is not granted a successful Credit by Special Assessment, the student then proceeds to complete the practicum. In either outcome, the student is responsible to pay the tuition amount for the practicum course.

Students who are granted credit for SOWK 410 through the Credit by Special Assessment process are exempt from completing Integrative Seminar (SOWK 411) which is taken concurrent with Practicum I, but do not receive credit for this course. Instead, they must decide with the faculty to take an alternative course for equivalent credit to the seminar (to complete an additional options course).

A successful Credit by Special Assessment and credit SOWK 410/633 does not automatically guarantee that these hours will be credited or recognized by the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) as provisional hours counting towards registration.

### **Term Breaks**

Students and field instructors are encouraged to discuss the student's schedule for the university breaks, including the week-long term breaks in November and February. These breaks are a part of our campus mental health strategy, and our policy is that students are not expected to attend practicum during these times. Students and field instructors may negotiate for the student to continue in practicum during some or all of this break, or to be off from practicum during this break, depending on what works best for everyone involved.

### **Illness, Unavoidable Absences and Holidays**

Students must notify the field instructor as soon as possible about unexpected absences from practicum. When a statutory holiday occurs on a practicum day and the practicum office is closed, the student is expected to make up the time during the semester. Students should not attend practicum if they are ill, to prevent contagion. Students will need to make-up practicum time for an absence due to illness or any other reason, except for cases of widespread pandemic or other community emergency situations. In such situations, please consult the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education for pandemic or emergency-related policies and procedures.

## **Student Learning and Assessment**

Evaluation for successful completion of practicum is guided by five practice objectives (see page 26) which is measured through the individual Learning Agreement. Students are responsible for developing a Learning Agreement that outlines their learning activities, goals, and accountabilities in consultation with the field instructor and faculty liaison to clarify respective responsibilities, expectations and support fair, objective evaluation. The student and field instructor tailor the plan to the student's interests and needs in the context of their practicum experience.

An initial draft of the student's Learning Agreement is completed within the first 75 hours (or three weeks) of the practicum. This draft is reviewed and signed by the student, field instructor and faculty liaison, generally during an initial meeting. Learning Agreements are intended to be working documents and activities can be modified, added, or removed as the practicum progresses and the student's learning needs become clearer.

For each practice objective in the Learning Agreement, students specify:

- What they want to learn (i.e., which components of the Practice Objective).
- How they will accomplish that learning (i.e., the learning activities they will do).
- Evaluation learning goal achievement (i.e., accountability).
- When they intend to complete the learning (i.e., the timeline for learning).

Assessment of students is an ongoing process that occurs in educational social work supervision, practicum evaluation meetings and the integrative seminar course. Assessment and evaluation occur through a mutual relationship founded in values of trust, respect, and learning. The intention is to help students integrate theory and practice and promote professional development.

### **Initial Assessment: Preliminary Impressions**

Field instructors and students may be asked to articulate their preliminary impressions of the practicum by about the end of the third week (or 75 hours) and to complete a corresponding form. Recording preliminary impressions is intended to support the student's development of reflective self-evaluation and to facilitate discussion of the student's strengths and potential areas of concern. The preliminary impressions form may be used as a discussion tool during the initial meeting between the student, field instructor and faculty liaison.

### **Mid-Term Evaluation**

Throughout placement, the student receives supervision and feedback about their performance from the field instructor. At about the halfway point in the practicum, a written mid-course progress report is prepared by the student and field instructor. This report is included within the Learning Agreement document, which is available through the IPT online system. The student's progress on the activities described in the learning agreement is reviewed, and the student and field instructor comment on the student's achievement in each practice area and use a rating scale to estimate the student's attainment to-date of each objective. The anchors on the rating scale indicate achievement as follows:

Not Meeting Objective: The student's level of performance or achievement clearly does not meet the mutually agreed upon expectations associated with the Practice Objective or activities. Ratings at this level indicate serious concern about the student's performance. The student may be placed *at risk of failing* the practicum if she or he receives this rating for one or more practice objectives at the mid-course evaluation. If possible, students and field instructors are asked to outline a plan for improvement in specific areas and within a defined time frame.

Partially Meeting Objective, Improvement Needed: The student's level of performance or achievement is less than expected. The student meets some of the mutually agreed upon expectations associated with the Practice Objective or activities and demonstrates the capacity for learning and growth, but improvement is needed due to a need for better results, additional experience, increased opportunity to focus on this objective, further coaching, or supervision. Ratings at this level may indicate some concern about the student's performance. At mid-course evaluation, students and field instructors are asked to outline a plan for improvement in specific areas within a defined time frame.

Meeting Objective: The student's level of performance or achievement clearly and consistently meets the agreed upon expectations associated with the Practice Objective or activities. While there is still room for growth, the student has a good understanding and the ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and values associated with the Practice Objective.

Exceeding Objective: The student's level of performance or achievement far exceeds the agreed upon expectations associated with the Practice Objective or activities. This level refers to the student who "stands out" and demonstrates a sophisticated understanding and outstanding ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and values associated with the Practice Objective. The student's performance relative to the Practice Outcome leaves no doubt about readiness for practice.

#### Minimum Standards for Meeting Practicum Requirements at Mid-Course Evaluation

At mid-course, students and field instructors make a summative determination indicating whether the student is meeting the requirements of the practicum. Where students are not meeting objectives at mid-term, a plan must be in place to address those areas of concern.

#### **Final Student Evaluation**

The final assessment of the student's achievement in practicum follows the same process as the mid-course evaluation, described above. The student and field instructor review the accomplishment of learning activities, comment on and rate the student's attainment of the practice objectives, and comment on the student's overall achievement. The evaluation may be discussed with the faculty liaison at the final meeting. A final determination about whether the student has completed or failed to complete the practicum course requirements is made. This meeting can take place in person, virtually or over the telephone.

#### Minimum Standards for Meeting Practicum Requirements at Final Evaluation

Students must be at the *Meeting Objective* level for all the practice objectives to successfully complete or pass the practicum course.

#### **Completion of Practicum Courses**

Practicum courses are graded as Complete or Incomplete. Students who do not receive a Completed Requirements (CR) grade in practicum may be required to withdraw from the program. A student who is permitted to repeat the practicum typically will be required to repeat both the practicum and



the co-requisite integrative seminar. Students are not permitted to withdraw from a practicum course without Faculty approval.

### **Student at Risk of Failing Practicum**

Concerns regarding the student progress should be discussed as early in the practicum as possible. The faculty liaison should be contacted by the student and/or field instructor for consultation to determine an appropriate course of action toward supporting the placement and the student's successful completion of the practicum. The student's Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education should also be made aware if a student is deemed at risk of failure.

Faculty liaisons take the final practicum evaluation into consideration when assigning a grade for the practicum course. A student who fails to meet practicum requirements can request a withdrawal from the course, according to University of Calgary regulations. If the student is assigned a failing grade for the course, the appeal channels through the Faculty of Social Work, Faculty of Graduate Studies and University of Calgary are available. A student who has failed a practicum course or who withdraws at the end of the term must have the approval of the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education to re-register for the practicum. A student who makes two unsuccessful attempts at completing a practicum course will generally be asked to withdraw from the program.

The Faculty of Social Work recognizes that some students will demonstrate challenges in practicum that could not have been predicted by classroom participation or achievement. The evaluation of a student whose practicum progress and/or social work aptitude have been judged unsatisfactory should usually be a conclusion agreed upon by the student, field instructor and faculty liaison. Students may be placed at risk of failing the practicum if they are at the Not Meeting Objective level for one or more of the practice objectives, or at any time if other serious concerns regarding performance, professional practice or misconduct arise. Faculty liaisons, field instructor and students are encouraged to initiate a review as early in the practicum as possible once concerns are identified, as early identification of at-risk situations increases the likelihood that concerns can be addressed, and delays of the student's education schedule minimized. The field instructor has primary responsibility for monitoring and documenting the student's achievement and challenges in practicum; and is asked to contact the faculty liaison as soon as possible with any questions or concerns. Students have access to all protections and channels of appeal available through the Faculty of Social Work, and the University of Calgary.

### **Unprofessional Behaviour or Misconduct**

The study of social work practice places students in a position of special trust with professional social workers and their clients. Social work education occurs both inside and outside the classroom and the Faculty of Social Work has the responsibility to prepare students ready for competent and ethical practice.

Behaviour that causes the field instructor, faculty liaison, or student to question the student's potential to achieve the practicum objectives or practice ethically as a professional social worker

should result in a thorough review. A student's impaired judgment, non-academic misconduct, failure to adhere to the CASW Code of Ethics or legislation set out by Provincial/ Territorial Social Work regulatory body in which the practicum is taking place, or engagement in irresponsible behaviour may result in the student being placed at risk of failure.

The following examples illustrate situations in which a student may be assessed as being currently unsuitable for professional social work education. The list is not exclusive of other forms of misconduct:

- Concealment or distortion of the truth on the Application for Admission to the Faculty of Social Work or the University of Calgary.
- Serious conduct that contravenes the University of Calgary Statement on Principles of Conduct.
- Unethical behaviour as defined by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education Code of Ethics (2005) and the Provincial/ Territorial Social Work regulatory body. Such unethical behaviour includes (but is not limited to):
  - a) Medical condition that affects the student's ability to perform as a social worker if that condition negatively affects judgement and interferes with the ability to function within a professional context.
  - b) Substance use that interferes with the ability to function within a professional context.
  - c) Criminal behaviour (e.g., arrests and convictions for such crimes as physical assault, sexual assault, drug trafficking) that interferes with the ability to function within a professional context.
  - d) Conduct that contravenes the policies of the practicum setting (applies to students in practicum).
  - e) Imposing stereotypes on a client, including behaviour, values, or roles related to race, ethnicity, religion, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, income source or amount, political affiliation, disability or diagnosis, or national origin, that would interfere with the provision of professional services to the client.
  - f) Inability to form a professional, helping relationship.

### **Initial Steps When Serious Concerns Are Identified Field Instructors**

1. Document the problematic behaviour or lack of progress in writing.
2. If possible, share the concerns and potential for remedial action with the student.
3. Contact the faculty liaison for consultation as soon as possible.

### **Students**

1. If concern develops about their own practicum progress, the student should:
  - a. Ask for clarification in writing.
  - b. Listen to the concerns and potential for remedial action described by the field instructor.
  - c. Be explicit about learning needs, including supervision needs.
  - d. Contact the faculty liaison for consultation as soon as possible.

### **Faculty Liaisons**

1. Ensure the student and field instructor are aware of the policies related to students at risk of failing practicum.
2. Consult with the student and/or field instructor as needed, documenting these consultations appropriately.
3. Inform the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education or Director of Field Education as soon as possible.

### **Process for Placing the Student at Risk of Failure**

In any at-risk situation, students, field instructors, and faculty liaisons work closely with the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education. The following process should be followed:

1. The student receives written notification from the faculty liaison that they are at risk of failing the practicum and details about the concerns that have led to this determination.
2. The Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education is advised when a student receives notification of being at risk of failing a practicum. The Director of Field Education may also be consulted.
3. A meeting to review the concerns regarding the student's behaviour or progress in practicum is typically held with the student, the field instructor, and the faculty liaison. The Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education or Director of Field Education may also take part in this meeting.
4. The outcome of the review meeting may be:
  - (a) The student remains in the placement with close supervision and under the conditions specified in a remedial educational plan. The remedial educational plan should, at a minimum: 1) be in writing and be signed by the student, field instructor, and the faculty liaison; 2) specify the activities required of the student to continue in the field placement; 3) specify indicators that will be used to judge whether or not the student has addressed the concerns; 4) specify how the student will be supervised while addressing the concerns about their performance; and 5) specify when the situation will next be reviewed.
  - (b) The student leaves the field placement, and an alternative field placement is arranged whereby the student continues in the practicum course, with a possible extension of the required time. In this case, the student should be aware that: 1) The Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education will work closely with the student to arrange a new practicum, however, a new placement in the current semester cannot be guaranteed. It may take considerable time to finalize a new practicum, particularly for distance students who are responsible for taking the lead in finding their own practicum placement. In some cases, the student may have to

wait until a new semester starts or the course is offered again to resume the practicum and/or seminar courses; 2) The faculty liaison, Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education/Director of Field Education, or the new practicum may require the completion of hours over and above the number required by the practicum course, in order to ensure the achievement of the practicum objectives; 3) Potential field instructors may be made aware of the student's previous placement experience, and/or "at risk of failure" status; and 4) A remedial educational plan (as outlined in 4a above) may be established in the new practicum.

- (c) The student is asked to withdraw from the practicum course with the recommendation that the student be permitted to repeat the course in a different agency during a subsequent semester.
  - (d) The student is asked to withdraw from the practicum course, with a recommendation that the student also withdraws from the BSW/MSW program.
5. The outcome of the review meeting should be documented in writing, with a copy to the student, field instructor, and the faculty liaison and the student's Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education/Director of Field Education.
  6. The outcome for the student in the practicum course remains the decision of the faculty liaison as the teacher-of-record.

### **When a Practicum Ends Without a Review**

On occasion, a practicum is terminated by a field instructor (agency), or faculty liaison and the student is asked to leave the practicum without a formal review process. In these situations, the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education or Director of Field Education may ask for a meeting with the student, field instructor, and/or the faculty liaison. Written reports from these individuals may also be requested. Consultation with appropriate individuals may be required to help determine appropriate next steps.

### **Student Concerns about Practicum**

On occasion, a student may find that the practicum placement does not meet their learning objectives or needs, or that their learning is not being adequately supported in the practicum. In such situations, students are required to address their concerns with the field instructor, and/or the faculty liaison. The faculty liaison can serve as a support person for the student in this situation, clarify the practicum expectations of students and field instructors/agencies, and facilitate discussions between the student and field instructor as needed. Students are expected to make reasonable attempts to address the concerns in the practicum placement, and to work collaboratively with their field instructor and the faculty liaison in doing so. In situations where documented attempts have been made by the student, field instructor and faculty liaison to address the concerns, and the concerns remain or it is determined the student's needs cannot be met in the practicum or the practicum objectives cannot be achieved, a joint determination may be made for the practicum to be terminated.

Students require the approval of the faculty liaison and the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education/Director of Field Education to terminate a placement before termination occurs. This decision to leave the practicum cannot be made unilaterally by the student, doing so may result in the student failing the practicum or being placed at risk of failing the practicum.

If a collaborative decision is made to terminate the practicum, the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education will work with the student to find an alternative field placement for the student to continue in a practicum course, with a possible extension of the required time. In this case, the student should be aware that while the student will be supported to find a new placement as soon as possible, a new placement in the current semester cannot be guaranteed. It may take considerable time to finalize a new practicum, particularly for distance students who are responsible for taking the lead in finding their own practicum placement. In some cases, the student may have to wait until a new semester starts or the course is offered again to resume the practicum and/or seminar courses. Close consultation and collaboration with the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education during this process is highly recommended.

### **Feedback and Evaluation**

The provincial field education team, led by the Director of Field Education, receives feedback from students, field instructors, and faculty liaisons and takes the feedback into consideration during program planning. In addition, near the end of the practicum, students and field instructors are asked to complete evaluation forms (through the IPT system), as follows:

- ***Student Evaluation of the Field Placement:*** This form provides students the opportunity to provide feedback about their field placement experiences. This form is available to the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education only, though agencies may ask for generalized and aggregate feedback collected over time.
- ***Student Evaluation of the Faculty Liaison:*** This form provides students the opportunity to provide feedback and evaluate their faculty liaison. Aggregate class feedback may be provided to faculty liaisons for the purposes of improving their future teaching and instructional development. The completed form may be available to be seen by the faculty liaison on IPT.
- ***Field Instructor Evaluation of the Field Education Process:*** The Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education appreciates receiving feedback from field instructors regarding their experience with the field education process. The Office is committed to adapting its processes and structures according to the needs and preferences of affiliated agencies and field instructors. In addition to the evaluation form available on IPT, Field Instructors are also welcomed to discuss their feedback of the field education program with faculty liaisons, or with the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education. or Director of Field Education.

- **Faculty Liaison Evaluation of the Placement:** As part of ongoing efforts to improve the field education program, faculty liaisons are asked to provide feedback on placements and field instruction to the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education.

## Student Resources and Information

### International Students

All international students completing field practicum placements in Canada are responsible for securing appropriate work permits. Please consult the University of Calgary's International Student Services team for assistance: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/iss>

### Standard of Care Expected by Students

Social work students are not held to the standard of care of fully qualified professionals but are expected to function competently within their level of skill. They are expected to be aware of their own limits and, when appropriate, to refer the case to or seek assistance from the field instructor or other qualified staff.

### Academic Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) who will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students please visit: [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/) The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodationpolicy>

### Deferral of Term Work

Students registered for a practicum course are expected to complete the practicum within that term. A deferral can potentially impact program completion (convocation) dates. When completing the practicum within the term is not possible, the process of obtaining a deferral of term work proceeds as follows:

1. The student, field instructor and faculty liaison discuss the situation as soon as possible. If a deferral is agreed upon, a date by which the course will be completed is set.
2. The faculty liaison submits a Deferral of Term Work form to the student services manager for processing and approval by the Faculty and University.
3. The student completes the practicum by the agreed completion date.
4. A Change of Grade Form is completed by the faculty liaison upon completion of practicum so that the student's record may reflect the completion of the course.

### Information Sharing

The practicum agency and the Faculty of Social Work have a shared responsibility for educating and shaping the professional practice of social work students. They also have a duty to protect individuals, families, and communities and to ensure competence in graduating social work students.

An essential aspect of this collaboration is the appropriate sharing of information about student performance collected by Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Educations/Director, field instructors, faculty members and, in some cases, field agency personnel under the authority of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.

Throughout the duration of the field placement, information about students is collected for the purposes of identifying emerging issues, problem solving, evaluating student performance, and assigning grades. This information may become part of the student's file held by the University of Calgary.

This information will only be used for the identified purposes, but students should note that, when necessary, information will be shared among personnel responsible for establishing and monitoring the working relationships among faculty, the student, student colleagues, field instructors, agency clients, agency staff, and others who are responsible for monitoring student performance. The limited disclosure of personal information may be appropriate when there is an emerging situation or concern that may negatively impact clients, field instructors, agency staff, faculty, and/or student colleagues or when field instructors, faculty liaisons or other faculty members need to include other personnel in resolving issues in the field or classroom.

In all cases, the decision to disclose or share personal information will be sensitive to the evaluative nature of the practicum and conducted in a thoughtful, professional manner that adheres to the CASW Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice dictated by the provincial/territorial social work governing bodies. Questions about the Faculty of Social Work's policy regarding information sharing between field agencies should be directed to the Field Education Coordinator/Associate Director of Field Education or Director of Field Education.

### **Student Safety in a Practicum Setting**

Student safety in practicum is a priority and students and field instructors need to be aware of risks to avoid potentially dangerous situations. Violence can be experienced in many forms, including verbal, physical, emotional, and psychological. The Faculty of Social Work recognizes that intersectionality of social identities and marginalization can increase the likelihood of experiencing violence in a workplace or practicum setting and is opposed to all forms of discrimination and violence.

Agency responsibilities in risk management include:

- Responding immediately to a student concern about safety. All safety issues should be reviewed through consultation.
- Students have the right to question any potentially unsafe assignment without repercussions.
- Informing students of safety and security programs/regulations of the agency.
- Advising against students working alone in the agency, especially during evening hours or at night.
- Informing the student if an assigned client has a history of violence.

- Discussing safety issues with students, particularly prior to potentially hostile situations or home visits.

Students' responsibilities in risk management include:

- Arranging designated work spaces with personal safety in mind (e.g., always have a pathway to the door).
- Never working alone in a building.
- Informing the practicum instructor or other staff of when and where clients will be seen.
- Understanding agency/Faculty policy regarding transporting clients in a personal vehicle (see below).
- Reporting any concerns or incidents related to personal safety to the field instructor.

### **Client Transport**

Students are advised not to transport clients in personal vehicles. If this is necessary, the student must have the proper liability insurance on their vehicle.

### **Harassment and Discrimination**

The University of Calgary has established policies and procedures to protect students, staff and faculty from sexual harassment and other forms of harassment and discrimination. The University of Calgary's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion serves a central point of contact, resources, training, awareness, and support to the University community on issues of equity and diversity. The University has established policies and procedures to protect students, staff and faculty from harassment and discrimination.

The right to information about and protection from harassment, discrimination and violence extends to students in their field placement, to field instructors and faculty. The Faculty of Social Work is opposed to all forms of harassment and discrimination and students, field instructors, and faculty members are expected to understand and practice within the University's policies and procedures pertaining to discrimination, harassment, equity, and human rights.

Learn more about the University of Calgary's Harassment Policy and how to report harassment: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Harassment-Policy.pdf>

### **Social Media Policy**

The Faculty of Social Work recognizes the importance of technology and social media and supports the appropriate use of these methods of communication among social workers. With the rapidly evolving platforms of communication, it is increasingly important to outline the acceptable uses of social media where faculty, staff, and students are accountable for their engagement with these platforms. Responsible and ethical use of social media should be informed by the:

- Provincial equivalent to the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) and agency policies in the context of a practicum
- CASW Code of Ethics



- CASW Social Media Use and Social Work Practice

### ***Guidelines for Communication about the Faculty and the Practicum - Confidentiality***

The content of publicly accessible electronic communications should be respectful and adhere to the values outlined in the CASW Code of Ethics (2005). The Faculty of Social Work respects and encourages freedom of expression and critical debate. The Faculty of Social Work does not support the use of inflammatory, libellous, or disrespectful language. This can result in disciplinary action up to and including school/practicum termination.

The Faculty of Social Work encourages writing that is accurate and based in knowledge. Electronic communications should be treated as public documents recognizing that they could be seen by anyone, and professional communication is always required.

Websites, blogs, tweets, and other uses of social media that make mention of the Faculty of Social Work or the field placement should identify that the views expressed are those of the writer alone and do not represent the views of the Faculty of Social Work and/or the field placement setting. *Students are prohibited from mentioning, discussing, or identifying any clients or service-users via social media.* If a client or service-user should request interaction via social media with a student, the student must politely but clearly decline to maintain professional boundaries. The student is encouraged to seek out guidance and support from faculty, staff, and/or their field instructor to best handle each unique situation.

Unless given permission by the Faculty of Social Work or their field instructor, students are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Faculty of Social Work or their field placement agency. Moreover, students should not give the impression that they can speak on behalf of the Faculty of Social Work or the field placement agency. Students must not share information that is confidential about the Faculty of Social Work or confidential information about their field placement setting, clients, colleagues, or other students.

Faculty, staff, and students are legally liable for anything they write or present online and there can be professional or academic consequences for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, bullying, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They can also be sued by any individual or organization that views their commentary, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, harassing, bullying, libellous or creating a hostile work environment.

### **Supporting Documents**

1. [Practice Objectives for BSW SOWK 410/412](#)
2. [Practice Objectives for MSW Foundational Practicum \(SOWK 633\)](#)
3. [Practice Objectives for the MSW Advanced Practicum \(SOWK 660\): Clinical Social Work Specialization](#)

4. [Practice Objectives for the MSW Advanced Practicum \(SOWK 660\): Leadership in Human Services Specialization](#)
5. [Practice Objectives for the MSW Advanced Practicum \(SOWK 660\): International & Community Development Specialization](#)
6. [Guidelines: Use of Agency Material in Classroom](#)
7. [Consent for Audio or Video Recording Clients](#)
8. [Practicum Orientation Checklist](#)
9. [Faculty Liaison Role Description](#)
10. [External Field Instructor/Supervisor Role Description](#)
11. [Faculty Field Instructor Role Description](#)
12. [Field Instructor Role Description](#)
13. [Client Consent Form \(Adult\)](#)
14. [Client Consent Form \(Child/Youth\)](#)
15. [Agency Affiliation Agreement](#)
16. [Application for Field Instructor Status](#)

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