



# **MSW-UTC**

## **FIELD EDUCATION HANDBOOK**

Social Work Program

Chattanooga State Office Building

Dept. 3133, 540 McCallie Ave.

Chattanooga, TN 37403

<http://www.utc.edu/social-work/>

The goal of the student handbook is to provide students with a general source of information on the program's policies and procedures. However, information and policies in the MSW-UTC Student Handbook and Field Manual are subject to change. The information in this handbook and field manual is in no way intended to serve as a contractual agreement and does not supersede the university and trustee regulations. It is the student's responsibility to stay current with the policies and procedures of the University and the MSW-UTC program. (*Updated Fall 2021*).

**MSW-UTC FIELD EDUCATION HANDBOOK**  
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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

### INTRODUCTION

Field education is considered the *signature pedagogy* of social work education.

“Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline -- to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum – classroom and field – are of equal importance within the curriculum, 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 by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies.” (EPAS, 2015, p. 11).

The vision of the MSW-UTC program is to be recognized as an innovative partner in southeast Tennessee and northern Georgia that educates and trains students for the complex world of social work practice. The MSW-UTC field placement utilizes a competency-based learning model that provides learning opportunity through the use of “real life” experiences. Field education in the classroom, and in the community, will focus on providing students with a wealth of learning exposures that may include guest speakers, volunteer experiences, interviews, and field trips. Additionally, assessment is an integral part of the field learning experience and will include self-assessment, peer assessment, and instructor assessment at various points in the learning process.

Field Education also provides the foundation to integrate classroom theory and social work practice. Several integrative learning mechanisms in the field placement lead to the exploration and integration of practice and theory. These mechanisms include assignments with an emphasis on comprehending how theory guides practice, field instructors who model how theory guides practice, and classroom guidance to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

### DIVERSITY

The MSW-UTC program believes that promoting and supporting the strengths of diverse cultures provides a foundation upon which students can master new learning and develop the differential assessment and intervention skills to provide effective services to diverse and at-risk populations. It is through field education that students are exposed to an affirmative approach to human diversity centered on the universally accepted values and objectives of social work, including the support of diversity, the uniqueness of the individual, the concept of interdependence, and the commitment to serve. Field placements are carefully selected with the intention of providing students with exposure to a wide variety of diverse experiences.

## **STRUCTURE OF FIELD EDUCATION IN THE MSW-UTC PROGRAM**

The Social Work Program is dependent upon community agencies to carry out the field component of the learning process. Students are supervised by a professional social worker (the field instructor) and by a faculty member (Director of Field Education and/or field faculty) from the Social Work Program. This is intended to facilitate the integration of classroom learning with agency-based practice and to provide support to students as they engage in this dynamic process.

Students who enter the MSW-UTC program complete two distinct field placements: an eight-credit, 400-hour generalist placement and an eight-credit, 500-hour specialized placement. Those who enter into the program as an advanced standing student will only need to complete a single, eight-credit, 500-hour specialized field placement.

The generalist placement exposes students to the knowledge, values, cognitive affective processes, and skills needed to engage in generalist social work practice. Students will complete the Learning Agreement I during the generalist year.

During the specialized placement, advanced specialized practice knowledge and skills are developed, and students acquire the ability to respond with greater autonomy to increasingly complex practice situations involving diverse client systems of various sizes, with a concentration of aging through the life span. The student will complete the Learning Agreement II during the specialized placement.

Diversity, populations at risk of discrimination and oppression, and social and economic justice are stressed in both generalist and specialized placements. Each field placement also allows students to deepen their understanding of professional values and ethics. Finally, students are encouraged in their field placements to use evidence, both from the literature and from their own practice evaluations, to inform their work with client systems.

Traditionally, field placements begin in the Fall semester, but flexibility to accommodate the schedules of learning adults may be offered on a student-by-student basis as those needs are identified. For the generalist year, students spend approximately 16 hours/week at their placement. For the specialized placement, students spend approximately 19 hours/week in their field placement. In the specialized placement, students are given the option to complete a mezzo/macro social work experience focused on strengthening, enhancing, and demonstrating social work leadership and advocacy skills on behalf of individuals, families, and organizations as they age through the life span for a total of 500 hours. Other students in the specialized curriculum focus on developing and demonstrating clinical capacity using therapeutic modalities focusing on individuals as they age through the life course and their families. A minimum of 100 clinical contacts hours are required with 400 hours being a combination of micro, mezzo, and macro practice with individuals, families, and groups as they age through the life course.

In the generalist and specialized years, students will be continuously assessed for competency through self-assessment, peer assessment, and instructor assessment. Students will also use the skill of reflection throughout to evaluate their field placement and growing skills. Reflection and assessment are incorporated through the use of learning agreements, course activities, weekly reflection forms, supervision sessions, and the field seminar.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES DURING COVID-19**

All incoming MSW-UTC Social Work Interns will be responsible for signing the [clinical experiences acknowledgement form](#) prior to starting placement. Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, the college has developed this document for review which entails the risks associated with completing placement in the community as a component of your education. Students will be provided a copy of the clinical experiences acknowledgement form, as well as the social work specific policy related to COVID-19 as seen below.

All students in the UTC Social Work program are expected to adhere to University specific policies regarding health checks before coming to campus or engaging in university related work off campus, such as practicum and internship. Students will complete the daily health check [link](#) found on the UTC main page. In addition, students are required to complete any health checks required by their specific practicum and internship agencies. Failure to do so may result in termination of placement and programmatic professional performance review.

The University has created and approved a Fall 2021 Absence policy. Social Work instructors will work with students who have illness and may miss course work as a result of illness or other COVID related issues. However, this absence policy does not supersede CSWE accreditation and Tennessee licensure standards which delineate expectations for field work and time students engage in practicum/internship hours and university and site supervision hours. Therefore, if students are unable to complete required practicum/internship hours they will need to contact their university supervisor and advisor to determine appropriate steps that meet both students' needs and program requirements for degree completion. Students can find specific guidelines related to the Social Work Program and Practicum/Internship guidelines in the student handbook which is posted on the UTC website at [www.utc.edu/socialwork.com](http://www.utc.edu/socialwork.com).

## **II. PRACTICUM (FIELD) EDUCATION**

### **BEGINNING FIELD**

The MSW-UTC program has specific criteria for admission into field education across all program options. The program only admits students who have met the specified criteria. Admission to field education for all students requires three steps:

Step 1: First, students must be admitted into the MSW-UTC program and participate in advising.

Step 2: Next, students submit a Field Education Application by the specified due date for the term that the student wishes to begin field education.

Step 3: Students complete an interview with the Director of Field Education to determine field readiness and agency interest.

Advanced Standing students are admitted into field education through the following process:

Step 1: Once a student has been admitted into the MSW Program, they complete two advanced standing seminar courses with a 3.0 or higher in the summer before entering the field.

Step 2: The students will apply to field by the due date outline by the director of field education and meet with the field director.

Step 3: Upon completing this process, students will be admitted into advanced field education to complete a 500-hour placement (250 hours each in the fall and spring semesters or summer terms) in congruence with required co-requisite classes.

The application process and stated criteria for field education ensure that only students that have met the requirements are enrolled in field education. Once applications are received, the Director of Field Education will review all Field Education Applications and contact each student to set up a one-on-one meeting. **Students who do not complete the field application by the due date will not be permitted to enter into field and will be required to wait until the next available application period.**

### **READMISSION TO FIELD**

There may be times when personal matters or challenges occur during a student's time in the program, which causes field to be disrupted. When a student has chosen to readmit into field, and concerns regarding professional performance and academic success are minimal, the Director of Field Education in consultation with the MSW Program Director will determine if a student will enter field immediately upon acceptance into the program. If professional fitness or academic success are of concern, a student's readmission to field may be delayed up to a semester or academic year based the student's need to grow and develop professionally and academically prior to going into placement.

### **INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR OF FIELD EDUCATION**

Prior to the interview with the director of field education, a review of the student's field application, background check results, and resume are conducted. At the interview, the director of field education will evaluate the student's overall professional performance and field readiness. Additionally, the director of field education will review the current field placement openings that match the student's areas of interest. Once an appropriate field placement agency is determined, the director of field education will send an email to the agency contact introducing the student. It is then the student's responsibility to respond to the agency and set up an initial interview with that agency by the stated deadline.

### **INTERVIEW WITH FIELD PLACEMENT AGENCY**

Students will be responsible for reaching out to the field placement agency only after receiving contact information from the Director of Field Education. Students will present their resume for review at the field agency interview and participate in the interview process per agency protocol. If the agency accepts the student and the student feels that agency is a good fit for their learning goals, then the field placement is confirmed with the Director of Field Education via the Field Confirmation Form.

In some cases, a student may not be accepted by an agency. If a student finds themselves in such a situation, that student will be given up to two additional interview opportunities. If the student is not accepted by the second or third agency, the student will be required to reapply to field education the following semester.

### **SECURING THE FIELD PLACEMENT**

To secure the field placement, the student must complete the following:

- Field Confirmation Form
- Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Background Check and Fingerprinting

- Purchase Student Liability Insurance
- Submit the Field Confirmation form
- Complete the clinical acknowledgements form

If the required information is not returned by the specified deadline, the student may not be permitted to begin placement and may as a result be required to wait until the next field application period in which the student will be required to reapply for Field Education.

## **ENTERING FIELD**

In addition to interviewing and returning all paperwork, including the background check, the student must complete all training and learning modules required by the MSW-UTC program. The student is also responsible for the completion of training and/or any onboarding required by the placement agency for new students. Failure to complete the required paperwork will result in placement being postponed until the next field application period and the student will be required to reapply.

## **ATTENDANCE IN FIELD SETTING**

Prompt and consistent attendance is required at Field Setting. Upon starting placement, students will be required to complete the Field Hours Form with their Field Instructor/Task Supervisor. Students should present to their placement as scheduled and on time. As the MSW program is a professional program, tardies and absences will not be tolerated. If an absence is necessary, it should be prearranged, at minimum, 48 hours in advance with their Field Instructor/Task Supervisor however, the 3<sup>rd</sup> absence, of any sort, will result in a professional fitness meeting

Students that are tardy to their field placement two or more times or deviate from their prearranged schedule as defined by the Field Hours Form, will be required to participate in a professional fitness meeting with the Director of Field Education and a behavioral contract will be created should the student be tardy a 3<sup>rd</sup> time. Absences that are not pre-arranged will not be tolerated.

Any hours that the student missed must be made up at a later time. In addition, students are required to make up missed supervision sessions within a week of the supervision session for which a reflection journal will be required for submission on Blackboard.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 16 clock hours per week in the field agency in order to meet the 200-hour requirement for each semester for the generalist year, and a minimum of 19 hours per week to meet the 250-hour requirement in the specialized year. Two full days in the agency is strongly recommended in order for students to have the optimal learning experience. Additionally, students may complete a maximum of 8 hours per day in their agency setting and may complete a maximum of 40 hours per week without prior written permission from the Director of Field Education.

If a student experiences extensive health or medical problems, they should consult with the Director of Field Education to determine if medical leave is appropriate. Students who are experiencing extensive health problems will be compromised in their learning process if they are in a position that requires extensive make-up hours which could further jeopardize their health.

If a student experiences an extensive health or medical problem, significant family stress, or personal crisis that requires extended absence from the field placement, they will need to apply for a formal leave of absence from the MSW-UTC program and UTC. After a leave of absence, the student must

follow the policies and procedures for re-engaging in the MSW-UTC program as stated in the MSW-UTC Student Handbook Academic and University Policies (p. 15).

## **DOCUMENTING FIELD HOURS**

Each individual student is responsible for documenting their clock hours in the agency as well as for completing the Monthly Field Hours Log, which must be signed by the student and supervisor. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that this form is completed, signed, and submitted by the due date.

## **FIELD PLACEMENT IN PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT**

Employment-based field placements provide students with an opportunity to satisfy the learning requirements for field in the program while continuing to work. The program has specific policies in place to assess the possibility of employment-based field internships. For those already employed in social service agencies, field placements may be possible if the outlined criteria are met; however, because the program is aimed at preparing social workers for various practice settings, students are strongly encouraged to explore new avenues for professional growth.

Should the student choose to pursue an employment based field placement, the student's employer, the MSW-UTC program, and the student will work together to assure that the following conditions are met. Each of these conditions must be met or the Director of Field Education cannot accept the agency as a placement.

1. The student must be released from their job responsibilities/unit and reassigned to a different program or unit within the agency for at least eight (8) and up to 16 hours per week. This allows the student to be perceived and treated as a learner rather than an employee during field hours.
2. The activities identified for field education must be substantially different from the student's regular work responsibilities and must be challenging and contribute to skill development. The activities must also be compatible with the social work practice curriculum. The student will submit a narrative delineating the difference between employment and practicum responsibilities.
3. The student must be supervised in field activities by an MSW who has at least two years of post-graduate experience or a task supervisor. Should a task supervisor be assigned, the student will need to receive supervision from an MSW in another department of the agency, in the community, or in the Social Work Program itself. The task supervisor and the MSW supervisor will work collaboratively together. The field instructor and the employing supervisor must be different people.
4. The student must have been employed by their current agency for no less than six months.

Once the above-mentioned conditions are met, the student, in consultation with the employer, completes a *Request for Field Internship in Place of Employment* application. The application will be reviewed by the Director of Field Education, and a determination will be made regarding the appropriateness of the placement.



## CHANGE IN FIELD EDUCATION PLACEMENT

Each student is expected to complete all 400 hours for their generalist placement in one agency. In addition, all 500 hours for the specialized placement will be completed in one agency. However, on rare occasions, some students might require a change in field assignment. This could be necessary if a field instructor leaves the agency and a suitable replacement for continued instruction is not available. Additional examples that may warrant a change may include, but are not limited to: inadequate agency resources to support field education, learning experiences in agency are too narrow, placement error based on incompatibility, or agency reorganization.

**No placement change will take place without consultation between the field instructor, task instructor, and the Director of Field Education. No student may independently change placements or terminate placement. Students that independently modify, change, or alter any placement related process without the consultation of the Director of Field Education, will automatically be required to reapply for during the next application cycle and a professional performance review will be scheduled.** For these reasons, should concerns arise, it is important that they be addressed immediately before they are permitted to escalate and necessitate a placement change. The Director of Field Education is available to assist the student and the field instructor with problem identification, mobilization of resources, and mediation. When these means have been explored and the resolution is not forthcoming, the student will be assisted in locating an alternative placement with as little disruption to the learning process as possible. **Students that are terminated from placement, by the field agency, due to concerns raised in regards to professionalism, violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, an inability to emotionally regulate, current or ongoing concerns related to integrity, concerns related to dignity and worth of the person, an inability to abide by and uphold agency practices, or other behaviors that are not becoming of an emerging professional social worker, will be required to withdraw from field education and a plan, including a meeting, will be developed in coordination with faculty and the student.** Depending on the circumstance of the concern, a report may be made to the Dean of Students Office. This plan may include termination from field for the semester, the entire academic year, or indefinitely.

## TERMINATION FROM FIELD PLACEMENT

The MSW-UTC program honors its commitment to the profession and is obligated to evaluate student's fitness to enter the profession. Assessment for field readiness is ongoing and begins during the initial interview with the Director of Field. The field placement requirements are not complete until a final field visit is scheduled and completed with both the field placement agency and student. Because of this, students should be mindful that, regardless of hour completion, issues of professional performance will continue to be monitored. When issues of professionalism are detected, the MSW-UTC program takes a proactive approach to assisting students to correct behavior quickly so as not to disrupt the educational experiences. When issues of professional performance are noted by a faculty member, agency-based field instructor/task instructor, or an administrator has concerns about a student's professional performance, the student may be *suspended* from the field education site by the Director of Field Education until the reported issues have been resolved. Additionally, depending on the nature of the concerns, the MSW-UTC Field Program expects all students to abide by the professional

behavior expectations; therefore, deviation from those expectations can result in a student performance evaluation and review. The process for initiating a professional performance review and criteria can be found in the MSW-UTC Student Handbook (pp. 20-23).

According to Bernak, Epp, & Keys (1999) impaired students show an inability to insightfully understand and resolve their own issues so that these issues do not interfere with the therapeutic process” (p. 21). These may include:

1. Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships.
2. Consistent failure to apply social work values and ethics as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Clear and persistent emotional problems such as substance abuse, mental illness, emotional instability, emotional/psychological disorders that interfere with one’s ability to function at expected levels or are manifested in inappropriate behaviors. This is subject to student rights under disability law.
4. Serious problems in pre-professional placement and/or field education, poor performance in the field, inability to carry out assignments and the requirements of the field practicum.
5. Clearly illegal activities, conviction of a felony, false information on application, or lying about past illegal behavior.
6. Pattern of classroom behavior that is disruptive or that undermines the work or morale of faculty and students.

Students who find themselves experiencing any of the aforementioned “impairments” are encouraged to be proactive and seek consultation with their academic advisor, program director, or field director. Students are also encouraged to seek professional help, take voluntary leave, or adjust schedules as needed. Social workers and social work students should make every effort to assure that personal impairments do not interfere with their ability to serve clients to the best of their ability.

### **III. STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

A major goal of this program is to prepare students to serve as professional social workers in the community setting. Faculty members bear the responsibility to determine if students have demonstrated academic competence, appropriate professional behaviors, and ethical behaviors that show the student’s ability to work with multiple client systems. Therefore, faculty have the responsibility to determine when students are not meeting the acceptable standards for academic, professional, and ethical conduct. When such behaviors or issues are identified, faculty will explore, when possible, actions to assist in the correction of the problems/issues noted. The following information is provided to clearly identify the expectations of all students in the Social Work programs.

It is expected that all students in the Social Work programs will follow and are subject to the university’s code of conduct. Students are responsible for reviewing and be knowledgeable about what is expected from all students. [UTC’s Student Code of Conduct](#).

## HONOR CODE

Students in the Social Work program are held to the standards in the UTC Honor Code. Students will be subject to review, penalty, and possible dismissal from the program if the UTC Honor Code is violated. It is expected that all students in the Social Work program have reviewed and are aware of the Honor Code Policy and what it entails as well as reviewing the Honor Code Pledge statement. Within this code are many definitions that students should be familiar with as they progress through the program. The Social Work program at UTC values academic integrity and will report students, as noted in the policy, for failure to uphold academic standards and the honor code. [UTC's Honor Code](#).

It is expected that all students in the Social Work program will follow and are subject to the university's code of conduct. Students are responsible for reviewing and be knowledgeable about what is expected from all students.

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

While a student may be terminated from the program for academic reasons, students may also be terminated from the Social Work program if they fail to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, or lack sufficient emotional stability which results in impaired judgment or behavior requisite for professional practice. According to Bernak, Epp, & Keys (1999) impaired students show an inability to insightfully understand and resolve their own issues so that these issues do not interfere with the therapeutic process" (p. 21).

In assessing whether to suspend or terminate a student, the Social Work program considers academic and professional performance.

Students are expected to behave and perform in a way that demonstrates professional behavior fit for professional social work. It is expected that students will demonstrate the following standards:

**Accountability:** Accountability begins with attendance to the respective classes. It is expected that students are on-time to all scheduled class sessions. Students are expected to participate in the activities and assignments in each class comparable to the level of their peers. Work should be completed in a timely manner and follow the directions as given with the assignment/activities. Students should come to class prepared to engage with the content and be able to demonstrate having read and completed other related assignments.

**Respect:** All peers, instructors, field supervisors, clients at the respective agencies should always be treated with dignity and respect. Respectful behavior pauses to listen to others, provides feedback in a constructive manner, approaches conflict with peers or instructors with a cooperative approach. Respect always uses positive and non-judgmental language. Maintain respectful behaviors inside and outside the classroom. Inside the classroom, refrain from using electronic devices in a distracting and non-coursework related manner.

**Confidentiality:** The NASW Code of Ethics (1.07) outlines the guidelines for privacy and confidentiality. It is important that students review this code and practice its tenets within the classroom setting. Information shared in class should be treated as confidential information. Students are urged to exercise caution in sharing very personal information in the classroom. Students should refrain from disclosing any personal or identifying information they have encountered in the field setting.

**Competence:** The NASW Code of Ethics includes competence as one of the six ethical principles that guides the social work professional. Social Workers are mandated by this code to practice within their areas of competence continue a practice of developing and enhancing their professional expertise. In order to demonstrate competence, students should work to apply themselves to fully engage in the academic experience, through completion of the readings, assignments, and meeting deadlines. Student should be working continuously to improve their abilities. In order to become fully competent as a professional, it is important that you work to assess yourself for any issues that might impact your ability to effectively work in the class or with clients.

**Integrity:** The NASW Code of Ethics highlights integrity as a core principle of the professional. Social workers are always expected to behave in a trustworthy manner. Students should always practice honesty with themselves, their peers, and their instructors. Students should work to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Committing to submitting work that upholds the university's standard of academic integrity. Students should work to accept and integrate feedback given.

**Diversity:** Students will be given many opportunities, throughout the program, to develop an openness to new ideas, new people groups, and new beliefs that may be unfamiliar to them. While learning these new concepts and exploring ideas can be uncomfortable at times, embracing diversity will be emphasized. In the classroom and in practice, it is expected that students will maintain speech that is free of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, stereotyping, etc. It is expected that person first language is utilized in both written and verbal communication in a way that is consistent with social work values and ethics as well as fulfills APA guidelines. Student are expected to demonstrate a willingness to serve a diverse group of individuals, families, groups, and/or communities.

**Communication:** Students are expected to work to develop and improve both written and verbal skills. These skills are used in both the educational and the professional practice setting. Students should be able to demonstrate positive, constructive, respectful and professional communication skills with peers and instructors demonstrating assertive communication with peers and instructors as well as demonstrate writing skills that are commensurate with the level of education.

**Social Justice:** The NASW Code of Ethics lists Social Justice as a core value of the profession. Students should work to develop a commitment to social justice for all populations at risk. Students will be given many opportunities in the Social Work program to learn about and to address issues of social justice and oppression as well as learn methods to address those injustices at all levels of social work practice.

#### **CRITERIA FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

When issues of professionalism are detected, the Social Work program takes a proactive approach to assisting students to correct behavior quickly so as not to disrupt the educational experiences. When issues of professional performance are noted by a faculty member, agency-based field instructor/task instructor, or an administrator has concerns about a student's professional performance, as it relates to the field education experiences, the student may be *suspended* from the field education site by the Field Agency Supervisor, the Program Director, or Field Education Director until the reported issue has been resolved. If the issue of professional performance has been noted by a faculty member about a student's professional performance, as

it relates to class-based performance, the student will be notified. In either case, steps will be initiated to correct the behavior quickly so that the student can continue in the educational process as much as possible.

Students in the Social Work Program will be evaluated on a regular basis by faculty and field supervisors of the program. The Social Work department uses a Level Review process to address and monitor professional performance concerns. Additional details on the Level Review procedures are listed below. In addition to UTC Student Code of Conduct, the NASW Code of Ethics, and the professional behaviors mentioned above, a student's performance will be evaluated in the four general areas:

- Basic Skills Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills
- Emotional & Mental Abilities Necessary for Program Performance
- Professional Performance Necessary for Professional Practice
- Ethical Considerations

Situations below are examples of issues that may be addressed through the professional performance review:

1. Substance abuse
2. Plagiarizing in coursework or fieldwork
3. Pattern of classroom behavior that is disruptive or that undermines the work or morale of faculty and students.
4. Lying or cheating on academic or field assignments
5. Impaired performance in the classroom or field setting. Behaviors include, but are not limited to being actively suicidal, emotional instability, emotional/psychological disorders that interfere with one's ability to function at expected levels or are manifested in inappropriate behaviors, inability to focus or communicate, distortion in thought processes, or otherwise unable to develop appropriate work relationships in the social work context. This is subject to student rights for disabilities as defined by FERPA and the ADA-AA.
6. Clearly illegal activities, conviction of a felony, false information on application, or lying about past illegal behavior or failure to disclose a felony conviction.
  - a. Please note that some crimes may prevent a student from being able to obtain a practicum setting or to obtain professional licensure as reported in the required background check.
  - b. In some cases, admission to field practicum may be delayed due to the nature of the crime.
  - c. Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; however, any crime conviction that prevents students from obtaining a field practicum placement will result in the student being dismissed from the program. Please note that the field placement is a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requirement in order to obtain a Social Work degree.
7. Inadequate interpersonal relationship skills necessary for social work practice, which includes the inability to form positive working relationships with faculty, peers, supervisors, and clients as demonstrated by ongoing conflict with faculty or peers, and results in the student's inability to work cooperatively on group projects with peers, cause disruptions in the classroom and/or the field settings.
8. Inadequate written or verbal communication skills, which impede the ability to communicate client information, practice concepts, and academic/theoretical ideas clearly in work with faculty, peers, supervisors, and clients.

9. Excessive absences from class, or field, which are considered predictive of poor professional performance. Please see syllabi for all courses to clarify the attendance policy.
10. Failure to pass a required course with a “C” or higher.
11. Termination from a practicum placement related to student performance or violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
  - a. The first time a student is dismissed/terminated from a field practicum placement, they will be instructed to withdraw from field education and field seminar. A professional performance plan will be initiated by the field faculty to correct the behavior. Once the student has been able to demonstrate the behavior has been corrected, they will be eligible to reapply for a field education placement the following semester.
  - b. The second time a student has been dismissed from field education due to their performance or violation of the NASW Code of Ethics, they will not be given the opportunity to secure another field education placement and will be terminated from the program.

### Level Review Procedures

A level review is initiated when student performance concerns are identified. There are three levels of review. The severity of the performance concern and the need for student support determine the level of review. Regardless of the level of the review, it may be necessary to consult with other members of the university (e.g. School of Professional Studies administration, Dean of Students Office, Office of Student Conduct, Disability Resource Center, Title IX).

### Level I Review

A Level I review includes performance concerns in which a student may need additional support or referral. Social Work faculty member identifies the performance concern then corresponds with the student about the concern with an email and/or meeting.

Examples of criteria that warrant a Level I review include but is not limited to:

- Attendance
- Expressed mental or emotional distress, stressful life events that may interfere with the capacity to meet the academic and/or field demands of the program or to perform in a professional environment.
- Inappropriate cell phone or computer use during instruction time that is distracting and interferes with the ability to meaningfully engage in class discussion or activities.

### Level I Process

1. Student will be notified, by e-mail, by the faculty member. The professional performance concerns will be outlined in the e-mail and the student will be invited to respond and/or meet to discuss the concern.
2. If the concern cannot be resolved via e-mail, a meeting will be scheduled and notes from the meeting will be recorded on the Remediation Plan form (see page # 26) to document the process and plans for success. Action steps will be noted for continued success in the program. The form will be signed by both the student and the faculty representative.
3. Follow-up will be scheduled as needed.

## Level II Review

A Level II review involves moderate performance or behavior concerns that interfere with a student's capacity to meet the academic and/or field education demands in the program.

Examples of criteria for Level II Review include but is not limited to:

- The student has not resolved and continues to demonstrate a Level I performance concern
- Concerns about a student's well-being
- Concerns about a student's field readiness
- Concerns with a student's noncompliance with ethical standards as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics
- Concerns about a student's professional behavior (e.g. demeanor, appearance, oral, written and electronic communication)
- Academic misconduct such as plagiarism, cheating or misrepresentation of information
- Repeated concerns about the student's inability to apply instructor feedback

## Level II Process

1. The faculty notifies the Program Director and other department faculty, if warranted. If the student's behavior dictates further intervention, a referral will be made to the appropriate campus resource for support (e.g. School of Professional Studies administration, Dean of Students, Office of Student Conduct, Title IX, Disability Resource Center).
2. Student will be made aware of their rights to bring an advocate/advisor/observer to participate in any scheduled meeting; question the evidence; and offer a response to the concerns.
3. If it is determined that corrective action needs to be taken, the student will be informed, and a representative from the appropriate campus resource will be invited to the meeting(s), and the Professional Performance Form and Plan will be completed that outlines changes that need to be made and/or any actions to be taken within a specified time frame. The form will be signed by both the faculty representative and the student.
4. Actions steps outlining the required improvements in performance will be documented on the Professional Performance Form and Plan.
5. Monitoring and follow-up will be scheduled as needed.
6. If a student chooses not to sign the Professional Performance Form and Plan, the case will be submitted to the appropriate campus resource and it will be submitted as the next level for review and disposition.

## Level III Review

A Level III review is reserved for serious student performance and behavior problems or concerns and can involve dismissal from the program.

Examples of criteria that warrant a Level III review include but is not limited to:

- When performance deficits persist and have not been resolved in previous level reviews
- A student does not meet the criteria for satisfactory academic or field performance

- A student exhibits behavior that is hostile, intimidating or threatening in class, in any class related activities, inside or outside of the classroom, or in the field education setting.
- A student has been arrested and charged with a crime.
- Academic dishonesty such as lying, cheating, falsifying academic records, including information on the field education application.
- Violations of any university policy as outlined in the UTC Student Code of Conduct

### Level III Process

1. Upon notification of a Level III concern, the Program Director or Director of Field Education gathers information about the performance concern.
2. If the student's behavior warrants further intervention and is an offense that meets the criteria for mandatory reporting, a report will be made to the office of Student Outreach and Support and/or the office of Student Conduct for further guidance or disposition. Students should be made aware of their rights to bring an advocate/advisor/observer to participate in the meeting; question the evidence; and offer a response to the allegations.
3. If it is determined that corrective action needs to be taken, the student will be informed, and a representative from the office of Student Outreach and Support will be invited to the meetings, and the Professional Performance Form and Plan will be completed that outlines changes that need to be made and/or any actions to be taken within a specified time frame. The form will need be signed by both the faculty representative and the student.
4. Information gathered and discussed at the Level III meeting will be used to determine one of two outcomes.
  - a. If it is determined that the student can continue in the program with conditions, the conditions and expectations will be clearly communicated to the student verbally and in writing. The Professional Performance form will be completed and include clear action steps for continuance in the program and will be signed by both the student, faculty member and the Program Director.
  - b. Continuance in the program is contingent upon meeting the expectations and action steps in the Professional Performance Plan. Please note that a student may be required to withdraw or delay enrollment in field education or coursework until conditions of the Professional Performance Plan have been met. Monitoring and follow-up are scheduled.
  - c. Should it become necessary to dismiss the student from the program, policies of the University will be followed.

Note: If the Program Director is identified as the primary faculty noting the concern, a proxy will be appointed to direct the Professional Performance Process.



## **IV. FIELD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The MSW-UTC program regards the student as an adult learner, capable of identifying their learning needs and shaping the educational process. The field education is a bridge from the student role to the professional role. During the experience the relationship with faculty and field instructors progressively moves from that of student to colleague. This philosophy is exemplified by the student's growing responsibilities within a field education assignment.

1. Using the field education as an opportunity to enrich and extend the whole curriculum.
2. Purchasing and maintaining professional liability insurance to be purchased on campus at the University Bursar's office.
3. Assuming professional responsibility and appropriate accountability for assigned client services and other agency activities.
4. Preparing a *Field Education Learning Agreement I & II* with the field instructor's input and revising as necessary.
5. Participating in weekly supervisory conferences with the field instructor, preparing an agenda, selecting, recording, or presenting material representative of work, sharing reactions to and questions about the field education experience, advising the field instructor of new learning needs.
6. Participating in selected agency activities (e.g., staff meetings, conferences, in service training, and committee work) when these are not in conflict with campus based courses, seminars, or other commitments.
7. Obtaining agency approval for the use of any case material or records outside of the agency while maintaining accepted standards of confidentiality.
8. Informing the field instructor of classroom assignments that relate to field education instruction and sharing material when relevant.
9. Confering periodically with the Director of Field Education about learning experiences and any problems and/or concerns related to the field education assignment.
10. Providing or arranging for transportation to and from the field education placement.
11. At all times, abiding by the NASW Code of Ethics.

### **DIRECTOR OF FIELD EDUCATION**

The Director of Field Education is a full-time faculty member of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Social Work Program who reports to the social work program coordinator and is responsible for the overall coordination of field education instruction within the framework of curriculum developed by the program. The Director of Field Education roles include, but are not limited to, expanding and recruiting new field sites, linking students with field opportunities, evaluation of field sites and ongoing training, maintenance of field education materials, development and implementation of student orientations, and monitoring student progress.

## **FIELD INSTRUCTOR**

The field instructor's role is critical in facilitating a student's learning and providing a positive educational experience for the student. The field instructor serves as a role model for professional and ethical social work practice and carries final responsibility for the student's training in the field site. Additionally, the field instructor will score the student on professional performance and improvement. The selection of the field instructor is a responsibility of both the field site and the Director of Field Education. When the site identifies a potential field instructor, it is the responsibility of the Director of Field Education to evaluate and approve the candidate.

Field Instructors should have a social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program, have at least two years of professional social work experience, and be employed at the field site for at least six months.

## **FIELD SUPERVISION POLICY**

Every student completes their field internship experience working under the direct supervision of their assigned field instructor. Every field instructor is an MSW graduate of a CSWE-accredited social work program. All task instructors are individuals without a formal social work degree but have experience in social services and can provide an equitable experience without a social work degree. When a student's field instructor is out of the office for a meeting, for lunch, or for other work responsibilities, field instructors make sure students work with task supervisors. Task supervisors are qualified staff members available on-site to the students when field instructors are temporarily away from the office.

In addition, there may be learning opportunities for a student at a field site that are beyond the scope of the field instructor's responsibilities and/or expertise. A task or project, related to the learning outcomes as set forth in the learning agreement, may be assigned to the student by the field instructor. Supervision of this task/project may be provided by another person. This task instructor must provide written and/or oral feedback on student performance to the field instructor. Task supervision is in addition to the weekly supervision by the primary field instructor. The field instructor remains responsible for overall supervision and administration of the student's field placement.

Exceptions to the standards noted for field instructors might include the following:

- An appropriate agency does not have an MSW supervisor available to students but can provide a task supervisor that does not have an MSW for day-to-day supervision;
- The MSW field instructor has less than two years' experience.

In these cases, the learning needs of the students will be assessed along with the agency's ability to provide quality supervision and training. When deemed appropriate by the Director of Field

Education, an off-site MSW field instructor will be assigned to serve as the overall supervisor and to provide regular supervision to the MSW-UTC student.

Students will attend formal supervision with a MSW for a minimum of one hour per week. Students are responsible for scheduling supervision, having their field instructor sign necessary forms, and making up supervision sessions if missed. *For more information regarding the process for making up missed supervision sessions, please refer to the section on Attendance in Field Setting (p.8).* Supervision should be face-to-face unless explicit permission has been granted by Director of Field Education.

In addition, students that are unable to conduct supervision sessions due to issues outside of their control (i.e. field instructor illness, closure of agency, or other unexpected circumstances not caused by the student), the student should supply documentation of that situation in the form of an email to the Director of Field Education. These occurrences will be handled on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Director of Field Education.

### **SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM/AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES**

In addition to these specific roles, the social work program and the agency have special responsibilities toward each other.

The Social Work Program's Responsibilities to the Agency:

1. Consulting on the assignment of students to the agency to ensure appropriate learning opportunities for students that also fit the agency's service functions.
2. Providing the field instructor with information about the student, the curriculum, school policies, and assisting the field instructor through consultation and conferences.
3. Designating a member of the faculty to serve as liaison to the agency.
4. Planning periodic meetings of field instructors and faculty to integrate field education instruction with the total curriculum.
5. Informing field instructors of their privileges within the university community (e.g., library use).

The Agency's Responsibilities to the Social Work Program:

1. Accepting students in field education without regard to race, color, gender, age, religion, ethnic or national origin, political, or sexual orientation.
2. Recognizing students as developing professionals who should not be assigned to inappropriate tasks.
3. Providing a qualified field instructor who has sufficient time and resources to develop student learning experiences, preparing and conducting individual student conferences, attending college-sponsored meetings, and preparing student evaluations.
4. Providing adequate facilities and equipment appropriate to the student's needs. Each agency that accepts a student for field placement will have an active Affiliation Agreement on file with the university.

## V. EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The **ongoing evaluation** of a student's performance is an integral part of the field instructor's responsibilities. During their weekly supervision, the field instructor can help the student (1) identify performance strengths and weaknesses, (2) evaluate progress towards achieving learning objectives, and (3) demonstrate professional responsibility. It is the student's responsibility to provide the field instructor with a supervision agenda at the beginning of supervision session. The field instructor will add agenda items as needed during the conference.

The **mid-term evaluation** serves as a checkpoint for the student's progression through the field placement and should summarize the student's strengths, progress, and growth areas. The **end of semester evaluation** will be used to summarize the student's performance in relationship to the *Field Education Learning Agreement & Evaluation I & II* as well as the student's overall professional performance. Field Instructors will specifically evaluate this performance through the use of the Field Education End of Semester Evaluation Form. In addition to the End of Semester Evaluation form, the student's Learning Agreements will be graded for completion, content, and overall competence by the Field Education Faculty at UTC. Both methods of evaluation will provide the student with a clear sense of the direction for future learning activities related to the social work profession in general. It is of utmost importance that as areas of growth or correction in the student are identified, the field instructor and the student clearly discuss them immediately. Thus, the student will not be faced with unexpected negative feedback at the end of the final field education visit when there is no time to grow and improve in these areas.

Field Instructors are also integral in the student's completion of the *Field Education Learning Agreement & Evaluation I & II*. Field Instructors will work collaboratively with students to develop their Learning Agreement, periodically review the Learning Agreement to assure that learning goals are being met and sign off on the Learning Agreement at the end of each semester. No grade is assigned until the field education evaluations and signed Learning Agreements are received. **Based on the field instructor's recommendations, the Director of Field Education assigns a grade for the field education course and oversees any issues related to the administration of the field education experience.**

### EVALUATION OF FIELD EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

The MSW-UTC program uses the CSWE Competencies (EPAS 2015) for its field education outcomes. Using a curriculum design that begins with the outcomes, expressed as the expected competencies, programs develop the substantive content, pedagogical approach, and educational activities that provide learning opportunities for students to demonstrate the competencies (CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, 2015).

The field education competencies can be delineated into a series of measurable learning behaviors and activities that will guide the student and field instructor in developing the *Field Education Learning Agreements I & II*. Students are expected to integrate the competencies into learning behaviors/activities for all of the field education outcomes. Expectations are developed around each

competency and the activities used to achieve each, depending on what stage the student is in the field education and the professional experience that they may already have.

The intent of the education is to help students apply knowledge acquired in the classroom and develop fundamental skills through exposure to multiple social work roles and approaches to practice. At the end of the foundation year, and completion of the Learning Agreement I, students are prepared for entry-level generalist practice, and have started the process of professional development and have a base on which to build for advanced and specialized skills, knowledge, and practice. At the end of the advanced concentration year, and completion of the Learning Agreement II, students are prepared for advanced practice, with a concentration on working with individuals, families, groups, and communities as the age through the life span.

The Field Education Learning Agreement & Evaluations are designed to help the student and field instructor identify individual learning objectives and experiences or activities that will meet those objectives. It serves as a framework from which to select participatory activities that will benefit the student. The field instructor can use the Field Education Learning Agreement & Evaluation I & II to decide which of the agency's educational opportunities (cases, projects, meetings, etc.) is most appropriate for the student's current objectives and professional skills. The Field Education Learning Agreement & Evaluation I and II can be modified as objectives are achieved, new needs emerge, or additional education experiences become available.

The Field Education Learning Agreement & Evaluation I & II is developed by the student and the field instructor in consultation with the Director of Field Education and makes explicit what the student's learning focus will be. Thus, it is a major tool for evaluating the student's progress toward meeting their learning objectives.

## **FIELD EDUCATION SITE VISITS**

As a focused MSW-UTC program, every field education experience is monitored closely through field education site visits throughout the academic year. The policy for monitoring student learning and safety requires the director of field education and field faculty to conduct several agency sites visits during the field education experience to assess the student learning, to provide guidance and direction for the field instructor, and to ensure student safety. In addition, at the field orientation training attended by field instructors and students, a safety presentation is presented and students, along with their field instructors, discuss safety as it relates to their respective field site and how students are monitored in placement.

The process for monitoring student learning and safety is ongoing as field settings are encouraged to maintain contact with the MSW-UTC program, specifically the field department, should additional monitoring be needed. Through the submission of weekly agenda and reflections forms, field faculty are also able to monitor student learning through the application of experiences that meet learning behaviors. Additionally, faculty teaching field seminars are constantly listening to student input and monitoring content for quality of learning and safety. If it is determined that a student is not getting what they need in placement or that their safety is compromised, the MSW-UTC program will seek to resolve the issue immediately.

(NOTE: this schedule will be conducted twice for traditional two-year students, and once for advanced-standing students):

In accordance with the policy for monitoring student safety and learning in placement, site visits are conducted throughout the year to ensure student learning. The procedures for how and when site visits occur are as follows:

- First site check-in is conducted at mid-term, and it is initiated by the director of field or field faculty.
- An in-person site visit will be scheduled toward the end of the first semester when students complete around 200 hours.
- A third check-in will take place around 300 hours.
- A fourth and final formal in-person site visit is scheduled when students are nearing completion of their field hours.
- Faculty also conduct visits throughout the year to monitor student learning and safety as needed and requested by the placement site or student intern.

## **EVALUATION/GRADING OF THE FIELD EDUCATION EXPERIENCES**

The foundation upon which students receive a field education grade will be the *Field Education Learning Agreements I & II*, the midterm evaluation, and the end of semester evaluation. The skill with which the student performs the contracted objectives and activities plays a major role in determining the student's ultimate education grade. Field instructors are active participants in the evaluation of students' field performance and make grade recommendations to the Director of Field Education and/or field faculty who have final responsibility for assigning the field education grade. At the end of the foundation year, and completion of the Learning Agreement I, students are prepared for entry-level generalist practice, and have started the process of professional development and have a base on which to build for advanced and specialized skills, knowledge, and practice. At the end of the advanced specialist year, and completion of the Learning Agreement II, students are prepared for specialized practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities as the age through the life span.

The procedure for evaluating student learning is a collaborative effort between the director of field education, the instructor in field seminar, and the field instructor or task instructor at the agency. The criteria for evaluating student learning begins with the student learning agreement. In order to successfully pass field, students must complete:

- a learning agreement for each semester they are in field with a final score of 80% or higher.
- The End of Semester Field Visit
- A field evaluation form which is used throughout the learning process to evaluate the student's progress in meeting their learning goals and demonstrating social work competence.

The MSW-UTC program has a policy requiring Field Instructors and/or task instructors to be responsible for completing the End of Semester Evaluation and participate in all agency site visits where feedback about student learning, areas of growth, and strengths in placement, in addition to agency feedback from the student are provided, while the Director of Field Education and field seminar instructors will evaluate the Learning Agreement for completion and understanding. The MSW Grading Scale used is below:

A = 90 – 100% (Advanced Competence/Mastery; Student consistently exceeds competency standards; demonstrates the ability to grasp, apply, and extend key concepts, processes, and skills; clearly demonstrates exceptional understanding of material and competence)

B = 80 – 89% (Developing Competence consistently; Student consistently meets the competency standards; grasps and applies key concepts, processes and skills.)

C = 70 – 79% (Beginning Competence; Student is beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills, demonstrates a growing understanding and ability to apply the course content and/or relate to CSWE competencies)

D = 60 – 69% (Below Basic Competence/Needs Improvement; Student has many gaps in understanding of concepts; demonstrates limited ability to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills; content and competencies do not connect.)

F = 59% and below (Competence is missing. Application and connection between content and CSWE competencies are missing/unacceptable; student consistently misses deadlines, assignments, or submits unsatisfactory work)

**Students may repeat Field Education I and II once.**

## VI. OTHER POLICIES

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, students are to abide by the decision of the university, not the placement agency. In cases where the field agency is closed but the university is not, students are to abide by the protocols set forth in this handbook. *For more information regarding the process for making up missed supervision sessions due to issues beyond the student's control, refer to the section on Attendance in Field Setting (p.8).* If a student is unable to get to an open agency during inclement weather, the absence is considered unplanned and must be made up by the student.

**All missed time must be made up in the field education agency: NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### JURY DUTY

Students called to active jury duty will need to alert their field instructor and UTC Field Office of the dates they will be on jury duty. Students need to plan carefully for client care and coverage of other assignments during this absence. Time lost in field work will need to be made up.

**All missed time must be made up in the field education agency: NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### MILITARY DUTY

Students called to active military duty should notify their field instructor and the UTC Field Office. Official University of Tennessee at Chattanooga policy and guidelines should also be followed to protect the student's academic status. The UTC Office of Military and Veteran's Affairs can provide guidance, assistance, and support to students who are called to active duty.



## VII: APPENDICES

### Appendix A: CSWE Competencies and Behaviors (EPAS 2015)

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
1.1 Make ethical decisions by applying standards, laws and regulations, and models for ethical decision-making
1.2 Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice
1.3 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
1.4 Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
1.5 Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgement and behavior
Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
1.1 Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
1.2 Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences
1.3 Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies
Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
1.1 Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
1.2 Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice
Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
1.1 Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
1.2 Apply critical thinking to engage analysis in quantitative and qualitative research methods and findings
1.3 Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery
Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
1.1 Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services
1.2 Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
1.3 Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
1.1 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage clients and constituencies

1.2 Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies
Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<p>1.1 Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.2 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.3 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.4 Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies</p>
Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<p>1.1 Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.2 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.3 Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes</p> <p>1.4 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.5 Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals</p>
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<p>1.1 Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes</p> <p>1.2 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of clients and constituencies</p> <p>1.3 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes</p> <p>1.4 Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels</p>

## **Appendix B: Specialized Competencies and Behaviors**

### **EPAS 2015 Competencies and Behaviors Enhanced for Specialized Practice for MSW-UTC**

#### **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior with Client Groups as they Age through the Life Course**

Clinical social work practitioners understand the importance of demonstrating ethical and professional behavior through utilizing the strengths perspective. This perspective allows clinical social workers to recognize and respect the person-in-environment by utilizing models that facilitate ethical decision-making by applying the standards, laws, and regulations for ethical practice. Clinical social work practitioners working with individuals, families, and groups as they age through the life course recognize the importance of utilizing and participating in interprofessional collaborative practice to improve the outcomes for clients and their constituencies. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. apply pertinent laws and standards, regulations, and models to enhance ethical decision-making.
- b. practice reflection and self-regulations by incorporating different viewpoints and value systems relevant to practice in order to professionally manage ethical dilemmas and conflicts.
- c. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
- d. demonstrate the ethical use of technologies in order to enhance practice outcomes.
- e. distinguish between client situations and/or cases when supervision and/or consultation is necessary and when to practice independently in order to ensure ethical and competent practice.

#### **Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice with Client Groups as they Age through the Life Course**

Clinical social work practitioners seek out knowledge about the various forms of diversity and difference that influence and impact the professional relationship with clients and their presenting issues. Clinical social workers practitioners use and apply research knowledge of diversity and difference to enhance client well-being. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. analyze research and practice information to evaluate the complexity of diverse cultures and value systems in order to understand the power dynamic between individuals and groups with privilege and those that are marginalized and oppressed.
- b. join in the therapeutic process as learners and recognize the clients and constituencies as the experts of their own experiences.
- c. practice consistent methods of self-regulation and self-correction in obtaining supervision/consultation, continued training/education, and ongoing personal assessment in order to manage and reduce personal biases and values when working with diverse clients and groups.

#### **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice with Client Groups as they Age through the Life Course**

Clinical social work professionals utilize their own understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for the human rights of individuals, families, and groups as they age through the life course. Clinical social workers:

- a. understand and accurately differentiate between threats to social, economic, and environmental justice, such as discrimination and oppression, in order to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.

- b. engage in ethical practice for advancing social, economic, and environmental justice utilizing multiple sources of knowledge and social work values in order to reduce personal bias in decision-making.

#### **Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research Informed Practice with Client Groups as they Age through the Life Course**

Clinical social work practitioners recognize the importance of the process to engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice to facilitate better outcomes for individuals, families, and groups as they age through the life course. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. utilize practice knowledge and theory to direct scientific inquiry and research.
- b. apply critical-thinking to engage analysis in quantitative and qualitative research methods and findings.
- c. demonstrate how research implications can be utilized/implemented in micro and macro practice situations in order to improve practice, policy, and service delivery with individuals and families as they age through the life course.

#### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice with Client Groups as they Age through the Life Course**

Clinical social work practitioners identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services in order to engage and work with clients and their constituencies as they age through the life course. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. engage in ongoing assessment of how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.
- b. demonstrate the value and purpose of analyzing, formulating, and advocating for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

#### **Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social work practitioners recognize the importance of engaging with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to facilitate the therapeutic relationship. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. utilize human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with diverse clients and constituencies such as individuals and families as they age through the life course.
- b. participate in interprofessional collaborative relationships to facilitate the change process with diverse clients and their constituencies as they age through the life course.
- c. engage with clients within the person-in-environment and strengths perspective
- d. exercise empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

#### **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social work practitioners recognize the importance of assessment in order to collect and interpret information from clients and their constituencies. Clinical social work practitioners are able to apply knowledge of human behavior in the environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to analyze assessment data from clients and their constituencies. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. utilize critical-thinking skills to analyze and interpret information from clients and their constituencies.
- b. identify and utilize key concepts in the agreed-on goals that facilitate a clear description of the specific objectives that represent the strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and their constituencies.

- c. select appropriate intervention strategies that integrate the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies in order to assist clients to better understand the connection between the implications of the intervention strategies and potential outcomes.

**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social work practitioners recognize the importance of a critically chosen intervention in order to facilitate change with individuals, families, and groups as they age through the life course. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. prioritize and use evidenced-based interventions that are relevant and guide efforts to assist clients and their constituencies to achieve practice goals and enhance well-being.
- b. apply multiple theoretical frameworks such as human behavior in the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with individuals, families, and groups as they age through the life course.
- c. demonstrate the ability to participate and engage in interprofessional collaboration(s) in order to facilitate clients and constituencies in achieving beneficial practice outcomes.

**Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social work practitioners recognize the importance of evaluation and the application of the human behavior in the social environment, person-in-environment, as well as multiple theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of clients and their constituencies. Clinical social work practitioners:

- a. demonstrate knowledge and ability to select the appropriate methods in order to evaluate outcomes.
- b. create and use complex questions to analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions, program processes and outcomes to enhance the well-being of clients and their families as they progress through the life course.
- c. apply and utilize evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

## APPENDIX C: MSW-UTC CURRICULUM GRID

<b>Generalist Curriculum</b>		<b>30 hours</b>
SOCW 5113	Theory and Practice I	3 hours
SOCW 5220	Communication and Writing for Professional Practice	3 hours
SOCW 5223	Theories of Aging and Development	3 hours
SOCW 5414	Foundation Field Education I	5 hours
SOCW 5411	Field Seminar I	1 hour
SOCW 5123	Theory and Practice II	3 hours
SOCW 5213	Social Policy	3 hours
SOCW 5350	Research Methods for Social Work	3 hours
SOCW 5424	Foundation Field Education II	5 hours
SOCW 5421	Field Seminar II	1 hour
<b>Summer Semester-For Students Admitted to Advanced Standing</b>		<b>6 hours</b>
SOCW 5100	Advanced Standing Bridge Course	3 hours
SOCW 5950r	Current Topics	3 hours
<b>Specialized Curriculum</b>		<b>30 hours</b>
SOCW 5133	Advanced Practice with Aging Families I	3 hours
SOCW 5225	Grant Writing for Social Work	3 hours
SOCW 5234	Psychopathology and Mental Health	3 hours
SOCW 5434	Advanced Field Education I	5 hours
SOCW 5431	Advanced Field Seminar I	1 hour
SOCW 5143	Advanced Practice with Aging Families II	3 hours
SOCW 5244	Leadership in Social Work	3 hours
SOCW 5352	Advanced Research for Program Evaluation	3 hours
SOCW 5444	Advanced Field Education II	5 hours
SOCW 5441	Advanced Field Seminar II	1 hour

## APPENDIX D: UTC-MSW COURSES DESCRIPTIONS

### Generalist Courses

#### SOCW 5113 Theory and Practice I (3 credit hours)

Defines and describes direct social work practice; knowledge, values, and skills necessary to provide a wide scope of developmental, preventative, and therapeutic services to individuals and families as clients. Prerequisite: Admission into the MSW program or department head approval.

#### SOCW 5220 Communication and Writing for Professional Practice (3 credit hours)

This course will provide an introduction to writing for practice, policy, and program development. Students will expand their professional vocabulary to support descriptive and critically reflective writing. Emphasis is placed on the development of social work language and the ability to communicate information.

#### SOCW 5223 Theories of Aging and Development (3 credit hours)

Exploration of theoretical paradigms used to understand the aging process. Emphasis placed on using theory to understand development throughout the life course to inform social work practice with older adults. Prerequisites: Admission into the MSW Program or department head approval.

#### SOCW 5414 Foundation Field Education I (5 credit hours)

The course provides students opportunities to apply theories and concepts of professional social work practice within a field agency during a 200-hour field internship experience. Emphasis placed on assisting students to use knowledge and skills for practice with individuals and families. Prerequisite: Admission in the MSW program or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

#### SOCW 5411 Field Seminar I (1 credit hour)

This course assists students to integrate theory and classroom learning in their field internships. Students use the seminar to provide mutual support, discuss and complete assignments needed in field, explore on-going practice concerns. Standard letter grade.

#### SOCW 5123 Theory and Practice II (3 credit hours)

Defines and describes social work practice; knowledge, values, and skills necessary for work with groups, communities, and organizations as clients. Prerequisites: SOCW 5113 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval.

#### SOCW 5213 Social Policy (3 credit hours)

The course explores the history and development of social welfare institutions and the social work profession. Content focuses on examining the relationships between social problems, social policies, and social work practice from historical and contemporary perspectives. Prerequisite: Admission into the MSW program or department head approval. Social work course fee will be assessed.

#### SOCW 5350 Research methods for Social Work (3 credit hours)

This course introduces principles and methods of conducting and evaluating social research, literature review, the importance of ethical issues related to research, and qualitative and

quantitative methodologies. Prerequisites: SOCW 5220 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval. Social work course fee will be assessed.

#### SOCW 5424 Foundation Field Education II (5 credit hours)

The course provides students with a second opportunity to apply theories and concepts of professional social work practice within a field agency during a 200-hour field internship experience. Emphasis placed on helping students use knowledge and skills for practice with groups, communities, and organizations. Prerequisites: SOCW 5414, and SOCW 5411 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval. Corequisites: SOCW 5421 or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

#### SOCW 5421 Field Seminar II (1 credit hour)

This course assists students to integrate theory and classroom learning in their field internships. Students use the seminar to provide mutual support, discuss and complete assignments needed in field, and explore on-going practice concerns. Emphasis placed on helping students complete their generalist field evaluation and field report. Prerequisites: SOCW 5414, and SOCW 5411 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval. Corequisites: SOCW 5424 or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

### **Specialized Courses**

#### SOCW 5133 Advanced Practice with Aging Families I (3 credit hours)

The course provides focused content on knowledge, values, and skills for working effectively with older adults and their families. Content includes examination of physiological, psychological, and social dimensions in practice, and different approaches of intervention.

#### SOCW 5225 Grant Writing for Social Work (3 credit hours)

This course emphasizes the knowledge and skills needed for proposal development, professional grant writing and program development.

#### SOCW 5234 Psychopathology and Mental Health (3 credit hours)

Advanced practice course surveying the mental health and substance abuse services available and needed for aging clients across the life span. Emphasis placed on assessing and intervening effectively with clients at different stages in the aging process.

#### SOCW 5434 Advanced Field Education I (5 credit hours)

This course provides students a focused opportunity to apply theories and concepts of professional social work practice within a field agency that serves older adults. Emphasis placed on the use of direct practice knowledge and skills with older adults and their families.

Prerequisites: SOCW 5424 and SOCW 5421 with a grade of B or better, or admittance into the advanced standing program. Corequisites: SOCW 5431 or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

#### SOCW 5431 Advanced Field Seminar I (1 credit hour)

This course assists students in the integration of theory and classroom learning in their advanced field internships. Students use the seminar to provide mutual support, discuss and complete assignments needed in field, and explore on-going practice concerns when serving older adults



and their families. Prerequisites: SOCW 5424 and SOCW 5421 with a grade of B or better, or admittance into the advanced standing program. Corequisites: SOCW 5434 or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

#### SOCW 5143 Advanced Practice with Aging Families II (3 credit hours)

This course provides focused content on knowledge, values, and skills of group work with older adults as well as indirect practice methods used with communities and organizations that serve older adults and their families. Prerequisites: SOCW 5133 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval. Social work course fee will be assessed.

#### SOCW 5244 Leadership in Social Work (3 credit hours)

An advanced social work practice course focused on developing and understanding the skills and traits of social work leaders. Emphasis placed on developing leadership skills and traits and practicing concrete strategies for utilizing leadership skills in the social work profession.

#### SOCW 5352 Advanced Research for Program Evaluation I (3 credit hours)

This course builds upon SOCW 5350 and applies evaluation research designs to programs and practice, including strategies to select qualitative and quantitative methods of analyzing evaluation data and ethical issues related program evaluation and presentation of findings. Prerequisites: SOCW 5350 with a grade of B or better, or admission to the advanced standing program. Social work course fee will be assessed.

#### SOCW 5444 Advanced Field Education II (5 credit hours)

The course provides students a focused opportunity to apply theories and concepts of professional social work practice within a field agency that serves older adults. Emphasis placed on the use of indirect practice knowledge and skills with communities and organizations that serve older adults and their families. Prerequisites: SOCW 5434, and SOCW 5431 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval. Corequisites: SOCW 5441 or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

#### SOCW 5441 Advanced Field Seminar II (1 credit hour)

This course assists students in the integration of theory and classroom learning in their advanced field internships. Students use the seminar to provide mutual support, discuss and complete assignments needed in field, and explore on-going practice concerns when serving older adults and their families. Emphasis placed on helping students complete their Advanced-year field evaluation and field report. Prerequisites: SOCW 5434, and SOCW 5431 with a grade of B or better, or department head approval. Corequisites: SOCW 5444 or department head approval. Standard letter grade.

### **Advanced Standing Seminars**

#### SOCW 5100 Advanced Standing Bridge Course (3 credit hours)

This is required for all students admitted to the Advanced Standing MSW Program. Students will obtain a conceptual orientation necessary to proceed to the MSW Specialist curriculum. The goal of this course is to supplement the knowledge, skills, and values developed in a CSWE accredited BSW program, provide an overview to the theories of aging, and conduct a basic overview of graduate level writing and research skills while identifying university resources that support

graduate studies. In addition, students receive preparation for the field placement experience through an experiential learning activity focused on again. Prerequisites: Acceptance into the Advanced Standing Program.

SOCW 5950R Current Topics (3 credit hours)

Current topics seminar in an area of social work that bears relevance to professional social work.