

UMBC
Baccalaureate Social Work Program – Office of Field Education
Learning Agreement Instructions and Suggestions

This form can be found under “Forms” on IPT at www.runipt.com

For the *Learning Agreement*:

During the first 3 weeks, the student and field instructor should start thinking about the Learning Agreement by considering:

- Learning objectives of the student
- Skills the student would like to develop
- Agency needs
- The Learning Agreement is a JOINT effort between the student, field instructor, and task supervisor (if applicable)
- Review what it means for something to be MEASURABLE
- Refer to SOWK 480 and 481 syllabi
- Review the entire draft with your field instructor
- As homework, TYPE what you and your instructor discussed and bring it to supervision the following week; it is normal to do a few drafts
- Make sure that you and your field instructor sign the learning agreement in IPT; the field instructor will sign first, and then the student and field liaison
- Submit your Learning Agreement via IPT, by the date listed on the Field Calendar

For the *Evaluation*:

- During both semesters, midterm evaluations are completed by the field instructor in October and March; the final evaluations are completed in December and April; discussed with the student, and then the field instructor, student, and field liaison sign the form
- It is important that the field instructor discusses the ratings prior to signing the form
- The new midterm will evaluate essential social work skills and professional behaviors in the middle of each semester
- The field instructor, task supervisor (if applicable), and student sign the evaluation and submit it via IPT, by the date listed on the field calendar
- Students may not pass field if all paperwork has not been completed and submitted via IPT, by the end of each semester

We hope this list of suggestions inspires you to be creative as well as realistic. It is meant to give you ideas under each competency to help you review what others have done and envision what might be possible for your student/s at your agency. **Please create assignments so that they are measurable and specific to your agency/student/supervision circumstances.**

Some Steps to Consider:

1. When you begin the process, look at the opportunities that are available, the tasks that you perform in your job, and how your student may participate in agency activities.
2. Talk with the student in order to understand her/his interests and life experiences. How might these interests play a role in what you determine as assignments?
3. What are the student's strengths? How might these be expanded through the experiences you provide?
4. What areas in the student's experience are weak and how might you help her/him build skills and knowledge?

You can help your student/s become responsible for her/his own learning by involving her/him in this process of establishing assignments, reviewing progress weekly, giving feedback, and completing the evaluations each semester. The process starts here and you and your student can create a solid foundation upon which to build her/his learning. The Learning Agreement should be a "live document" that is used during each supervision session.

<p>Competency #1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</p>
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<p>Assignments should involve: ethical decision making, understanding of professional development, professional roles and boundaries, and the use of supervision.</p>

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #1:

- Through process recordings and discussions in supervision, reflect on use of self and demonstrate an awareness of personal strengths and challenges.
- Meet attendance and timeliness expectations of field placement.
- Read policies and procedures, observe colleagues, attend meetings and talk with instructor to understand agency expectations regarding professional behavior.
- Reflect on how personal assumptions impact professional conduct and interactions with clients.
- Maintain attire and appearance in accordance with agency expectations, alter if necessary.
- Prepare a weekly supervision agenda and discussion questions and utilize supervision to review and reflect upon field assignments, to discuss strengths and areas for growth.
- Learn expectations regarding documentation and other required written communication and gain competency in using agency computer systems.
- Document interactions with clients, agency or community according to agency protocol and integrate field instructor feedback in order to ensure that documentation is clear, concise and contains an appropriate level of detail.

- When working with clients, colleagues and field instructor, practice communicating effectively and respectfully, both verbally and nonverbally. Seek feedback and assistance as needed from the field instructor and/or faculty field liaison.
- Modify social media accounts in ways that reinforce professional boundaries and discuss in supervision.
- Use process recordings and supervision to identify, explore and discuss ethical issues.
- Read agency policies related to confidentiality, mandatory reporting and duty to inform; discuss during supervision and follow ethical and legal standards for privacy and confidentiality in accordance with state, federal, agency and institutional standards.
- Discuss common ethical issues for the setting and how to handle them with the field instructor. Talk with colleagues about ethical dilemmas they have encountered and how they arrived at decisions.
- Ask field instructor about rules related to the use of personal and agency technology, make appropriate changes, if needed, and discuss in supervision.

Competency #2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Assignments should include: opportunities to discover how a culture's structure may positively or negatively affect the creation or enhancement of privilege and power, to gain self-awareness and to understand the importance of difference when working with clients. Understanding how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience, recognizing the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize or alienate clients.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #2:

- In process recordings and supervision, reflect upon communication style, values, cultural differences, transference issues, assumptions and biases, and identify ways they could impact interactions with clients.
- Increase awareness of oppression and learn about cultures, history, socioeconomics, and politics of clients by listening to their experiences and asking questions in order to more fully understand their lives; discuss the effects of oppression in supervision.
- Increase awareness of oppression and learn about the cultures, history, socioeconomics, and politics of clients by participating in relevant trainings and reading applicable articles.
- With field instructor guidance, initiate open discussions of client/worker differences during supervision sessions.
- Identify strengths in clients and reflect upon how to build on strengths in supervision. Be open to discussing personal biases.

- Use clients as educators and experts on the prison experience, way of life in prison, and being incarcerated fathers.
- Attend a cultural/religious activity that is meaningful to consumers served by the agency to better understand and appreciate cultural differences.
- Plan activities or an event where clients can discuss cultural awareness, diversity, and how cultural values in society can create barriers for clients.
- Implement learned cultural competency and non-judgmental skills when engaging with clients of different cultures or views.
- Practice open-mindedness and present self as a learner when engaging with clients of different cultures, and ask questions to understand their differences.
- Discuss client's background via psychosocial evaluation to ascertain how clients can be marginalized, oppressed and voiceless in supervision with field instructor.
- Attend and observe 1-2 Empowering Mothers groups to better understand how group structures can be utilized in competent diversity practice within the social work profession.
- Continuously interact with the diverse participant population by attending outings, leading projects, and leading and observing goal setting sessions.
- Observe 2-3 home visits to gain a better understanding of the diverse population the agency serves and discussing in supervision.
- Student will view a webinar on parenting practices with Alaska Native population and discuss its impact on clients seeking services
- Student will attend staff meetings and demonstrate self-initiative by actively asking questions, discussing with field instructor, and reflecting in journals.
- Student will interview their field instructor regarding the agency structure and overview, then complete an infographic on the agency and a presentation to classmates.
- Student will complete weekly journals, engage in regular supervision as well as seminar, discussing own feelings, values, and bias, demonstrating self-awareness by identifying handling of those aspects and discussing with field instructor.

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

Assignments should include: experience with oppression and discrimination, and opportunities for advocacy and practice with advancing human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice with clients.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #3:

- Identify relevant social justice issues and increase knowledge of them through research, readings, trainings, or other activities.
- Increase understanding of and reflect upon the impact of social, economic and environmental issues on clients through listening to clients, discussions in supervision, research, readings, trainings or other activities.

- Research current or impending legislation that will impact client systems served by practice site and discuss in supervision.
- Identify strategies to advocate for client access to resources (i.e., attending lobby day); implement one or more advocacy strategies and discuss in supervision.
- Assist clients who have restricted opportunities as a result of their circumstances (i.e., single mothers, homeless individuals) in understanding their rights and identifying new possibilities for themselves.
- Identify common economic barriers to care and discuss with your field instructor in supervision.
- Identify opportunities to incorporate environmental concerns in order to help improve the functioning individuals and communities.
- Engage in research concerning social, economic, and environmental justice for prisoners/inmates to explore what issues are prevalent and ignored by society at large and discuss in supervision.

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

Assignments should include: opportunities to understand the role of research in the agency and its application to practice, and how practice informs research.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #4:

- Review scholarly research in order to identify best practices related to a specific client challenge and discuss findings and strategies for intervening in supervision.
- Read a current research article on micro or macro intervention methods used in your agency and discuss strengths and weaknesses of those interventions with field instructor.
- Compile data for grant applications or other agency reports.
- In collaboration with colleagues, evaluate an aspect of agency programming or of clients' experiences with the agency.
- Research topics for groups by using scholarly articles and manuals provided by the agency.
- Research a policy issue or relevant social work bill and present learnings/findings to field instructor and/or colleagues.
- Student will demonstrate knowledge of interventions by researching and summarizing in writing at least three intervention methods that can be used with the agency's target population.
- Student will learn about resources in their community, identifying gaps and overlaps in resources, demonstrating ability to critically think by creating a community resource guide for clients.
- Student will understand how to best work with the target population by completing two article reviews that discuss the agency's target population and share this information with the field instructor.

Competency #5: Engage in Policy Practice

Assignments should include: discussion of policy and its effect on service delivery, analysis of the policy change process in the agency, and the opportunity to explore policy change.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #5:

- Assess the differential impact of policies on various populations and discuss or present to field instructor and/or colleagues.
- Follow the implementation of a relevant policy initiative and present learning to field instructor and/or colleagues.
- Research a policy issue or relevant social work bill and present learnings/findings to field instructor and/or colleagues.
- Select a local, state, or federal policy and discuss its impact on client access to and utilization of agency services during supervision.
- Continue to monitor and analyze the impact the Justice Restoration Act has on the criminal justice system and the correctional environment
- Discuss the application of policy practice skills when working with consumers (e.g., HIPAA, mandated reporting, duty to warn).
- Research and assess the impact of policies that affect client access and utilization of agency services and report findings to field instructor and colleagues.
- Attend Advocacy Day to advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
- Student will meet with the staff at the senior center, demonstrating their understanding of policy impact by writing up a summary of the agency's referral process, services, and funding sources.
- Student will research healthcare reform policy and demonstrate their advocating abilities by completing a letter to a legislator in favor of or against the policy. Discuss findings and share letter with field instructor.
- Student will interview five clients about their experiences with various agencies, demonstrating student's ability to identify gaps in policies.

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

Assignments should include: opportunities to understand the importance of human relationships, learning strategies to engage diverse clients and understanding how students' personal experiences may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #6:

- Read client chart or records, make a list of questions that arise as a result of this reading and discuss in supervision.

- Learn how to appropriately introduce yourself to clients, staff and community members and practice doing so.
- Begin to establish rapport by reflecting content and reflecting feelings in client interactions.
- Engage with diverse clients by listening to their experiences and asking questions in order to more fully understand their lives.
- Organize a group of clients to discuss a common concern in their community and invite all interested parties to the community meeting.
- Complete assigned screening/assessments to improve interview skills and engage with individuals whose background differ from your own.
- When working with a client, explain the limits of confidentiality, partialize client issues to make them more manageable, and explain agency services as well as the role of the social worker.
- Demonstrate empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies in one-on-on interactions.
- Utilize active listening and preparedness skills when meeting with new and existing clients.
- Utilize motivational interviewing skills when engaging with clients to complete biopsychosocial assessments.
- Engage and collaborate with client families and other agencies as needed to provide optimal services to the client.
- Facilitate bi-weekly community meetings with the residents and monitor the agency social media page to better engage with the community.
- Student will complete an intake assessment to obtain the ability to engage a client in conversation about themselves.
- Student will demonstrate engagement skills through co-facilitation of an educational group for clients, write a summary and discuss with field instructor.

Competency #7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Assignments should include: understanding that assessments are ongoing, recognize the implications of the larger context in the assessment process, and understanding how students' personal experience and reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #7:

- Identify client/group/community strengths and needs and discuss with supervisor.
- Complete intakes/psychosocial evaluations/needs assessments and other paperwork according to agency protocols.
- Meet with community members to assess the scope of a concern and develop and carry out a needs assessment survey in the effected community.
- Complete a client genogram or ecomap as part of client assessment.

- Effectively collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
- Develop treatment plans with clients based on mutually agreed on goals and interventions related to presenting problems.
- Discuss how to identify mental health symptoms of clients in supervision and reflect how personal experience may impact client assessments and decision making.
- Meet with clients monthly to evaluate treatment plans and assess progress towards goals.
- Demonstrate appropriate documentation skills through writing up assessments and client notes which will be reviewed by field instructor.
- Through observation of worker-client interactions, students will be able to identify assessment skills utilized in a one-page summary, and discuss with their field instructor.
- Student will demonstrate assessment skills while working with a client to develop SMART goals.
- Student will demonstrate ability to utilize assessment tools by completing an eco-map and timeline with a client.

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

Assignments should include: understanding that intervention is an ongoing component of the interactive process of practice, becoming knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients, understanding theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluating and applying this knowledge to effectively intervene with a variety of client groups.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #8:

- Create a service agreement/treatment plan with client by identifying solutions and outlining client-centered goals every three months or within timeframe identified by agency protocol.
- Review client progress toward goals using agency appropriate measures/tools.
- In supervision, discuss and reflect upon client interactions and progress and integrate feedback into future interactions.
- Demonstrate ability to discuss and process information and clearly articulate ideas, thoughts, and concepts when working with and discussing clients.
- Develop and implement a plan with community members to address the identified concerns, based on a needs assessment.
- Review client progress throughout the termination phase; prepare client for final session/meetings and create a transition plan.
- Effectively negotiate, mediate, and advocate on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.
- Engage in inter-professional collaboration to achieve beneficial practice outcomes for assigned clients.

- Utilize MANDT/crisis interventions during crisis situations with clients, including while answering or returning calls on the crisis line.
- Collaborate with staff from various disciplines to develop client actions plans, will assist and guide clients in setting achievable and attainable goals, and will refer clients to appropriate community resources.
- Demonstrate ability to implement and continually assess client progress toward goals through the application of chosen intervention and evaluation methods. Observation of skill by field instructor.
- Student will observe worker-client interaction in helping resolve client problems, demonstrating ability to identify appropriate strategies to use with clients in crisis.
- Student will demonstrate ability to work on multi-disciplinary teams by giving report and recommendations during morning client rounds.
- Student will advocate for client needs in a case conference, write a case note summary and discuss with field instructor.
- Student will demonstrate ending skills by creating a discharge plan with a client.

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

Assignments should include: recognizing the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes, understanding human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluating and applying this knowledge in evaluating outcomes.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #9:

- Review client progress toward goals using agency appropriate measures and tools and maintain communication and follow up with client to determine outcomes and potential success.
- Collect, organize and analyze client (including groups/communities) data to determine appropriate interventions.
- Discuss and evaluate interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities with field instructor in supervision and modify interventions based on findings.
- Monitor the effects of an implemented community-based plan and meet with community members to discuss findings and make changes as needed.
- Use group facilitator evaluation to critically analyze group members' performance, participation, and demonstration of growth as a father.
- Evaluate overall effectiveness of interventions by looking at client outcomes as demonstrated by progress in their assessment/clinical summary or treatment plan.
- Complete client satisfaction surveys to measure success of mental health services at the agency.
- Effectively analyze, monitor and evaluate intervention program processes and outcomes
- Meet with clients throughout program and evaluate the progress made toward treatment goals as they're preparing to discharge.

- Review progress notes and process recordings with field instructor in supervision to evaluate the effectiveness of different practice techniques.
- Student will demonstrate evaluation skills by utilizing the agency's evaluation tools with a client and discussing with field instructor.
- Student will meet with various workers to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of their intervention with a client. Student will demonstrate understanding of evaluation by being able to identify what they would have done the same or differently and discuss with field instructor.
- Student will complete and present a case presentation to the treatment team on a recent client, demonstrating ability to analyze the work with the client and effectiveness of the outcome.
- Student will research other Housing First programs and their current evaluation methods and demonstrate evaluation skills through a write up summarizing the findings and student's own recommendations.