

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 in IPT, by the date listed on the Field Calendar.

For the *Evaluation*:

- The midterm evaluation is completed by the field instructor in October. It should only be completed in the spring semester if there is a concern or if the student is in a new placement. The midterm evaluates essential social work skills and professional behaviors.
- The final evaluations are completed in December and April; discussed with the student, and then the field instructor, student, and faculty field liaison sign the form.
- It is important that the field instructor discusses the ratings prior to signing the form and 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 ideas under each competency to help you review what others have done and envision what might be possible for your students at your agency. Please create assignments so that they are measurable and specific to your agency/student/supervision circumstances.

Some Steps to Consider:

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. Talk with the student in order to understand her/his interests and life experiences.

1. How might these interests play a role in what you determine as assignments?
2. What are the students' strengths? How might these be expanded through the experiences you provide?
3. What areas in the students' experience are lacking and how might you help them build skills and knowledge?

You can help your student become responsible for their own learning by involving them 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 their learning. The Learning Agreement should be a "live document" that is used during each supervision session.

Competency #1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Assignments should involve: ethical decision making, understanding of professional development, professional roles and boundaries, and the use of supervision.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #1:

- By the end of the semester, complete at least 2 process recordings and discuss them in supervision to reflect on the use of self, identifying at least one personal strength and one challenge in each session.
- Maintain 100% compliance with field placement expectations for attendance and punctuality throughout the placement period, as documented in supervision logs.
- Within the first month of placement, read the agency's policies and procedures, observe colleagues, attend at least 1 staff meeting, if applicable, and discuss expectations for professional behavior with the field instructor.
- Reflect on how personal assumptions may affect client interactions by writing at least 1 short reflection entry and reviewing them during supervision by mid-semester.
- Prepare a weekly supervision agenda with at least 2 discussion questions and use supervision to review field tasks, strengths, and areas for growth consistently throughout the semester.
- Learn documentation expectations and agency computer systems by attending a training session (if available) and demonstrating independent competency by week 6 of the placement.
- Complete all required client and agency documentation according to protocol and integrate field instructor feedback to ensure clarity and detail, as evidenced by improvement over 3 reviewed documents during the semester.
- Practice effective and respectful communication with clients, colleagues, and supervisors throughout the placement; seek feedback in supervision at least biweekly to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Use at least 2 process recordings and 2 supervision sessions to explore ethical issues encountered in practice by the end of the semester.
- Read the agency's policies on confidentiality, mandatory reporting, and duty to inform during the first 2 weeks, and demonstrate understanding by correctly explaining confidentiality limits in at least 2 client interactions observed or role-played in supervision.

- Discuss at least 2 common ethical dilemmas in the agency setting with your field instructor and interview one colleague about an ethical issue they faced and how it was resolved by mid-semester.
- During the first 3 weeks, ask your field instructor about appropriate use of personal and agency technology, make adjustments as needed, and revisit the topic in supervision at least once during the semester to ensure compliance.

Competency #2: 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 #2:

- By the end of the semester, identify at least 2 relevant social justice issues and increase knowledge of them through readings, research, trainings, or other activities, and discuss insights during supervision.
- By mid-semester, reflect on the impact of social, economic, and environmental issues on clients by listening to client experiences and/or completing related reading or training, and discussing observations with your field instructor.
- Research one piece of current or impending legislation relevant to the client systems served by your agency within the first 6 weeks and present your findings and its potential impact in supervision.
- Identify at least 2 advocacy strategies to support client access to resources (e.g., attending a lobby day, contacting a representative) and implement one strategy by the end of the semester, followed by a reflective supervision discussion.
- Support clients facing restricted opportunities (e.g., single mothers, unhoused individuals) by helping at least one client understand their rights and identify 2 new options or resources and review the interaction with your field instructor.
- Identify and document at least 2 common economic barriers to care encountered by clients at your placement site, and discuss them with your field instructor in supervision before the end of the semester.
- Explore how environmental issues affect the community by identifying at least one way to integrate environmental concern into practice (e.g., housing, transportation), and present your idea in supervision for feedback by week 10.

- Conduct research on social, economic, and environmental justice issues affecting incarcerated populations, summarize key findings in a 1-page brief, and lead a discussion in supervision on overlooked societal issues by the end of the semester.

Competency #3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Assignments should include opportunities to understand how clients are impacted by racial, economic, ableist, and sexist inequities that are a result of systemic structures of oppression, opportunities to provide outreach, education, and intervention aimed at providing relief from inequities and aimed at disrupting systems of oppression.

Field Practice Activities to Develop and Demonstrate Competency #3:

- Complete at least 2 process recordings throughout the semester and use them in supervision to reflect on communication style, values, cultural differences, transference, assumptions, and biases—and identify specific impacts on client interactions.
- Increase awareness of oppression by actively listening to at least 2 clients' personal experiences and asking culturally informed questions; discuss the impact of oppression in at least 2 supervision sessions during the semester.
- Participate in 2 trainings and read 2 relevant articles about client cultures, histories, socioeconomics, and political contexts; summarize key takeaways and reflect in supervision.
- Initiate open discussions of client/worker differences during at least 2 supervision sessions with field instructor guidance over the course of the semester.
- Identify 2 client strengths per case and reflect in weekly supervision on ways to build on these strengths, while also identifying and discussing any personal biases.
- Acknowledge clients as experts in their own lives by asking at least one open-ended cultural or lived-experience question in 2 client sessions and reflect on responses during supervision.
- Attend one cultural or religious activity relevant to the population served by the agency before mid-semester; reflect in journal and/or supervision on how this informs client understanding.
- Plan or assist with one event or activity where clients can share experiences around cultural identity, barriers, or awareness by the end of the semester; reflect on impact in supervision.

- Implement non-judgmental and culturally responsive engagement skills in at least 3 client sessions, and review examples in supervision and journals.
- Demonstrate open-mindedness and humility in all client interactions, and document 3 instances where asking respectful questions helped clarify client values or perspectives.
- Conduct a psychosocial evaluation for at least 2 clients and discuss in supervision how aspects of identity (race, class, gender, etc.) may contribute to marginalization or oppression.
- Attend one anti-racist or anti-oppressive training by mid-semester, and present learnings in supervision or seminar, reflecting on liberatory frameworks.
- Participate in at least 2 group activities or outings with the diverse client population; take a leadership role in one session (e.g., setting goals or leading discussion) and reflect afterward.
- Observe 2–3 home visits by week 10 to gain deeper understanding of client environments, process insights with field instructor in supervision.
- Attend a weekly staff meeting and demonstrate initiative by asking at least one question per meeting, with follow-up discussion during supervision or in weekly journal entries.
- Complete weekly journal reflections, attend supervision and seminar consistently, and explore personal values, feelings, and reactions related to field experiences.

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 at least one scholarly research article addressing a specific client challenge and summarize findings and potential interventions during a supervision session before mid-semester.
- Select a peer-reviewed article on inherent bias in research and discuss its relevance and implications with your field instructor by week 6.

- By the end of the semester, design and pilot a brief client feedback survey, with field instructor input, to gather insights on services or programming.
- Identify one evidence-based practice used at your agency, and evaluate its strengths, barriers, and potential gaps; present your findings in a written reflection and supervision discussion by week 8.
- Identify at least two funding sources supporting agency programming and discuss how they influence outcomes and whether they align with community needs by the end of the semester.
- Read one research article related to micro or macro-level interventions used at your agency and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of those interventions in a written summary discussed in supervision.
- Assist with compiling data for one grant application or agency report and reflect on how data supports funding or program decisions by the end of your placement.
- Collaborate with at least one staff member or colleague to evaluate a specific aspect of agency programming or client experience and discuss insights during supervision by week 10.
- Research at least two group intervention topics by using scholarly articles and practice manuals and share summaries with your field instructor for potential use in group planning.
- Identify one policy issue or current bill related to social work practice, research it thoroughly, and present your findings to your field instructor or team in a 10-minute informal presentation or discussion by mid-semester.
- Demonstrate knowledge of interventions by researching and writing summaries of at least two intervention methods relevant to the agency's target population, submitting the summary by week 12.
- Create a community resource guide by identifying local services, noting gaps and overlaps in coverage, and present the guide to your field instructor and, if appropriate, share with clients by the final week of placement.
- Increase understanding of the agency's target population by completing two article reviews focused on the population's needs or challenges and discuss how this information shapes your practice during two supervision sessions.

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:

- By week 8, assess the differential impact of at least one policy on two or more populations served by the agency and present your findings to your field instructor or in a team meeting.
- Follow the implementation of a current local or state policy initiative throughout the semester and provide a 5-minute summary or reflection in supervision by the end of the semester.
- Research one active policy issue or relevant social work bill and present a 1-page summary or 5-minute overview to your field instructor or colleagues by mid-semester.
- Select one local, state, or federal policy and discuss in supervision how it impacts client access to and use of agency services by week 6.
- In supervision, discuss the application of at least two policy practice skills (e.g., HIPAA, mandated reporting, duty to warn) as they arise in practice situations throughout the semester.
- Research and assess at least two policies that affect client access and utilization of agency services and share your findings with your field instructor and/or agency staff by week 10.
- Attend Advocacy Day during the spring semester and reflect on the experience in supervision, focusing on how policy advocacy supports human rights and social justice.
- By week 4, meet with agency staff to understand the referral process, services offered, and funding sources, and summarize this understanding in a supervision session.
- Research healthcare reform policy and demonstrate advocacy by writing a letter to a legislator either in support of or against the policy and share your letter and findings with your field instructor by week 12.

- Interview at least two clients over the course of the semester to explore their experiences with various service agencies and identify policy gaps based on their stories; discuss common themes and gaps in supervision by the final 3 weeks of placement.

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 at least 2 client charts or records by week 4, create a list of questions based on your review, and discuss insights and knowledge gaps in supervision.
- Learn how to appropriately introduce yourself to clients, staff, and community members; practice and reflect on these interactions in at least 3 field experiences by mid-semester.
- Begin building rapport with clients by consistently using reflection of content and feelings in at least 2 client interactions, with feedback provided during supervision.
- Actively listen and ask culturally responsive questions in at least 3 sessions with diverse clients to better understand their lived experiences; reflect in weekly supervision discussions.
- By the end of the semester, organize and facilitate one community meeting around a shared concern among clients, inviting all interested parties and documenting the outcome in supervision.
- Complete at least 2 screening or assessment tools with clients from different backgrounds to improve interview skills and discuss each experience with your field instructor.
- In at least 2 client sessions, explain the limits of confidentiality, partialize presenting concerns into manageable components, and clarify agency services and the social worker's role; review language used in supervision.
- Demonstrate empathy, use reflective listening, and apply interpersonal engagement techniques in one-on-one sessions, and receive feedback from your field instructor on these efforts.

- Prepare for and actively listen in all client meetings by using structured notes or checklists and reviewing your level of preparedness in supervision biweekly.
- Apply motivational interviewing techniques during at least 2 biopsychosocial assessments and reflect on what went well and what could be improved in supervision.
- Collaborate with at least one family member or outside agency representative per client (where appropriate) to coordinate services and support client goals, and review communication approach with your field instructor.
- Facilitate bi-weekly community meetings and help manage the agency's social media page to enhance outreach and engagement; report outcomes during monthly supervision check-ins.
- Complete one full intake assessment independently (or with supervision), demonstrating your ability to build rapport and engage a client in meaningful conversation about themselves.
- Co-facilitate at least one educational group for clients during the semester, write a brief summary, and discuss your role and group dynamics in supervision.

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:

- Conduct a community mapping exercise to identify community strengths and needs by week 6 and discuss key findings with your field instructor during supervision.
- Complete at least 2 intakes or psychosocial evaluations according to agency protocol by mid-semester, ensuring accuracy and timeliness in documentation.
- Meet with at least 2 community members to gather perspectives on a shared concern and help design and implement a needs assessment survey within the community by week 10.
- Create one genogram or ecomap as part of the client assessment process by week 8 and review its insights with your field instructor.

- Collect and organize data from at least 3 client sessions, and apply critical thinking to identify patterns, concerns, or service needs, sharing your interpretations in supervision.
- Collaboratively develop treatment plans for at least 2 clients with mutually agreed-upon goals and interventions related to the clients' presenting problems and review them during supervision.
- Engage in at least 2 supervision discussions to reflect on how your personal values or experiences may influence your ability to recognize and assess client mental health symptoms.
- Meet with each assigned client monthly to review treatment plans and assess progress toward set goals, documenting updates in client records and discussing with your supervisor.
- Demonstrate effective documentation by writing at least 3 client notes or assessments, submitting them for feedback and revision by your field instructor.
- Observe a worker-client session and write a 1 page summary identifying the assessment strategies used, then review and discuss your observations in supervision within one week of observation.
- Collaborate with at least one client to create SMART goals during the treatment planning process and reflect on your engagement and assessment skills in supervision.
- Complete an eco-map and a timeline with at least one client to explore environmental and historical factors influencing their current functioning; discuss findings with your field instructor by week 10.

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 or treatment plan with at least one client every three months (or per agency protocol), identifying solutions and at least three client-centered goals, and review with your field instructor.
- Review client progress using agency-approved tools (e.g., progress notes, checklists, rating scales) for each assigned client monthly, and discuss results during supervision.
- During weekly supervision, reflect on at least one client interaction, receive feedback, and incorporate suggestions into your next session with that client.
- Demonstrate clear and professional communication when discussing at least 3 client cases with your field instructor or colleagues, ensuring accuracy and use of appropriate terminology.
- Collaborate with community members to develop and implement a plan addressing an identified concern by week 10, based on results from a prior needs assessment.
- As part of the termination process, review client progress toward goals and create a transition or discharge plan with at least one client, discussing preparation and closure in supervision.
- Effectively negotiate or advocate on behalf of at least 2 clients during interactions with agencies or service providers and reflect on these experiences in supervision.
- Participate in at least one inter-professional collaboration (e.g., meeting or consultation with another discipline) to support positive outcomes for a client and summarize takeaways in supervision.
- Apply a crisis intervention technique during an actual or simulated client crisis and debrief the situation in supervision, identifying what went well and what could be improved.
- Collaborate with staff from two different disciplines to develop a client action plan, assist the client in setting 2–3 realistic goals, and connect them to relevant community resources.
- Implement an intervention method for at least one client case, track progress weekly, and discuss results with your field instructor for ongoing evaluation and support.
- Observe a worker-client session where a crisis is being resolved, write a 1-paragraph summary identifying the strategies used, and discuss your observations with your supervisor.

- Participate in daily or weekly client rounds with a multidisciplinary team and present a brief report and recommendations for at least one client case.
- Advocate for client needs by speaking on their behalf in a case conference, write a follow-up case note summary, and review the advocacy process in supervision.
- Demonstrate termination and transition skills by creating a comprehensive discharge plan for at least one client and review its effectiveness and completeness with your field instructor.

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 using agency-approved evaluation tools (e.g., treatment plans, progress notes) biweekly, and maintain communication and follow-up with each client to determine outcomes and inform next steps.
- Collect, organize, and analyze data from at least 3 clients or one client group/community to identify trends and determine appropriate interventions by week 10 of the semester.
- Discuss the effectiveness of interventions for individuals, families, or groups in weekly supervision, and identify at least one modification to implement and assess in future sessions.
- Monitor outcomes of a community-based intervention plan by meeting with community members at two follow-up intervals, summarizing findings and recommended changes in a written reflection.
- Administer a group facilitator evaluation tool to assess participation and growth in a fatherhood support group; analyze responses and summarize findings in supervision.
- Evaluate client progress and the effectiveness of interventions by reviewing progress toward goals in the treatment plan or clinical summary for at least 2 clients, and adjust strategies based on findings.

- Distribute and collect client satisfaction surveys from at least 5 clients receiving mental health services, summarize results, and discuss patterns and areas for improvement with your field instructor.
- Monitor and evaluate a specific intervention program (e.g., group work, case management, workshops) by tracking attendance, participation, and outcomes, and compile a short evaluation report by the end of the semester.
- Meet with clients during their program participation and again prior to discharge to assess progress toward each goal listed in the treatment plan, documenting outcome measures and any remaining needs