

PRACTICUM MANUAL

BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL WORK



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
Tacoma, Washington 98447-0003**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome from the Department of Social Work!

We are pleased that you are interested in pursuing a career in Social Work and that you have chosen to study at Pacific Lutheran University. Welcome! Our undergraduate and graduate programs in social work are dedicated to the principle that as professionals, we should strive to improve the quality of individual and community life through the enhancement of social justice and opportunity.

Graduates of the Baccalaureate Program in Social Work are prepared for entry level positions in a wide variety of settings, working with a wide variety of populations including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Graduates in the Master's Program in Social Work are prepared for advanced clinical practice with individuals, families, and groups, with a focus on health and behavioral health. Our graduates are employed in social service agencies throughout the region. They also are employed and are providing leadership throughout the state as well as in other parts of the country and in international positions. The practicum experience in both the BSW and MSW programs are considered the "signature pedagogy" where students are able to integrate theory, knowledge, and practice.

Our faculty bring years of experience as social workers, educators, consultants, and agency administrators. The faculty and staff are committed to maintaining a quality educational program, to meeting the needs of our students, and to providing leadership and service to the profession and community.

Pacific Lutheran University's BSW program has been accredited since 1975 and the MSW program is pursuing accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education and has entered into candidacy. All students who begin the MSW program as of fall 2024 will graduate from a fully accredited program. We look forward to having you as a student in our program. We hope you will find it a challenging and rewarding experience.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PRACTICUM MANUAL

This manual offers information on both the BSW and MSW practicum programs. This manual has been prepared to assist students, agencies, agency supervisors, and faculty members to understand the objectives, policies, and procedures governing the practicum program for both the BSW and MSW programs at PLU. It is designed to answer the most frequently asked questions about the practicum programs in the Department of Social Work, their policies and procedures, and to clarify expectations, rights, and duties of all involved in a social practicum program.

The contents of this manual are based on best practices in social work that are guided by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) standards, and PLU's and the Department of Social Work's policies. Please be aware that the manual is reviewed and revised regularly; updated versions are available on the program's website.

Definition of terms you'll find throughout the Manual:

- **Practicum Coordinator:** The PLU faculty member who oversees and directs the practicum program.
- **Social Work Supervisor:** Person with an MSW and/or a BSW degree and relevant practice experience who provides social work supervision. This supervisor can be working within the placement agency or providing the supervision from outside the agency when there is not a social work supervisor available on-site. See specific supervisor requirements for each program in their respective sections below.
- **Agency Task Supervisor:** The day-to-day supervisor in an agency, who does not hold a social work degree, who provides daily supervision, if a social work supervisor is not available on-site. **Practicum Liaison:** The PLU faculty member who conducts agency visits each semester to evaluate student progress with agency supervisors' input.
- **Practicum Instructor:** PLU faculty members who are instructors of record for the practicum and seminar and assign grades for the class, with feedback from agency supervisors. The practicum instructor and liaison may be the same person.

After you've read the manual, please fill out the manual review document in the appendices and turn it via the QR code by the date listed on the form.

PROGRAM DIRECTORY

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PLU ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2025-2026

Summer Sessions 2025 (June 2 – August 1)

- Term I: Monday, June 2 – Friday, June 27
- Juneteenth: Thursday, June 19 – No classes
- Independence Day: Friday, July 4 – No classes
- Term II: Monday, July 7 – Friday, August 1

Fall Semester 2025 (September 1 – December 12)

- Labor Day: Monday, September 1 (*PLU offices closed*)
- Opening Convocation: Tuesday, September 2 – 10:00a.m.
- Classes Begin: Tuesday, Tuesday, September 2 – 12:15p.m.
- Mid-Semester Break: Friday, October 17 – No classes
- Veterans Day: Tuesday, November 11 (*Observance during Well-being Break*)
- Thanksgiving Break: Wednesday, November 26 at 1:45p.m. – Sunday, November 30
Classes resume on Monday, December 1 at 8:15a.m.
- Classes End: Saturday, December 6 (Saturday classes take final exam this day)
- Final Examinations: Monday, December 8 – Friday, December 12
- Fall Semester Ends: Friday, December 12
- Final Grades Due: Friday, December 19, 5:00p.m.

January Term 2026 (January 6 – January 30)

- Classes Begin: Monday, January 6
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Holiday: Monday, January 19 – No classes
- Classes End: Friday, January 30
- Final Grades Due: Tuesday, February 3, 5:00p.m.

Spring Semester 2026 (February 4 – May 22)

- Classes Begin: Wednesday, February 4
- Presidents' Day: Monday, February 16 – No classes
- Spring Break: Monday, Monday, March 23 – Friday, March 27 No classes
- Easter Break: Friday, Friday, April 3 – No classes
Classes resume Monday, April 6 at 8:15a.m.
- Classes End: Saturday, May 16 (Saturday classes take final exam this day)
- Final Examinations: Monday, May 18 – Wednesday, May 20
- Spring Semester Ends: Friday, May 22
- Commencement Ceremonies: Thursday, May 21 – Friday, May 22
- Final Grades Due: Friday, May 29, 5:00p.m.

[More academic dates for graduate programs.](#)

OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICUM

The BSW and MSW programs and practicum experiences provide learning environments and opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills to effectively create change in accordance with social work philosophies, educational policies, and accreditation standards set forth by The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The practicum, in conjunction with the practicum seminar, allows learners the opportunity to integrate social work theories, ethics, skills, values, knowledge, and cognitive/affective processes in developing professional competence and identity. The practicum represents a culmination of social work education, values and skills, which define the social work profession as a whole.

The practicum is social work's signature pedagogy, which permits learners the opportunity to apply skills from the classroom environment into practice. The practicum is designed to provide supervision to learners as they develop their practice competencies in a structured environment with experienced social work supervisors. As the signature pedagogy in social work education, the practicum is an important component in both BSW and MSW programs, encompassing the CSWE EPAS generalist and specialized competencies and behaviors.

The practicum provides learning opportunities in a variety of agencies, including public, non-profit, multidisciplinary, inpatient and outpatient services, human services, end of life, addiction, law enforcement, schools, community clinics, medical, and with mental health. Learners have the ability to work with children, adolescents, and adults. The diversity of practicum sites is to ensure learners have exposure to ample social work career paths and to create practice opportunities to meet learners' needs and interests. CSWE's 2022 educational policy regarding practicum is as follows:

Educational Policy 3.3: Signature Pedagogy—Field Education

Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline: to think, to perform, and to act intentionally, ethically, and with integrity. The field setting is where students apply human rights principles from global and national social work ethical codes to advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. It fosters a learning environment where anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion are valued. Field education is designed to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the explicit curriculum in the field setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria and measures of student acquisition and demonstration of the nine social work competencies. Responding to the changing nature of the practice world and student demographics and characteristics, field education programs articulate how they maintain or enhance students' access to high-quality field practicum experiences. Field education programs develop field models to prepare students for contemporary and interprofessional social work practice, including the use of various forms of technology. The program's field education director serves as an essential contributor to the curricular development, administration, and governance of field education.

THE BSW PROGRAM

PLU BSW Program

The overarching goal of the program is preparation for generalist social work practice with individuals, families, households, groups, communities, and organizations. Our graduates are employed in social service agencies throughout the region. They also are employed and are providing leadership throughout the state as well as in other parts of the country and in international positions.

BSW Program Mission

Educating caring, skillful generalists to be ethical agents for global and local change.

The Pacific Lutheran University Department of Social Work is dedicated to educating individuals for social work practice with individuals, families, households, groups, communities and organizations within a generalist framework that is based on a philosophy of social justice, egalitarianism, pluralism, and compassion for oppressed populations.

The BSW Curriculum

Within a program that is firmly based in the liberal arts, the social work major is designed to prepare students for beginning professional social work practice as well as graduate study in social work. Social work has both a heavily multidisciplinary-based body of knowledge and its own continuously developing knowledge base. The complexity of social issues and social problems that confront the modern-day social worker require this broad theoretical perspective. Social workers are involved in areas that are influenced by political, economic, social, psychological and cultural factors. To that end, the program stresses an understanding of social science theories and methods. The curriculum provides a foundation for understanding the interaction of individual, family, and community systems, as the basis for generalist practice. Students learn a multi-method approach to social work practice that enables them to address a wide range of individual, family, group, community and organizational needs. Students enhance their commitment to informed action to remove inequities based on race, ethnicity, culture, gender, immigration status, social class, sexual orientation, disability and age.

Social Work Competencies 2022 EPAS that Guide the BSW Program

Competencies	Behaviors
<p><i>Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</i></p> <p>Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of</p>

<p>Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.</p>	<p>research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication; C. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and D. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.
<p><i>Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and</i></p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. advocate for human rights at the

Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental

Justice Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and

- B. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and

Social workers:

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

<p>cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.</p>	
<p><i>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice</i> Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision-making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and B. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

<p><i>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</i></p> <p>Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and B. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
<p><i>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i></p> <p>Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies,</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and B. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

<p>including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.</p>	
<p><i>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and B. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

<p>may affect their assessment and decision-making.</p>	
<p><i>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and B. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.
<p><i>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and B. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.	
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BSW Practicum Requirements

Practicum Requirements for BSW Students (420 Hours total)

Fall Semester of Senior Year	J-Term	Spring Semester
210 hours 16hrs a week M and W and or F	Students are not required to work over J-Term can if it is mutually beneficial to the student and agency.	220 Hours 16 hours per week M and W and or F

BSW Eligibility for the Practicum Experience

PLU students can declare their major in social work at any point in their academic career. Students can declare their major by meeting with the chair of the undergraduate social work program. Standard with the major of social work, all students complete a year-long practicum placement in a community or campus-based helping entity. In the fall of a student's junior year they will be required to complete an application to the practicum experience. Details on this application process are provided to all potentially eligible declared majors by the program's field coordinator. Potential social work students should be advised that a criminal background check is required for placement into practicum. They also complete a resume, application for practicum, and interview with the Practicum Coordinator.

Practicum Placement Process for BSW Students

Students registering for the practicum must have senior standing, an overall GPA of 2.5, and a GPA of 2.75 within the social work major. The practicum process proceeds as follows:

1. Students must demonstrate their intentions of entering the practicum by attending the practicum preparation meeting held during Fall Semester. At this meeting, students complete the Practicum Experience Application (see Appendix).
2. Students schedule an individual interview with the Practicum Coordinator to discuss interests and any special needs (such as transportation, accessibility). Students bring a completed resume to this appointment. Students also have successfully completed a videotaped interview for SOCW 360.
3. One to two tentative agency placements are selected from a list of qualified practicum experience settings and the student then schedules preliminary interviews with agencies.
4. The student, the agency, and Practicum Coordinator make the joint decision regarding the appropriateness of placement.
5. Students complete any trainings, orientations, and additional background checks, as required by the agency. Students coordinate the scheduling of this with their agency supervisor.

Students need to follow this process to ensure quality practicum experience placements.

<i>Summary of the BSW Placement Process:</i>	
Item	BSW Senior Year
Hours	16 hours a week *
Days in a class	Tuesday and Thursday
Total Hours	420 Hours (210 a semester)
Weekly Supervision Requirement	Yes
Practicum Preparation	Orientation In Early December
Application Due	Feb 15 th
1:1 Meeting with Practicum Director	Completed by March 1 st
Students interview with agencies	March and April
Placements are finalized	By May 15th

- *Hours per week allow for flexibility and occasional sick days.*

Special Considerations in Placement of Students

The following factors are considered in making placement decisions:

- Student's individual learning needs - Throughout the course of the program, areas for growth may be identified for particular students. Knowledge of expertise provided by particular agency supervisors and in specific agencies is used to place students in settings that facilitate personal and professional growth;
- Student's expressed preference in terms of setting, population - Whenever possible, a student's interest in working with a particular population is honored. **However, the overall quality of the supervision is more important than working with a specific population;**
- Previous education and work experience - Some settings are more appropriate for students who bring a certain amount of experience and/or education in a particular area;
- Geographical location preferred by the student - As some students may commute a significant distance to school, every attempt is made to find an appropriate placement close to their home if so desired;
- Special needs such as transportation, accessibility - Individual needs of students are considered when making placement decisions.

Practicum Supervision for BSW students

Social Work Supervisors, for baccalaureate social work students, must hold a CSWE- or CASWE-accredited (or internationally earned ISWDRES-evaluated) BSW or MSW degree with 2 years post-baccalaureate or post-master's practice experience in social work. **Supervision must occur weekly for 1 dedicated hour.** This can take place in groups if there is more than one student at the agency. In the event that the day-to-day supervisor (i.e., task supervisor) does not meet this requirement, in addition to weekly supervision with the task supervisor, the student must also have supervision with a social work supervisor at **least bi-monthly** to provide a social work perspective within the agency setting. No student is to be supervised by a close relative, spouse, significant other, or close personal friend. No student is to make a separate monetary payment for supervision of the practicum experience.

THE MSW PROGRAM

PLU MSW Program

The MSW Program at PLU has one program option, which is primarily based in person on campus. This option is focused on unmet needs of the geographical area, specifically health and behavioral health. The program will also prepare students to meet other needs of the community and to meet needs as they change over time. Students will have generalist skills that will allow them to adapt to changing geopolitical, demographic, economic and other shifts, and they will possess the specialized clinical skills to apply in different settings and circumstances, such as work with older adults, children and families, those who are houseless, and others.

MSW Program Mission

The mission of the Master's in Social Work Program at Pacific Lutheran University is to prepare skilled, ethical, professional service-oriented leaders and change agents who work toward just, equitable, and empowerment-based service provision, policies, and systems on local and global levels. The program emphasizes critical consciousness, critical thinking, scientific inquiry, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive theories and methods to promote social, economic, and environmental justice and advance human rights and well-being, particularly in underserved and marginalized communities.

The mission and objectives of the MSW program are based on the purpose and values of the social work profession such as integrity, dignity and worth of humankind, respect for human diversity, the significance of human relationships, and the importance of viewing problems and solutions through a person-in-environment lens. The mission and objectives of the MSW program articulate how students will be prepared to competently and effectively engage in change work in various political, geographical, socioeconomic, and other settings.

The MSW Curriculum

The MSW at Pacific Lutheran University is designed to prepare individuals for advanced, specialist social work clinical practice. The social work curriculum includes one year (the first year) of generalist courses for students who enter the MSW without a social work background, which is referred to as regular standing. The second year of the MSW program is designed to offer students advanced, specialized courses that focus on clinical practice mainly in health and behavioral health, though skills can be applied in other areas of social work practice. Students with a BSW degree from a CSWE accredited program enter directly into the second year, which is referred to as advanced standing. Regular standing students join the second specialized year after the first generalist year. Each course counted in the Social Work major must be completed with at least a C-. More on the MSW curriculum can be found here: [MSW Curriculum](#). The MSW program, including the practicum experience, are guided by a set of generalist and specialized competencies articulated by CSWE. Students, in collaboration with their agency supervisors and practicum coordinator, specify the activities that meet the generalist behaviors (first year) and specialist behaviors (second year) that build on the generalist behaviors, in the learning plan for the practicum. The specialized competencies are specifically designed to help students achieve skills in clinical social work practice.

Social Work Competencies 2022 EPAS (generalist) that Guide the MSW Program

Competencies	Behaviors
<p><i>Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</i></p> <p>Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context; F. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication; use technology ethically and appropriately G. to facilitate practice outcomes; and use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior H. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

<p>workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice</p>	
<p><i>Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice</i> Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and D. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
<p><i>Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice</i> Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and D. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their

<p>supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.</p>	<p>own lived experiences.</p>
<p><i>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice</i> Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and D. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research

<p>research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.</p>	<p>methods to advance the purposes of social work.</p>
<p><i>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</i></p> <p>Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and D. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social racial, economic, and environmental justice.

<p>structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.</p>	
<p><i>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and D. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

<p><i>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision-making.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and D. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.
<p><i>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and D. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

<p>interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.</p>	
<p><i>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</i> Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.</p>	<p>Social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and D. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social Work Competencies 2022 EPAS (specialized) that Guide the MSW Program

Competencies	Behaviors
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Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers in clinical practice identify as professional social workers and actively represent and model the values and perspectives of the profession. Clinical social workers utilize the values and ethics of the profession as a foundation for their work to ensure that the systems in which they practice and the colleagues with whom they work are serving people in the most effective ways possible. When faced with an ethical dilemma, they know how to approach ethical decision-making with the goal to resolve the dilemma in a way that serves clients and changes systems to better serve them. Clinical social workers demonstrate the effective use of self in therapeutic and professional relationships and consistently engage in self-reflection regarding their knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes to ensure they practice ethically and competently and continue to learn and improve their skills as a practitioner.

Clinical social workers:

- A. understand the ethics of rapidly changing technology, particularly in health and behavioral health settings, and how it can harm or help different populations disproportionately.
- B. are able to effectively function on interdisciplinary teams to articulate and represent the views of the social work profession.
- C. understand the use of self and how to utilize it in therapeutic and professional situations.
- D. advocate for ethical, evidenced-based interventions, policies, and systems that increase equity and accessibility to services for all people, particularly disenfranchised consumers.
- E. identify one's strengths and limitations as a professional social worker and utilize supervision and other support to address limitations or issues that may affect the quality or effectiveness of one's professional practice.

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

Clinical social workers understand that safety, empowerment, self-determination, and equitable access to services and various systems are fundamental values of the profession. They actively work toward ensuring that the environments and systems with which people interact promote positive health, mental health, and overall well-being and eradicate racism, sexism, and other discriminatory practices that erode that well-being. Clinical social workers actively engage in activities such as education, advocacy, and effective clinical practice at various levels to ensure human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice is supported.

- Clinical social workers:
- A. advocate for human rights in clinical settings as well as in other settings where policy, laws, and systems may impinge on the rights of others and the services they have access to.
 - B. employ effective methods to address individual and systemic social, racial, economic, and environmental injustice.
 - C. educate service consumers, lay people, and other professionals about the deleterious effects of individual and systemic social, racial, economic, and environmental injustice.
 - D. utilize evidence-based interventions and models such as trauma-informed approaches, empowerment and strength models, and ecosystems theory to conceptualize and intervene with problems that impede human rights and different facets of justice.

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

Clinical social workers serve as models for how to employ anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices and perspectives to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are promoted. Clinical social workers employ these practices and perspectives in their therapeutic relationships but also in ways that support positive change in systems and policies that affect people at an individual level. Clinical social workers know how to effectively engage colleagues and

- Clinical social workers:
- A. articulate and employ anti-racist and anti-oppressive models and interventions in practice.
 - B. actively educate others (clients, colleagues, lay persons) on the importance of promoting anti-racist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices, policies, and systems.
 - C. serve as role models for anti-racist and anti-oppressive change agents.

<p>systems, particularly those that are large and bureaucratic, to promote ADEI efforts that benefit consumers of services.</p>	<p>D. advocate for anti-racist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive services, policies, programs, and systems.</p>
<p><i>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice</i></p> <p>Clinical social workers are adept consumers and generators of research. They understand and value the important role that research plays in their professional practice. Clinical social workers know how to critique the quality of research, understand the ethical implications of research, can apply research to their own practice, and stay abreast of new developments in practice. Clinical social workers also are able to use research methods to evaluate the effectiveness of their work and adapt their practices based on the outcome of their research.</p>	<p>Clinical social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. are active consumers of research on health, behavioral health, and other areas of practice to develop clinical skills and interventions. B. understand research methods to critically think about how studies are designed and carried out and how results are applied. C. can design and undertake research to evaluate and improve interventions, services, policies, and systems that better and more effectively serve consumers of services. D. use their research skills to educate others about and advocate for improved interventions, services, policies, and systems.
<p><i>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</i></p> <p>Clinical social workers understand the importance of policy in their practice. They can articulate the effect that policy has on those they serve, the systems in which they and their clients interface, and the ways in which policy can perpetuate disparities, discrimination, oppression, and inequities in access to and the quality of services. Clinical social workers can conduct policy analysis, apply analysis to their practice, and utilize analysis to advocate for policy change that promotes the well-being of clients and systems.</p>	<p>Clinical social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. understand the important role that policy practice plays in clinical social work. B. can conduct policy analysis to inform practice and system change. C. advocate for policy change to make services more accessible, equitable, and inclusive. D. educate colleagues, law makers, administrators, and the public on the effect that policy can have on the health and well-being of people. E. know how to critically analyze

	<p>policy for ethical dilemmas it may pose and disparities in how its applied, which can affect populations differently.</p>
<p><i>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, and Groups</i> Clinical social workers have a deep understanding of the engagement process with clients and why the engagement process is important in therapeutic relationships. Clinical social workers possess the skills to effectively engage with individual clients as well as with families and groups. Clinical social workers reflect on their skills to continually learn and improve and seek feedback and continued learning on their engagement skills.</p>	<p>Clinical social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. can skillfully and authentically convey warmth, empathy, positive regard for their clients and utilize other interpersonal skills to build trust and relationship with clients. B. understand how to employ the use of self to connect with clients therapeutically. C. can conceptualize client issues from a person-in-environment, ecosystems, and strengths lenses to engage with clients..
<p><i>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, and Groups</i> Clinical social workers understand the importance of the assessment process in effective therapeutic work with individuals, families, and groups. They know how to access, apply, and evaluate various assessment models and tools and how to evaluate the effectiveness of their own assessment methods. Clinical social workers understand how bias and other oppressive factors can infiltrate and affect assessment; thus, they are self-reflective of their work and are able to critically evaluate assessment methods for bias and other oppressive factors that may hinder assessment and harm clients.</p>	<p>Clinical social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. understand the importance of assessment in the therapeutic process. B. know how to access and employ a variety of assessment methods and choose appropriate methods based on the client situation. C. understand how to consistently evaluate the assessment process to revise the process for best therapeutic outcomes. D. are aware of how bias can affect the assessment process and effectively use self-reflection to evaluate how their own biases may impact their work. E. utilize anti-racist, anti-oppressive lenses and tools in the assessment process.
<p><i>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, and Groups</i></p>	<p>Clinical social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. know how to effectively

<p>Clinical social workers are skilled at choosing and using a variety of interventions in their work with individuals, families, and groups. Clinical social workers stay abreast of research and innovation in interventions and engage in on-going education on new modalities. Clinical social workers know how to critically think about interventions in terms of their effectiveness but also any ethical or other concerns interventions might bring in their applications with various populations and problems. Clinical social workers know how to utilize self-reflection and supervision to assess their own competency in utilizing various interventions.</p>	<p>intervene with individuals, families, and groups using a wide variety of evidence-based interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. utilize various resources such as research, trainings, colleagues, and supervision to stay abreast of new interventions and applications. C. critically evaluate interventions for effectiveness, ethical applications, and appropriateness for different populations and problems. D. utilize self-reflection and supervision to continually evaluate their practice and engage in on-going education ensure competency in intervention work. E. know their strengths and limitations with regard to interventions and when to refer clients.
<p><i>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups</i> Clinical social workers understand the value of evaluating their practice with individuals, families, and groups. They know how to approach and carry out evaluation and how to use results to improve their practice and the profession. Clinical social workers utilize resources such as research, supervision, consultation, and training to improve evaluation skills. They engage in regular evaluation to continually improve their practice</p>	<p>Clinical social workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. are able to evaluate their own practice with individuals, families, and groups. B. know how to evaluate the effectiveness of various interventions and approaches to therapeutic work. C. are able to use a range of resources (e.g., self-reflection, supervision, research, consultation) to evaluate practice. D. are advocates for evaluation of practice and ensuring that the profession engages in consistent evaluation to improve the effectiveness of and access to services.

MSW PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for MSW Students in REGULAR STANDING (960 hours total)

Fall of First Year	J-Term Spring of First Year Summer
	320 hours foundational practicum experience (generalist)
Fall of Second Year	J-Term Spring of the Second Year
320 hours advanced practicum experience (specialized)	320 hours advanced practicum experience (specialized)

Requirements for MSW Students in ADVANCED STANDING (640 hours total)

Fall	J-Term Spring Summer
320 hours advanced practicum experience (specialized)	320 hours advanced practicum experience (specialized)

MSW Eligibility for Practicum Experience

As a part of the application, students will have signed a statement to practice in accordance with NASW Code of Ethics; they also will have been cleared through a background check. Depending on the placement setting, additional background check information may be required. Regular standing students must have completed SOCW 505 and 510 to enter into the foundational placement in the first year. Regular and advanced standing students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 to begin placements. All students complete a resume, application for practicum, and interview with the Practicum Coordinator.

Practicum Placement Process for MSW Students

The practicum process proceeds as follows:

1. Students must demonstrate their intentions of entering the practicum by attending the practicum preparation meeting. At this meeting, students complete the Practicum Experience Application (see Appendix).
2. Students schedule an individual interview with the Practicum Coordinator to discuss interests and any special needs (such as transportation, accessibility). Students bring a completed resume to this appointment.
3. One to two tentative agency placements are selected from a list of qualified practicum experience settings and the student then schedules preliminary interviews with agencies.
4. The student, the agency, and Practicum Coordinator make the joint decision regarding the

appropriateness of placement.

5. Students complete any trainings, orientations, and additional background checks, as required by the agency. Students coordinate the scheduling of this with their agency supervisor. Students need to follow this process to ensure quality practicum experience placements.

If a student desires a specialized placement in a setting that is not on the list of qualified agencies (listed on Sakai), they need to discuss this with the Practicum Coordinator. If appropriate the practicum coordinator will reach out to the agency directly. The Practicum Coordinator will contact the agency and determine whether it meets the standards for the school.

Students are asked to not attempt to arrange their own internships. This includes reaching out directly to agencies, signing contracts and or making agreements with agencies about completing their practicum with the agency.

Summary of the MSW Placement Process:

Item	MSW Foundation MSW Advanced
Hours	*24 hours a week
Days in class	Wed PM Wed PM
Total Hours	320 Hours (Spring of 1st year) 640 Hours (Fall and Spring of 2nd year)
Weekly Supervision Requirement	Yes
Practicum Preparation	Orientation in October As needed
Application Due 1:1 Meeting with Practicum Director	October 31st April 1st Completed by Nov 1st April
Students Interview with Agencies	November and December April and May
Placements are	January 15th May 31st

Finalized	
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* Hours per week allow for flexibility and occasional sick days.

Special Considerations in Placement of Students

The following factors are considered in making placement decisions:

- Student's individual learning needs - Throughout the course of the program, areas for growth may be identified for particular students. Knowledge of expertise provided by particular agency supervisors and in specific agencies is used to place students in settings that facilitate personal and professional growth;
- Student's expressed preference in terms of setting, population - Whenever possible, a student's interest in working with a particular population is honored. **However, the overall quality of the supervision is more important than working with a specific population;**
- Previous education and work experience - Some settings are more appropriate for students who bring a certain amount of experience and/or education in a particular area;
- Geographical location preferred by the student - As some students may commute a significant distance to school, every attempt is made to find an appropriate placement close to their home if so desired;
- Special needs such as transportation, accessibility - Individual needs of students are considered when making placement decisions.

Practicum Supervision for MSW students

Social Work Supervisors, for master's social work students, must hold a CSWE- or CASWE-accredited (or internationally earned ISWDRES-evaluated) MSW degree and 2 years post-MSW practice experience in social work. Supervision must occur weekly for 1 dedicated hour. This can take place in groups if there is more than one student at the agency. In the event that the day-to-day supervisor (i.e., the task supervisor) does not meet this requirement, in addition to weekly supervision with the task supervisor, the student must also have supervision with a social work supervisor at least bi-monthly to provide a social work perspective within the agency setting. No student is to be supervised by a close relative, spouse, significant other, or close personal friend. No student is to make a separate monetary payment for supervision of the practicum experience.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF PRACTICUM INSTRUCTION

Responsibilities of the PLU Practicum Coordinator:

- to identify and recommend those agencies that meet the criteria for the practicum experience;
- to confer with students regarding progress in practicum instruction and/or any problems in the practicum experience;
- to maintain current information on each of the agencies regarding the type of experiences offered to students in each setting and the credentials of agency supervisors;

- to contact the agency to advise of potential student(s) for placement;
- to interview each student regarding educational goals for the practicum experience and assign students to individual agency supervisors;
- to orient students to the expectations of the practicum experience;
- to provide the individual agency supervisor with information about the background, abilities and interests of students to be assigned within the limits of personal, professional, and University standards regarding confidentiality;
- to create and conduct orientation for agency supervisors and to develop, coordinate and present seminars and appropriate in-service learning opportunities for agency supervisors and faculty on the relationship between classroom and practicum;
- to maintain good working relationships between practicum learning sites and the Social Work Department;
- to maintain communication with the agency supervisor and students;
- to consult with students and/or agency supervisors regarding any problems or potential difficulties arising from student or agency performance;
- to maintain and update the Practicum Manual;
- to participate in the design of the explicit curriculum;
- to assist in the development and monitoring of integrative seminars and practicum liaison activities;
- to provide feedback to agency supervisors and agencies regarding student evaluations of their experiences in that setting.

Responsibilities of Practicum Liaisons:

- to maintain good working relationships between practicum learning sites and the Social Work Department;
- to maintain communication with agency supervisors and students;
- to assist in the integration of classroom and practice;
- to assign grades to students after obtaining input from agency supervisors;
- to act as faculty liaison, visiting each agency at least once each semester to monitor student progress;
- to assist students with development of the learning plan and to approve the final learning plan; to consult with students and/or agency supervisors regarding any problems or potential difficulties arising from student or agency performance.

Responsibilities of On-Site Social Work Supervisors:

This position carries primary responsibility for the student's day-to-day experiences in the agency setting. Specific responsibilities are:

- to attend meetings offered by PLU;
- to provide a resume indicating completion of BSW or MSW from CSWE accredited program applicable;
- to conduct pre-placement interview with the student;

- to develop the educational plan (Practicum Learning Plan –Appendix) with the student;
- to orient student to the agency, to policies, and to expectations for the practicum experience;
- to provide regularly scheduled weekly individual or group supervision sessions to instruct in relevant content as well as review performance;
- to participate in evaluation conferences with the faculty liaison/practicum coordinator;
- to assess the student's performance, needs, and progress and complete and discuss the Student Evaluation (Appendix).

Responsibilities of Agency Task Supervisors:

Task Supervisors are only assigned when a BSW or MSW is not available at the agency.

- to coordinate with the social work supervisor to complete practicum learning plans and evaluations;
- to notify the faculty liaison of any problems or concerns with the student and/or the learning situation and work with the faculty liaison and student to resolve such problems;
- to provide feedback to the practicum liaison regarding recommendations for improving the practicum experience.

Responsibilities of Off-Site Social Work Supervisors:

Off-site social work supervisors are assigned when there are no BSW or MSW supervisors available at the agency.

- to provide regularly scheduled, twice monthly individual or group supervision sessions to instruct in relevant content as well as review performance;
- to coordinate with the agency site supervisor to complete practicum learning plans and evaluations;
- to notify the practicum liaison of any problems or concerns with the student and/or the learning situation and work with the practicum liaison and student to resolve such problems;
- to provide feedback to the practicum liaison regarding recommendations for improving the practicum experience.

Responsibilities of Students:

The student has a critical role in the practicum learning process and is expected to participate in the formulation and implementation of that process. The student is expected:

- to develop a current resume of relevant educational, employment, and volunteer experiences;
- to schedule and actively participate in the pre-placement interview with the practicum coordinator;
- to obtain information with regard to agency function, structure, policies, and programs and work in a manner that is consistent with these program and policies;
- to act in a professional manner as a representative of the agency in contacts with consumers, persons in the community, and other agency personnel;
- to comply with administrative procedures of the agency and assume the role of a member of agency's staff in adhering to agency personnel policies, regulations and procedures;

- to participate in the development of learning goals and objectives and in the evaluation of performance during the practicum experience through constructive and appropriate use of supervision and the formal evaluation process;
- to take the initiative in resolving learning difficulties or other concerns by communicating such concerns with the agency supervisor and practicum liaison;
- to practice in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics;
- to participate in evaluation of performance in the practicum setting;
- to complete evaluation of the practicum experience setting;
- to be responsible for keeping accurate track of practicum hours and activities.
- to obtain a signed and dated log of hours indicating completion of minimum required hours of practicum experience depending on the program (BSW, MSW regular or advanced standing).

Responsibilities of PLU/Social Work Department:

- to recognize that the agency's primary responsibility is to offer services to consumers;
- to provide a faculty advisor to the student throughout the educational program;
- to ensure that the student's practicum experience is integrated with academic learning;
- to respond to student concerns regarding the practicum;
- to offer agency personnel the opportunity to participate on committees relative to practicum and classroom curriculum;
- to ensure that the practicum experience meets accreditation standards, involves agency supervisors in the accreditation process and informs them of results of the accreditation review;
- to maintain current Statements of Understanding between the Department of Social Work, Pacific Lutheran University, and Affiliated Agencies.

Responsibilities of Agency:

- to submit job descriptions - what experiences are available for students; what types of students may best fit in with agency; expectations of students;
- to sign the Statement of Understanding between the Department of Social Work, Pacific Lutheran University and Affiliated Agencies;
- to provide enough opportunities for the student to meet the required hours for the practicum;
- to provide administrative support for the practicum experiences (e.g., allowing agency supervisors time for supervision, attendance at meetings).

PRACTICUM SELECTION AND PLACEMENT CRITERIA

Criteria for Selection of Agencies

A variety of agencies in the Tacoma - Pierce County area serve as practicum learning sites. Traditional human service settings, including community mental health centers, hospitals, corrections, state public welfare agencies, schools, and community-based agencies are utilized in this capacity. New practicum learning sites require an on-site visit and assessment by the Practicum Coordinator.

Criteria for the selection of practicum agencies include:

- acceptance of professional education for social work as a part of the philosophy and practice of the agency;
- the ability of the agency to provide relevant and appropriate social work experiences for the student (where the student has direct client contact and can learn, practice, and develop social work skills - interviewing, assessment, contracting, developing intervention plan, termination, record-keeping, work with larger systems, etc.);
- willingness to provide the Social Work Department with information concerning the agency, its services, and community events that have an impact on practicum and/or class curricula;
- agency policies and practice that reflect the ethical standards of the social work profession and the department's commitment to under-served, oppressed, and vulnerable populations;
- a climate conducive to student learning, including space, support services, and necessary equipment/supplies for students to work effectively;
- the availability of a qualified agency supervisor (see below) to provide a minimum of one hour of direct supervision to the student per week;
- willingness of the agency to provide adequate time for the agency supervisor to fulfill her/his responsibilities to the student and the Social Work Department. This includes participation in orientations and trainings provided by the University;
- a commitment to students, including a recognition of the importance of practicum instruction in social work education as well as viewing students in a learning role rather than as auxiliary staff members;
- agreement to treat all information including student evaluations as confidential;
- a willingness to allow the student to use case records, with appropriate confidentiality, in classroom discussions and assignments;
- a willingness to allow students to participate in staff meetings, in-service staff trainings, interagency conferences, and other educational opportunities.

Criteria for Selection of Social Work Supervisors/Task Supervisors

The role of Social Work Supervisor/Task Supervisor is difficult, as it requires the assumption of multiple roles, including being a professional role model for students as well as an instructor who teaches and evaluates students. This person should be able to demonstrate sound social work practice and explicate the concepts and principles that underlie that practice. In addition, this person is strongly committed to teaching and accepts the responsibility for the preparation of future social work professionals. This social worker should have the ability to evaluate their own practice and provide critical evaluation to others in a professional manner. They must be willing and able to attend and participate in seminars and other activities offered by the Social Work Department to enhance the learning experience for students. Degrees are reviewed, by the Practicum Coordinator, to ensure they meet one of the following: a CSWE-accredited degree, CASWE-accredited degree (from the Canadian social work accreditor, recognized through an MOU with CSWE and CASWE), or an internationally earned ISWDRES-evaluated degree and that supervisors have at least 2-years post-master's practice experience. These resumes and records are collected at the time an agreement is signed with the host agency and maintained by the Practicum Coordinator.

Specific criteria considered in the selection of Social Work On-Site Supervisors include:

- completion of MSW or BSW with two years of experience from an accredited school of social work;
- a preference that the agency supervisor is a Washington State Licensed Social Worker;
- two years post-degree social work experience;
- a minimum of 1-year experience at current agency setting;
- clear personal and professional identification with the agency and the intent to remain there for the duration of the school year; familiarity with agency policies and philosophy;
- a familiarity (or a willingness to become familiar) with the social work curriculum at PLU and an understanding of how the practicum fits into the curriculum;
- adequate time to provide supervision;
- an appreciation and respect for all aspects of human diversity.

Specific criteria considered in the selection of Task Supervisors include:

- preferred similar educational background to social work: a minimum of a BA in human services.
- a minimum of 1-year experience at current agency setting;
- clear personal and professional identification with the agency and the intent to remain there for the duration of the school year; familiarity with agency policies and philosophy;
- a familiarity with the social work curriculum at PLU and an understanding of how the practicum fits into the curriculum;
- adequate time to provide supervision;
- an appreciation and respect for all aspects of human diversity.

Specific criteria considered in the selection of Off-Site Social Work Supervisors (who are not PLU faculty members):

- completion of MSW or BSW from an accredited school of social work;
- a minimum of two year's experience as a social worker;
- experience with providing social work supervision;
- a familiarity with the social work curriculum at PLU and an understanding of how the practicum fits into the curriculum;
- adequate time to provide supervision.

PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE POLICIES

Policy on Student Email Communication

Email is the primary method of communication used by the Department of Social Work to share important information related to practicum placements, coursework, scheduling, and academic progress. BSW and MSW students are expected to check their university email at least once every 24–48 hours during the academic term, including while in practicum. Students should

respond to emails from faculty, practicum instructors, and university staff within two business days. If more time is needed to provide a full response, students are expected to acknowledge receipt and indicate when they will follow up.

Failure to regularly check and respond to email may result in missed deadlines, delayed communication around practicum issues, or negative impacts on academic standing or practicum placement. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their inbox is functioning properly, not full, and that notifications are set appropriately. Regular and timely communication is a critical part of professional social work practice and is expected throughout the program.

Assessment of Professional Behavior

Attention to and development of professional behavior is extremely important, especially during the practicum experience. Professional behavior in social works is aligned with the Code of Ethics and serves to protect clients, strengthen relationships with colleagues, contribute to the health of agencies, and helps to ensure the growth and success of your career in social work. As such, in addition to other evaluations that occur during each practicum placement, students will be assessed on professional behavior. This assessment helps students, practicum supervisors, and social work faculty pinpoint strengths and areas for growth.

LEARNING PLANS

A Learning Plan (Appendix) that defines the activities of student learning is to be developed by the student and agency supervisor(s) during the first five weeks of placement. It is designed to meet the educational needs of the student for the first semester of the placement, but may be renegotiated and modified to meet the changing needs of the student and/or agency. A second learning plan will be developed for students who are in two semester placements (MSW Advanced and BSW Students.)

Evaluation of Practicum Learning Plans

The Student Learning Plan Evaluation Form (Appendix) is designed to measure student performance of practice behaviors that operationalize the competencies of the social work program. Both the social work supervisor/task supervisor and student will complete the Student Evaluation Form. In instances where a student has a task supervisor and an outside social worker supervisor, they must work together to complete the evaluation.

The social work supervisor is strongly encouraged to discuss the evaluation with the student prior to its submission. Student practicum experience grades may be posted as an incomplete unless a completed and signed student evaluation form is submitted to the faculty practicum seminar instructor—accompanied by the log of hours completed to date with student and agency supervisor signature—by noon on Friday December 20 (fall semester) and Friday May 15 (spring semester). Additionally, at the end of spring semester, students must complete and submit the Evaluation of the Practicum Experience (Appendix).

If any of the supervisors working with students have any concern about the student's performance as unsatisfactory, they should confer with the faculty liaison **immediately** to discuss the severity of the situation and what steps should be taken to ameliorate the problem. If the student is in danger of receiving a failing grade, they must receive written warning from the faculty liaison by **mid-semester**.

Practicum Experience Start Date and End Date

In general, students are expected to start their placement at the beginning of the semester (September-May or Feb-May). However, there may be circumstances in which students need to complete hours before the semester begins, such as for agency orientations or trainings. Students who complete pre-semester hours are still required to maintain practicum hours at their agency for the duration of the semester (e.g. you can not end early). Students may, however, adjust working hours, in consultation with their supervisors, if they choose not to accrue more than the required hours.

To request permission to complete pre-semester hours, submit in writing to the Practicum Coordinator the following:

- Proposed start date;
- Reason for completing hours before the semester begins;
- Total number of hours that will be completed [a maximum of pre-semester 30 hours are allowed];
- A plan for how hours will be adjusted throughout the semester to ensure a full-semester presence at the agency (or a statement that you've chosen to accrue more than the required hours);
- Your supervisor's signature that the plan has been discussed and approved.

Excused Absence from the Practicum Experience

Students are expected to work on an agreed schedule that is pre-established at the start of the semester. Continuity of service to clients is a primary consideration when arranging for absences from the practicum. Students are excused from the Practicum Experience on PLU and agency holidays, but need to communicate clearly and directly with their agency regarding University and agency schedules. Students may choose to work on PLU holidays. Absences due to illness must be made up so that the student completes the required number of hours.

Excused Absence from the Practicum Seminar and Other Social Work Classes

Attendance at professional meetings may be required or encouraged by the agency. In such cases, this is considered part of the practicum experience and counts toward the minimum number of hours. The agency supervisor must notify the Practicum Coordinator by email of required training for the agency that may cause a student to miss social work classes at PLU. Other absences related to optional training for students may have an impact on the students' ability to participate in class, and therefore impact their class grades.

Policy Guidelines for Requesting a Change to Practicum Sites

Students are discouraged, in general, from requesting a change in their placement, and the expectation is that a request would be the **last step after attempting other conflict resolutions**.

Steps for Requesting a Practicum Change:

1. A request may be made in writing to the practicum coordinator in the social work

program that outlines why they are requesting a change and what steps they have already taken to address their concerns.

2. A meeting will then be scheduled with the student and the appropriate supervisors at the agency to discuss concerns.
3. If a new internship site is granted, it is possible that an increase in hours will be required, which will be determined by the department chair, the new agency, and the practicum coordinator. The need for additional hours is to make sure students have complete internship experiences, not to be punitive.
4. Students may also need to work at their internship site past may graduation and take an “in progress” grade in the class, depending on how many hours need to be made up.

Grading

The Practicum Experience is graded pass-fail. To earn a grade of pass, students must receive an acceptable evaluation, complete the minimum number of hours per semester (depending on the program), and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

Dismissal Policy

Consistent with the policies of CSWE, faculty members regularly review student performance throughout the academic year. Applicants to the Social Work Department give faculty permission to discuss their performance in the department when they sign and return the release of information form in the application packet.

Academic Dismissal:

Academic performance is measured by the overall and “within-major” cumulative grade point averages of students. At the start of each semester, Social Work faculty members review the academic record of all social work students. Students in the BSW program must maintain an **overall grade point average of 2.5**, and a grade point average of **2.75 within their major course** of study to matriculate within the Social Work department and advance to the Practicum. Students in the MSW must maintain a 3.0 GPA.

Students who fall below these grade point averages receive a letter at the conclusion of the first semester in which they do not meet the requirement. The letter invites them to meet with faculty if desired, but requires them to develop a plan for reaching the grade point standard, and suggests various resources within the University which might help them in this pursuit. Students who attain the grades needed are sent a letter congratulating them on their accomplishment. **Students who are unable to successfully complete their plan are not permitted to enter the practicum.** Those students who are not permitted to apply for practicum are invited to meet with faculty and a representative from the Advising office to formulate an alternate plan of study to attain the necessary grade point average, or to explore other academic pursuits. Students who want to contest the dismissal may appeal to the Dean of College of Health Professionals, and may follow the Pacific Lutheran University Grievance Policy.

Non-Academic Dismissal:

Non-academic performance refers to those interpersonal behaviors, skills, and values that are the vehicle for student’s work with peers, faculty and clients. Faculty anticipate and nurture the

demonstration or development of compassion, empathy, genuineness, the purposeful use of self, warmth, creativity, initiative, leadership, active listening, flexibility, good judgment, interpersonal skill, self-awareness and knowledge. Further, students are expected to attend to and continually develop their professional behavior.

Non-academic behaviors and values that impede the ability of the students to successfully practice social work include, but are not limited to,

- values that conflict with the Social Work Code of Ethics;
- unresolved mental illness, behaviors that degrade or devalue others;
- distracting personal habits;
- significant difficulties in communication;
- significant issues with professional behavior;
- and breaches of ethics.

When behaviors that impede practice are consistently observed in the classroom, during interactions with students or faculty, or in the practicum placement, all faculty members in the Department meet to discuss and describe the situation. The Department Chair and one other faculty member bring the questionable behavior to the attention of the student in a conference. **The student is asked to formulate, communicate and implement a plan to address the behaviors of concern.** A follow-up meeting time is set to review progress toward achieving the student's plan.

Students who successfully complete their plan are sent written confirmation and congratulations. Students who are unable to successfully complete their plan are invited to meet with Social Work faculty and a representative from the Advising office to formulate a plan for exploring other academic pursuits. Students who want to contest the dismissal may appeal to the Dean of College of Health Professionals and may follow the Pacific Lutheran University Grievance Policy.

Policy on Student Termination from Practicum Placement

Purpose:

This policy outlines the procedures and expectations for BSW and MSW students who are terminated from their practicum placement.

Policy Statement:

Students are expected to maintain professional conduct and adhere to all agency policies and expectations while in practicum. Termination from a practicum site is a serious matter and may impact a student's academic progression in the program.

Termination Without Prior Notice:

If a student is terminated from a practicum placement without prior notice due to performance concerns, ethical violations, or other professional issues, the following steps will be taken:

- **Review and Assessment:** The Practicum Coordinator and the program chair will meet with the student to review the circumstances surrounding the termination. The agency may also be contacted to obtain additional information as needed.
- **Temporary Hold on Placement:** The student will not be immediately placed in a new

practicum site. Continuation in practicum will be placed on hold pending further assessment.

- **Remediation Plan:** The student may be required to participate in a formal remediation process. This may include reflective assignments, professional development activities, or other steps to address the concerns that led to the termination.
- **Demonstration of Readiness:** Before being considered for a new placement, the student must demonstrate that they have addressed and resolved the issues that contributed to the termination. This determination will be made by the Field Director in consultation with program faculty and, when appropriate, the Field Advisory Committee.
- **Academic Implications:** *If an appropriate and timely new placement cannot be secured, the student may be required to withdraw from the practicum course and the accompanying seminar class. * The student may need to repeat the practicum and seminar in a future term to fulfill degree requirements.
- **Additional Considerations:** Each case will be evaluated individually, and placement decisions will be based on student readiness, agency availability, and the student's ability to uphold the NASW Code of Ethics and program standards.

Policy Guidelines for Disruption of the Practicum Placement

The practicum is considered an integral component of the BSW and MSW curriculum. There are a number of scenarios that may disrupt the practicum, listed below. In all cases, the Department of Social Work follows the Educational Policies for Pandemic and Evacuation Emergencies, adopted by the PLU Faculty Assembly, May, 2007, unless the University issues different guidelines.

PLU remains open, but internship site closes:

- A. Short-term disruptions – 21 days or less – Students resume their time at their internship when the site re-opens, and the 460 total hour expectations may be reduced 15 hours per week, not to exceed 45 hours. For example, if your practicum placement closes for one week, your total expected hours for the year could be reduced to 445 hours for the year. Alternately, students may earn up to 50 hours for work at home related to their placement, in collaboration with their agency supervisor.
- B. Long-term disruptions – more than 21 days – If students have completed at least 400 hours (the minimum required by CSWE), and have completed the evaluation and signed log of hours, they can consider their internship complete. If they have not completed a minimum of 400 hours, they can complete up to 50 hours for work off-site, in collaboration with their agency supervisor. If, with these 50 hours of off-site work, the student completes a minimum of 400 hours and the student and agency supervisor have completed the evaluation and signed log of hours, they can consider their internship complete. If, with 50 off-site hours, they still cannot reach 400 hours by the time their site reopens and the semester has ended, they will be given IP grade and can complete hours as soon as the site re-opens.

PLU moves to online courses to finish the semester:

The practicum experience will continue as planned, following agency policies, and the above

recommendations for short-term and long-term disruptions. Students will continue to appear at practicum sites unless told not to by the site or if they, themselves, are ill.

- PLU closes and the semester is declared complete: Students who have completed a minimum of 400 hours for the BSW and 900 for the MSW (required by CSWE) must turn in completed evaluation and signed log of hours. If the site remains open, students can continue until reaching the required hours for their program. If students have completed at least 350 hours in the BSW or 850 for the MSW, they may work on off-site projects, in collaboration with their agency supervisor, to make up remaining hours. If they have not completed the minimum, and the site remains open, students will receive IP and will continue until reaching the required number of hours. According to current PLU policy, “If a campus evacuation occurs following the midpoint of the semester, and a return to campus is not possible prior to the end of the term, the academic term may be considered complete on the designated Withdrawal date for that term. At that point each faculty member may issue regular grades, or may elect to utilize Pass/Fail grades for the class at his or her discretion.” (Educational Policies for Pandemic and Evacuation Emergencies)

It is recommended that students keep a current log of hours and get it signed or initialed weekly. (Adopted March 8, 2020)

Criminal Background Checks and Arrests While in the BSW and MSW Program

Before beginning the practicum placement, students need to be cleared through a background check. Additionally, many placement settings may require additional background checks as part of the onboarding process. Any criminal record (infraction, charge, misdemeanor or felony) may make a student ineligible for placement in certain agencies. Students are advised that a lack of disclosure about a criminal background during the agency interview process may result in a denial of placement at some agencies. It is strongly recommended that students with any level of criminal background openly discuss the specific situation with their designated program Practicum Coordinator during their pre-placement practicum meeting so they can get a better understanding of the potential challenges of placement, on a case-by-case basis.

Students may be ineligible for placement, or terminated from an agency, if criminal background information comes to light without prior disclosure. The Practicum Coordinator can provide insight to students as to potential opportunities and barriers to securing a practicum site but cannot guarantee placement or choice of placement. Information disclosed will be used only for the purpose of determining appropriate practicum options. Please note: If a student cannot be placed, they will not be able to continue in the MSW Program.

In the event a student is arrested or charged with a new offense or is convicted during the program, the student is required to disclose this information to the MSW Program Director and the Practicum Coordinator within 48 hours of arrest, charge, or conviction. Students may be terminated from the program if an arrest or charge comes to light without immediate disclosure.

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Failure to provide the required disclosures or notices will be deemed as deception and will be handled as a form of academic dishonesty in addition to any other violations. Arrests, violations, and/or convictions that violate university and/or department policies or standards could result in sanctions. Please see the NASW Code of Ethics, “4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud and Deception.”

Students who are arrested, charged, or convicted during the program are not permitted to return to the practicum placement until further notice. The student will be referred to the Student Review Committee for an initial review of the situation. The student assumes the risk involved with disclosing information and thus may choose not to disclose information. However, if the student chooses not to disclose information, the Student Review Committee will not be able to determine a course of action based on the program guidelines and the NASW Code of Ethics.

If a student is charged with a new offense, the student will most likely be required to take a leave of absence until the case has been resolved and a decision has been made by a court of law. A student may be permitted to complete classroom course work for the current semester. Once the outcome of the specific case or circumstance has been determined, it is the student's responsibility to inform the MSW Program Director and the Practicum Coordinator. At that time, the student will be referred to the Student Review Committee again for consideration of specific factors and implications related to the social work profession and his/her ability to return to the program and practicum.

SAFETY IN THE PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

It is imperative to understand that social workers work in a vulnerable profession, where violence in the lives of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities are current realities. Safety is the responsibility of all stakeholders during practicum: the student, agency supervisor, practicum site, faculty liaison, and Practicum Coordinator. Specifically, your safety, and the safety of others is of primary concern.

First and foremost, as a student, do not engage in assignments where you believe your safety or the safety of others is at risk. If you feel your safety or the safety of others is at risk, you should contact your agency supervisor, the faculty liaison, and the Practicum Coordinator.

Mandated Reporting and Duty to Warn

Federal and state laws cover the mandatory reporting of the suspected abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults and the duty to warn if a client is considered harmful to himself, herself, or others. The agency supervisors are responsible for educating learners with regard to these laws, along with the procedures to share any client concerns. During the practicum, the student is not required to be the primary mandated reporter, while functioning as an intern. This role is reserved for the site supervisor who is responsible for ensuring that all practicum site policies, regulations, laws, and ethical obligations are followed. The student can assist and should have exposure to situations that involve mandatory reporting and duty to warn.

Reporting an Incident

If an incident occurs in which a student is threatened or hurt, the agency supervisor or student should contact the practicum director and the faculty liaison immediately to discuss what actions the practicum site and Practicum Coordinator should take to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being. The incident should be documented and the steps taken to address it. There will be a meeting with the student, agency supervisor, and faculty liaison to discuss the situation, assess the immediate and ongoing risks, and find a resolution that promotes the student's sense of well-being and the learning process.

Home Visits and Travel

The MSW Program allows the student to conduct home visits and community visits after the first visit has been conducted with an agency supervisor or site supervisor approved designee (i.e. staff member). The purpose of shadowing the first home visit with the supervisor (or another staff person), is to determine the appropriateness of the client and setting. It is expected that the agency supervisor will assess the student's competency to conduct individual home visits or community visits, prior to approving this task.

Upon agency supervisor approval, the student can conduct visits independently as long as the supervisor is immediately available by phone. The student can leave a home visit or community visit if the student feels uncomfortable or unsafe. It is expected that the student will discuss any concerns immediately with the agency supervisor and faculty liaison.

All home visits and community visits must be documented by the student using a system housed in the agency or designed by the student if no system is available. It is important for students to know the practicum site's protocol for safety and security. The following are guidelines and suggestions that may be helpful to students and agency staff as they consider the particular safety issues in their settings. The practicum site should know the student's schedule and whereabouts at all times, especially when the student is working outside the building.

Security of Belongings:

The practicum site is responsible for providing students with a secure place to keep belongings while at placement. It is preferable that the space be one that can be locked. Students should not leave cell phones, laptops, backpacks, purses, and other personal articles visible and unattended, even in an office with the door closed. Valuables should not be brought to placement settings. Items of value should not be left in cars and/or should be placed out of view just prior to leaving a vehicle.

Working with Clients:

Students work with individuals, groups, families, organizations, and/or communities in a range of settings and situations. Some of these include work with clients dealing with overwhelming emotions and environmental stressors that result in behaviors that are threatening or appear to be threatening to the student. Students should always consult with the agency supervisor regarding preparation for and handling of specific situations that are potentially difficult or threatening, such as medical emergencies, suicide or homicide risks, potential abuse of others, and the presence of weapons.

Physical Surroundings:

When considering the location of practicum activities, it is important to consider the physical space and contents, whether there is more than one exit, and where each person will sit. When scheduling an appointment, it is helpful to think about whether other people will be around and available at the time of the meeting for help if needed. Also, it is important to have a plan for assistance in the event that the client/consumer becomes agitated. This may include having another staff person in the meeting.

Use of Automobiles

Students who will use a car as part of their placement are responsible for the maintenance of

current insurance. The insurance company should be made aware that the student is using the vehicle for business purposes. **Regardless of personal insurance, no student may transport a client in a personal vehicle.** Students may use agency vehicles to transport clients, but are strongly urged to explore the insurance coverage the agency provides for them.

Most agencies reimburse for mileage while conducting agency business. Students and agencies should clarify travel arrangements and requirements prior to the beginning of the placement. If agencies do not allow for reimbursement, students may request activities that do not require them to transport themselves to multiple locations during the day.

Students are prohibited from transporting a client, client's family, agency supervisor, staff, or other students in their own vehicles or to be transported by a client, client's family, or other interns.

Process for Implementing Student Safety Protocols

Students follow policies implemented by the practicum agencies. We require the placement agencies to orient the students on their safety policies and protocols. Safety protocols for students' agencies are discussed during the practicum seminar.

Also, in the practicum seminar and practicum handbook, students receive information on NASW Safety Standards as well as Homeland Security safety plans and FBI safety protocols. They discuss home visits and safety measures that are standard in social work settings. They also learn about those settings that can present the greatest risks for social workers.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

You are expected to make a personal commitment to the goals of the BSW and MSW programs and maintain professionalism in class and in the practicum. Cultural humility and competent practice is important. All communication and engagement should demonstrate the ability to follow the NASW Code of Ethics and problem solve at the appropriate levels according to the NASW Code of Ethics.

All students must adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and observe clients' rights to confidentiality, whether guaranteed through FERPA or HIPAA or separate agency policies. Additionally, they must follow the Pacific Lutheran University Code of Conduct and be in compliance with agency codes of conduct. <https://www.plu.edu/srr/student-code-of-conduct>

Professionalism is paramount in preparing for and participating in the practicum, which includes dressing in professional attire. You are expected to discuss the dress code with the agency supervisor during the face-to-face site interview and comply with the guidelines.

To maintain an engaging and productive learning environment, protect self and clients from unintended privacy violations, ensure awareness and safety, and ensure ethical engagement with clients, you should refrain from the use of personal devices for emails, telephone calls, text messages, and social media during the practicum. Personal communication devices should not interrupt any professional activities in the practicum site or pose any risk to self or others. Students should consult with the agency supervisor on the use of technology, communication devices and adhere to the practicum site policies.

Consider implications of social media and other technology use. Boundaries between personal and professional use of social media can become quickly blurred. Due to social work's professional standards and the obligation to follow the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, social workers need to continually assess the ethical implications/complications of social media use and avoid engaging in a dual role with clients, unintentional or intentional violation of privacy and confidentiality, professional image, and self-disclosure. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) EPAS competencies provide guidance on the use of social media related to: dual relationships, privacy and confidentiality, professional boundaries, conflict of interest, professional image, informed consent, appropriate self-disclosure etc. Please review and be aware of these guidelines as a basic standard.

CO-OCCURRING PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Students may be placed in an agency in which they have been or will be employee, but only under all the following conditions:

- The agency must be an approved practicum learning site and agree to sign a statement of understanding with PLU.
- The placement must provide a viable and identifiable learning and educational experience for the student.
- The student, in the role of learning, must have opportunities that reflect the nine competencies of the social work department and CSWE as articulated in the learning plan.
- Supervision related to employment and the practicum may be conducted by the same person (preferably different people) but the supervision time and focus must be separate.
- If a student becomes employed or unemployed at the practicum site, the Practicum Coordinator will work with the supervisor and student to ensure continuity for the practicum experience.
- All parties (student, agency supervisor, and practicum coordinator) must agree to these conditions.

APPENDICES

- A.** BSW & MSW Practicum Experience Applications
- B.** BSW & MSW Learning Plans
- C.** BSW & MSW Learning Plan Rating Sheet
- D.** Practicum Professionalism Assessment
- E.** Practicum Time Sheet Required Format
- F.** Co-Occurring Practicum Experience and Employment
- G.** Suggested Onboarding & Orientation Activities
- H.** Preparing Students for Social Work Supervision
- I.** Suggested Supervision Format for Supervisor
- J.** Practicum Evaluation
- K.** Agency Supervisor Information

Appendix A

PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE APPLICATIONS

BSW PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE APPLICATION

Please fill out the application using this [link](#). Email Maria Carrington (carrington@plu.edu) if you have any questions

MSW PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE APPLICATION REGULAR AND ADVANCED STANDING PROGRAMS

Please fill out the application using this [link](#). Email Maria Carrington (carrington@plu.edu) if you have any questions

Appendix B

BSW & MSW LEARNING PLANS

[BSW Learning Plan](#)

[BSW Learning Example Plan](#)

[MSW Learning Foundation Plan](#)

[MSW Learning Foundation Example Plan](#)

[MSW Learning Advanced Plan](#)

[MSW Example Learning Advanced Plan](#)

Links to the learning evaluations will be provided to students via their practicum instructor

Appendix C

BSW & MSW LEARNING PLAN RATING SHEET

Guidelines for Assigning Ratings in the Practicum Learning Plan

No competence*

Examples include

- Student declines to participate in activities
- Student is not able to demonstrate a skill despite repeated exposure to opportunities to learn and observes others doing the skill
- Student fails to demonstrate professionalism
- Student has demonstrated that they are unable or unwilling to improve behaviors/skills despite feedback

Or

- Student has not had a chance to demonstrate behavior

Emerging competence

Examples include

- Student struggles with completing more complex tasks without intensive supervision
- Student demonstrates understanding of tasks but is unable to work independently without supervision
- Student can complete some complex tasks independently without higher-level oversight
- Student has demonstrated growth in the area since the start of practicum

Or

- Student has had limited opportunities to engage in activities that demonstrate behavior

Competence

Examples include

- Student is able to perform tasks with relative/appropriate independence and with minimal supervision
- Student seek out and utilizes supervision appropriately
- Student is able to self-reflect on strengths and areas for growth
- Student demonstrates an understanding of the flow of tasks of the agency and initiating work as appropriate

Advanced Competence

Examples include

- Student demonstrates critical thinking about situations and an ability to conceptualize the purpose of the activities in the larger system and client context
- Student functions independently with minimal supervision
- Student demonstrates leadership, can teach others, and/or is viewed as a content expert in an area
- Student has completed advanced training in a particular area
- Student is able to apply social work behaviors/interventions in unique, creative ways that elevate the care of client populations

*A no competence rating may be appropriate for the first semester a student is in their placement. However, the hope would be that students are scoring in the competency range by the end of their second semester and the end of their placement.

Appendix D

Practicum Professionalism Assessment

Pacific Lutheran University
Department of Social Work

Evaluator Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Role (check one): ☐ Student ☐ Supervisor

Intern Name: _____ **Total Score:** ____/30

This tool is intended to assess the professionalism of social work students and encourage accountability during their practicum placements while representing PLU in agency and community settings. The form should be completed by the student (as a self-assessment) and their field supervisor. Scores will be factored into the student's practicum seminar grade.

Rating Scale: Please rate the student's performance in each category using the 1–5 scale provided and include honest, constructive, and specific comments whenever possible.

- 5 – Excellent (consistently exceeds expectations)
- 4 – Good (meets expectations)
- 3 – Developing (inconsistently meets expectations)
- 2 – Needs Improvement (rarely meets expectations)
- 1 – Unacceptable (does not meet expectations)

1. Reliability & Punctuality

Description: Consistently arrives on time and is prepared for all responsibilities. Provides reasonable notice when unable to arrive as scheduled.

Rating (1–5): _____

Comments:

2. Initiative & Engagement

Description: Is open to and seeks new learning opportunities, completes tasks reliably, and takes responsibility for actions.

Rating (1–5): _____

Comments:

3. Communication

Description: Communicates clearly, respectfully, and professionally in verbal, written, and digital formats with clients, staff, and peers.

Rating (1–5): _____

Comments:

4. Appearance

Description: Maintains appropriate dress and grooming according to agency guidelines.

Rating (1–5): _____

Comments:

5. Conduct

Description: Demonstrates respectful and professional behavior and maintains appropriate boundaries.

Rating (1–5): _____

Comments:

6. Use of Supervision

Description: Comes prepared with questions, seeks input on performance, receives critical feedback constructively, and applies it to improve skill and understanding.

Rating (1–5): _____

Comments:

Additional Comments (Optional)

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Evaluator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix E

Students are Required to Use this Format

PLU Social Work Department												
Advanced Practicum Time Sheet (MSW Students)												
Student:												
Field Instructor:												
Task Supervisor (if applicable):												
Field Site:												
Week	M	T	W	TH	F	SAT	SUN	Seminar Hours	Task Supervision	MSW Supervision	Weekly Total	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
											0	
Total Seminar Hours								0			0	
Total Task Supervision									0		0	
Total MSW Supervision										0	0	
Semester Total HRS (320 REQUIRED)											0	
*Use the space below for notes as needed												
2025												
Signatures - Review & Approve												
Student												
Field Instructor												
Task Supervisor (if applicable)												
Field Instructor												

Appendix F

CO-OCCURRING PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Pacific Lutheran University

Social Work Program

This form is to request a social work practicum placement be completed at a current place of employment or if a placement also becomes a place of employment.

Co-Occurring Practicum and Employment Site Policy

Students may be placed in an agency in which they have been or will be employee, but only under all the following conditions:

- The agency must be an approved practicum learning site and agree to sign a statement of understanding with PLU.
 - The placement must provide a viable and identifiable learning and educational experience for the student.
 - The student, in the role of learning, must have opportunities that reflect the nine competencies of the social work department and CSWE as articulated in the learning plan.
 - Supervision related to employment and the practicum may be conducted by the same person (preferably different people) but the supervision time and focus must be separate.
 - If a student becomes employed or unemployed at the practicum site, the Practicum Coordinator will work with the supervisor and student to ensure continuity for the practicum experience.
 - All parties (student, agency supervisor, and practicum coordinator) must agree to these conditions.
-

Appendix G

SUGGESTED ONBOARDING & ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

1. Orient students to their workspace, phone, computer, email, and internal data systems.
2. Initiate onboarding/orientation process, including safety trainings and other relevant trainings.
3. Review and discuss materials
 - a. Read NASW Code of Ethics
 - b. Discuss common ethical issues that arise
4. Read organizations mission statement, vision, program objectives, bylaws and contracts, and applicable laws that describe the organization's history and role in the service delivery system and larger community.
 - c. Discuss how these are put into action and if they have changed over time
5. Review organizational chart, job descriptions of social workers and other professionals in the organization.
6. Discuss decision making policies and procedures
7. Read policies and procedures, especially related to confidentiality guidelines, harassment, discrimination, Americans with Disabilities Act and OSHA. Review and discuss procuring supplies and provisions, telephone/communication/computer utilization, parking, and mileage/travel reimbursement.
8. Read organizations policies and procedures which define client eligibility for services and outline and procedures which define client eligibility for services and outline agency informed consent, confidentiality and professional conduct
9. Review examples of assessment tools and case studies, evaluation tools, and other samples of key organizational tasks, tools, and work
10. Attend staff and other agency/program meetings
11. Discuss staff/agency priorities, dynamics, decision making, leadership
12. Review emergency, HIPAA guidelines, Blood Borne Pathogens, and other health and safety related requirements.
13. Review expectations for supervision meetings, roles and responsibilities
14. Schedule regular meeting times.

Appendix H

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Why is Supervision Important in Social Work?

- Being active in supervision contributes to professional growth, and to the development of self-awareness.
- Supervision is an opportunity for students to clarify expectations.
- Social Work is stressful & difficult. One focus of supervision is support. Student work directly affects client's lives.
- Guidance, direction, support, and feedback from the field educator is important.

Students should strive to use supervision in a purposeful & responsible manner

- Meet at a regularly scheduled time with the supervisor.
- Be prepared. Bring questions, observations, & requests for input & feedback.
- Use the time to examine your performance & explore new ideas.

Expectations for students include:

Dependability & follow through on assigned work

- Attention to detail & proper procedures Initiative in work-related assignments
- A cooperative attitude toward the field educator & other staff
- A willingness to learn from whatever tasks are assigned Openness to supervision, including asking for, and learning from constructive criticism Willingness to seek help when needed

Stages of Supervision:

- Orientation: Students may feel uncertain; anxious
- Exploration and Skill Building: Students begin developing confidence as they build skills and competencies
- Beginning Competency: Students have acquired knowledge about the placement agency, and the attainment of skills increases student confidence. Students have a greater degree of self-awareness related to their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as particular areas of interest.

Supervision is an interactional process

However, it is not therapy

- Many students are drawn to the profession thinking it is a way for them to address their own issues. Supervision is not the place to do that. It is possible that, in working with clients, you may bump into your own issues. Having insight about that can be helpful.
- However, if your issues are getting in the way of being effective with your clients, you should seek outside resources and counseling to address them. Do not be offended by this recommendation - it is in support of you being a more effective social worker.

Conflicts may arise in the supervisory relationship

- For example, you may feel that your field educator does not devote enough time to you and your learning needs. Or you may feel that your field educator is either too

controlling or not structured enough. The two of you may have very different personalities.

- Perhaps you & your field educator differ in terms of gender, race, ethnic background, or age and this somehow affects your relationship. Whatever the conflict, talk about it. Do not avoid the problem. You will be expected to find ways to deal with these issues. Remember, your faculty liaison is available to assist in problem-solving.

Appendix I

SUGGESTED SUPERVISION FORMAT FOR SUPERVISOR

Reflective Questions to Ask Prior to Supervision

- How do I feel this student is doing?
- Areas of Strength:
- Areas for improvement:
- Is feedback needed on either?
- Staff I need to link in to help this student with their goals:

Questions to Ask the Student during Supervision

- What areas/activities did you feel went well this week?
- What areas/activities did you struggle with this week? What support do you need to address this?
- How do you feel you are learning the organization?
- Have you encountered any ethical questions/concerns this week?
- What are you looking forward to?

Appendix J
PRACTICUM EVALUATION
EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM SETTING
SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Agency_Supervisor_Semester/Year

1. Was there a clear understanding of the student role within your agency?

Were the expectations for you consistent with your experience, ability, and comfort level?
 Did you have adequate space to work? Privacy when needed?

2. What kinds of learning opportunities were available for you?
3. What types of tasks were assigned to you?
4. Were you afforded opportunities for generalist/specialized practice, including work at different system levels (individual interviews, task or treatment group work, agency level work, community), work at different phases of the social work process (intake/engagement, assessment, intervention, evaluation)?
5. Did you receive regular supervision?
6. Did you receive adequate feedback on your performance as a student intern?

Were staff development opportunities made available to you? Describe.
7. How well were you oriented to the agency? Describe the process.
8. Evaluate the workload. Quantity of work, Complexity of assignments, Nature of documentation required
9. Were you able to accomplish your learning goals? (If not, what were the reasons?)
10. Was your agency supervisor generally available and responsive? Please explain.
11. Did you feel that your agency supervisor fostered a safe, supportive, and challenging work environment? Please explain.
12. 8. Would you recommend this practicum setting for future social work students? Why or why not?

Appendix K
AGENCY SUPERVISOR INFORMATION
Social Work Department Pacific
Lutheran University

Name:

Agency:

Agency Address :

Phone:

Email Address:

Alt. Phone: Alt. e-mail Address

You may attach a current resume in lieu of completing this portion of the form.

Education:

College or Dates Major Minor Degree Date of
 University Attended Graduation

Graduate School & Post Graduate Training

Special Interests/Professional Certificates/Registration/Special Recognitions/Awards

Present Position:

Date of Appointment:

Practice Expertise: (Check all that apply)

Individual Family Group Child Aging

Adolescent Adult CO Mgt Other

Signature

Date

