



School of Social Work

Master of Social Work (MSW) Student Handbook

2014 - 2015

**University of Nevada, Reno
Division of Health Sciences**

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University of Nevada Reno

UNR Community

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) is one of eight institutions within the Nevada System of Higher Education. The University system was established in 1864, the year of the state's admission into the Union, but because of the state's small population, wasn't able to offer courses until ten years later. The first classes were offered by the University in 1874 in Elko as one of the rare preparatory schools in the intermountain region. In 1885, the University was moved to Reno, near the center of the state's population, and it has flourished since its first year of formal college-level study in 1887.

A constitutionally established land grant university, UNR emphasizes those programs and activities that best serve the needs of the state, region, and nation. UNR seeks to provide broad access to higher education irrespective of wealth or social status; to educate the professional cadres of an industrial, increasingly urban society; and to strengthen democracy by assuring the welfare and social status of all.

Approximately 19,000 students currently attend UNR. While the majority of students are undergraduates, the University has a sizable graduate student population of approximately 3,000. Students come from all over the state of Nevada to attend UNR. Additionally, UNR's reputation attracts many students from throughout the United States and the world.

UNR offers 70 bachelor degree programs, 59 master degree programs, 34 doctoral degree programs, and boasts 9 major academic units. UNR is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

UNR's School of Social Work is housed within the Division of Health Sciences (DHS). DHS also houses the School of Medicine, the Orvis School of Nursing, and the School of Community Health Sciences. Additionally, DHS is home to Campus Wellness and Recreation, Center for Application of Substance Abuse, Sanford Center on Aging and the Center for Program Evaluation, and Nevada Center for Health Statistics and Informatics.

The University of Nevada, Reno is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation in any program or activity it operates.

Campus and Surrounding Area

The University is an integral part of the thriving Reno-Sparks metropolitan area. The 290-acre campus of rolling hills features a blend of ivy-covered buildings, sweeping lawns, and functional, progressive architecture. The campus is located less than one mile from downtown Reno, and offers a spectacular view of the surrounding community and nearby mountains.

Reno is situated prominently in an attractive natural setting. Bounded on the west by the majestic Sierra Nevada range and on the east by the rolling basin range, Reno benefits from a comfortable climate. Marked by generally cool and dry weather, the area is a haven for those who love the four seasons. The area provides endless opportunities for outdoor recreational activities, including skiing, hiking, boating, fishing, camping, kayaking, and biking. Additionally, the area attracts nationally renowned performers and offers several museums.

Campus Resources

This listing is a sample of resources available to students at UNR.

Associated Students of the University of Nevada, 775-784-6589

<http://www.nevadaasun.com/>

The Associated Students of the University of Nevada, (ASUN) is made up of every undergraduate student at the University of Nevada and provides a vehicle, through elected officials, to voice student concerns. (From the ASUN website)

Campus Escort, 775-742-6806

Campus escort provides prompt, courteous, safety escorts to the students, faculty and staff of the University of Nevada, Reno. Rides may also be requested online.

<http://www.unr.edu/campus-escort>

Campus Recreation, 775-784-1225

<http://hhs.unr.edu/crw/>

Campus Recreation and Wellness provides several options for recreation and fitness. The Lombard Recreation Center includes a fitness center, swimming pool, climbing wall, gym, as well as racquetball, handball and squash courts. Campus Recreation and Wellness also provides students with intramural sporting opportunities, outdoor recreation opportunities, yoga and aerobics classes, and much more. Additionally, Campus Recreation has equipment available for rent. (Adapted from the Campus Recreation website)

Center for Student Cultural Diversity, 775-784-4936

<http://www.unr.edu/cultural-diversity>

The Center provides programs and services to support the academic and social success of students through advisement, leadership development, counseling and intercultural programming. The Center houses a conference room and computer lab. Some of the services we offer are: assistance understanding financial aid requirements, collaboration with academic faculty, community outreach, diversity workshops for students, multilingual professional and student staff, small library of culturally relevant resource materials, and student organization development and support. For more information please stop by the Center in the Joe Crowley Student Union. (Taken from the UNR Student Handbook)

Counseling Services, 775-784-4648

<http://www.unr.edu/counseling>

Counseling Services offers individual, couple, group psychotherapy services to UNR students. The counseling staff is comprised of licensed psychologists and licensed clinical social workers, along with a select group of advanced graduate students in clinical psychology or social work programs, who are under the supervision of the licensed staff. The staff is experienced in working with a wide range of issues, such as depression, stress, anxiety, eating disorders, sexual identity, interpersonal and

relationship concerns. Appointments for initial intake sessions can be made by calling (775) 784-4648 or by visiting 202 Thompson Building. Hours are Monday through Thursday 8am - 7pm, and Fridays 8 am - 5 pm. Services are confidential and comply with federal and state law, along with professional ethical codes. There is no charge for services beyond the mandatory counseling fee paid each semester. Counseling Services is fully accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services.

Testing Services Testing Services schedules and administers national and institutional tests (GRE subject tests, LSAT, PRAXIS, and Miller Analogies Test) that are required for admission to undergraduate and graduate programs and professional schools. Information pertaining to test dates, registration and test bulletins (some offering sample exams) are available at testing@unr.edu. Appointments may be made by calling (775) 784-1532. It is advisable to call two weeks in advance. (Taken from the UNR Student Handbook)

Disability Resource Center, 775-784-6000 (TTD: 327-5131)

<http://www.unr.edu/drc>

The DRC was created to meet the unique educational needs of Undergraduate and Graduate level students with disabilities. The staff at the DRC is available to provide these students with sensitive and individualized assistance at the student's request. The DRC is dedicated to providing a coordinated program of support services that are not furnished by other university offices or outside organizations. The DRC assists students in negotiating disability related barriers and strives to improve access and opportunity. This enables all levels of students with disabilities to become integrated into campus life, and become more successful undergraduate or graduate students while maximizing their independence. Our services are free of charge. (From the DRC website)

Financial Aid and Scholarships, 775-784-4046

<http://www.finaid.unr.edu>

The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Services administers federal, State and institutional grants, employment, loans, and scholarships. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) should be submitted each year by February 1 for maximum consideration for all financial aid programs for the next academic year. The annual deadline for scholarships is also February 1. For more information about programs, deadlines, eligibility and applications, visit our website. (Taken from the UNR Student Handbook)

Libraries, University, 775-784-6500

<http://www.library.unr.edu/>

Online collections of magazines, newspapers, journal articles, books, microfilms, video tapes, audio CDs and computer labs are among the many services available at the Getchell Library and the four science libraries. Information about library hours is available at any circulation desk, by calling or by visiting the website. (Taken from the UNR Student Handbook)

Mediation and Student Advocacy Services, 775-784-4388

<http://www.unr.edu/simas/>

Student Advocacy Services provides assistance to students in addressing conflict between faculty, administrators, and other students on campus. The assistance is provided in two ways: 1. through mediation services which provide an impartial third party to promote resolution of the conflict between the two parties; and 2. through student advocacy services in which an administrator assists students in resolving conflicts with university departments, in following the appropriate procedures to handle an appeal or request for special assistance, and in promoting a fair process or resolution on behalf of the student. Students seeking assistance are encouraged to visit with the administrator about the concern and discuss which of the two services best fits their needs. Both mediation and advocacy activities are carried out on a confidential basis for the student. For more information call, visit our website. (Taken from the UNR Student Handbook)

Motorist Assistance Program, 775-784-4654

If you accidentally lock your keys in your car, or find that the car has a dead battery, a tire is flat or that the car has no gas the Parking and Transportation Services Department will do its best to help you. There is no charge for their services.

Office of International Students & Scholars, 775-784-6874

<http://www.unr.edu/oiss/>

The Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS) provides the following assistance to International Students: Admission to UNR; transition into living in the United States; understanding policies, procedures, and regulation relating to visa status; understanding university policies, procedures, and resources; understanding federal laws which relate to international students; and intercultural training and understanding. (Adapted from the OISS website)

Student Health Center, 775-784-6598

<http://www.unr.edu/shc/>

The Student Health Center provides services for students, faculty and staff at UNR, TMCC, and WNCC. The center offers special healthcare for men and women, sports medicine for amateur athletes, dermatology services, psychological and counseling services. (From the Student Health Center website)

Office of the Associate Vice President for Student Success Services, 775-784-6307

<http://www.unr.edu/student-services>

Student Academic Support Services offers a variety of programs to assist students to succeed academically. Tutoring Center, Counseling Services, Trio scholars, McNair Scholars, The Center For Student Cultural Diversity, Tutoring Center, Upward Bound.

Social Work Profession

Introduction to Social Work

(Please note: the following information was taken from the *Bureau of Labor Statistics website* (<http://www.bls.gov/>, June 2010)

Social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people's lives. Social workers enhance the fit between people's needs and capabilities and the demands and resources of their environments. A variety of strategies are used to accomplish this goal. Social workers assist people in dealing with their relationships and solving personal and family problems. Social workers help clients identify their strengths and concerns, consider effective solutions, and find reliable resources. Social workers typically consult and counsel clients and link them with needed services. Often they refer clients to specialists in services such as debt counseling, eldercare, public assistance, or alcohol or drug rehabilitation. Social workers may review eligibility requirements, help fill out forms and applications, visit clients on a regular basis, and provide support during crises. Finally, social workers, through community organizing, program development, and political advocacy, strive to enhance environments to be socially and economically just for all people.

Social work demands a great deal from its practitioners. Social workers must be mature, emotionally healthy, and capable of coping with job-related stress. Social workers must be able to handle responsibility, work independently, and maintain good working relationships with clients and coworkers. Also required is a high level of skill in communication (i.e., reading, writing, and speaking). People who are conscientious, empathetic, caring, dedicated, and passionate will do well within the profession.

A bachelor's degree in social work (BSW) is the most common minimum educational requirement to qualify for a job as a social worker and prepares graduates for generalist practice. While educational opportunities and foci are shaped by regional contexts, national accrediting standards issued by the Council on Social Work education ensure that graduates of BSW programs nationwide are competent in the same generalist practice behaviors.

At the graduate level, social work requires its practitioners to be able to address more complex issues, work autonomously while knowing when to seek consultation, and to assume leadership roles in whatever setting they practice. Social workers with an MSW are also distinguished by their ability to use evidence from practice and research to reach and support their decisions. A master's degree in social work is the terminal practice degree.

Social workers who continue their education at the doctoral level primarily assume roles as educators, researchers, policy makers, and evaluators at universities, governmental, or private agencies.

Careers

For sheer variety, few occupations can match social work, which offers the broadest range of opportunities and settings. Social workers are found in public agencies, private businesses, hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, private practices, police departments, courts, and countless other interesting workplaces.

Traditionally, social workers have been strongly represented in the following areas:

Aging/Gerontology	Child Welfare
Family Services	Homeless Services
Healthcare	Mental Health
Public Welfare	Schools
Disabilities Programs	Corrections
Employee Assistance	Private Practice
Community Organization	Politics
Administration	Research

Employment Outlook

In 2012 there were approximately 607,000 social work jobs in the United States. About 9 out of 10 jobs were in health care and social assistance industries, as well as State and local government, primarily in departments of health and human services, mental health, social services, child welfare, housing, education, and corrections. Most private sector jobs were in social service agencies, hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, and other health centers or clinics.

Employment of social workers is expected to increase by 16 percent during the 2008-18 decade, faster than the average for all occupations. Especially rapid growth in job opportunities for gerontological social workers is expected due to the growing elderly population and the aging baby boom generation. Employment opportunities for mental health and substance abuse social workers are expected to grow by 22 percent over the next decade. Competition for social work jobs is stronger in cities where demand for services often is highest, training programs for social workers are prevalent, and interest in available positions is strongest. However, opportunities should be good in rural areas, which often find it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff. (<http://www.bls.gov/>, May 2012)

Social Work Salaries

Nationally, the average salary for an entry-level social worker is between \$40,000-\$47,000, depending on the type of work, experience required and geographic factors. Social workers with supervisory experience, many years of experience, and/or MSW degrees earn average salaries over \$60,000. Social workers who work for the State of Nevada typically make between \$40,000 and \$67,000 annually. (<http://www.bls.gov/>, May 2012)

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Accreditation

The programs of social work education provided by the University of Nevada, Reno School of Social Work is accredited at the baccalaureate and master's levels by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). This indicates to the public and to potential employers that UNR graduates meet the high professional standards established by CSWE in its *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)*. Please refer to <http://www.cswe.org> for a complete list of Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. UNR's MSW Social Work program has been accredited by CSWE since 1991.

Professional Licensure

Many social service positions within Nevada and throughout the United States require a social work license. Licensure establishes and enforces professional standards for practice. Each state has its own licensing body, with distinct rules and regulations governing the issuing of licenses. Within the Nevada, the Nevada Board of Examiners for Social Work issues social work licenses.

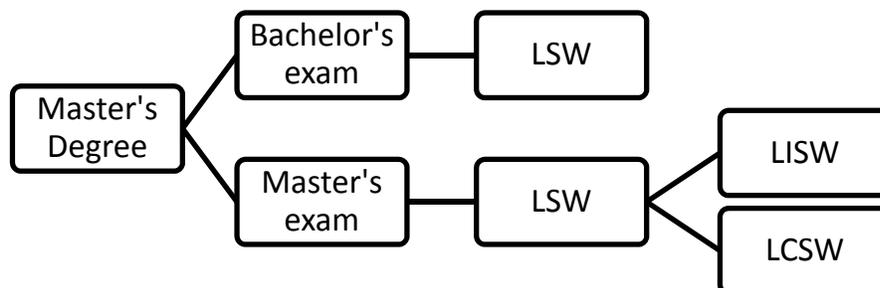
The state of Nevada has what is called "title protection" for social workers. This means that anyone who calls him/herself a "social worker" must be licensed. All students who graduate with a BSW or MSW are eligible to pursue licensure as a "Licensed Social Worker" (LSW).

Masters prepared social workers are eligible to earn a clinical license, which opens opportunities to work in additional settings and positions, including the Veterans Administration (VA), some child welfare positions, behavioral health, hospice, and community mental health. Some agencies such as the VA, only hires social workers who either have or are in the process of obtaining an LCSW. Significantly, the VA is the largest employer of master's-level social workers in the nation. Social workers with an LCSW license can also practice independently rather than as an employee of an agency.

In Nevada there is a second post-MSW license that enables social workers to practice independently. Social workers who obtain an LISW (Licensed Independent Social Worker) can provide referrals and support, but not clinical services, to clients and families. For example, a social worker with an LISW might assist clients who are caring for aging parents to improve their level of coping and well-being. Each of these licenses (LISW and LCSW) requires completion of 3,000 supervised postgraduate social work hours and a satisfactory score on an exam.

The social work licensing structure that is applied in Nevada at both the MSW level is depicted in the graphic below. Please visit the Board of Examiners for Social Workers website for additional information about social work licensure requirements in Nevada:

www.socwork.nv.gov



Resources

For information about career opportunities in social work and voluntary credentials for social workers, contact:

- National Association of Social Workers (NASW), 750 First St. NE., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002-4241. Internet: <http://www.socialworkers.org>

For a listing of accredited social work programs or to order a *Directory of Colleges and Universities with Accredited Social Work Degree Programs* for a nominal charge, contact:

- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), 1725 Duke St., Suite 500, Alexandria, VA 22314-3457. Internet: <http://www.cswe.org>

Information on licensing requirements and testing procedures for each State may be obtained from State licensing authorities, or from:

- Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), 400 South Ridge Pkwy., Suite B, Culpeper, VA 22701. Internet: <http://www.aswb.org>

Master of Social Work Program

School of Social Work Mission

The mission of the UNR School of Social Work is to prepare effective, ethical social work leaders and practitioners who—with a deep and abiding respect for cultural diversity and human strengths—challenge injustice and promote a more humane world through the development and delivery of evidenced-informed practices, policies, and programs. Our mission is achieved through education, research, and public service endeavors that reflect the unique mixture of urban, rural, and frontier characteristics of Nevada in the context of a globalized society.

MSW Program Mission

The mission of the MSW program is to prepare ethical, competent advanced generalist social work leaders who are able to practice reflectively and autonomously in complex environments across system levels with diverse client groups.

The University of Nevada, Reno School of Social work has one concentration, which is Advanced Generalist Practice (AGP). This AGP specialization reflects the practice context of Nevada with its unique character of urban and frontier settings and the limited resources for social programs and responds to this context by preparing graduates to address questions, issues and problems across methods, systems, and fields of practice. As defined at the UNR School of Social Work, AGP is characterized by 1) leadership in innovative problem-solving and change; 2) autonomous practice, and 3) use of integrated, evidence-informed knowledge, values, and skills to address ambiguous, complex problems in an increasingly diverse and ever changing practice environment.

MSW Program Goals

The goals of the MSW program flow from the MSW Mission and build upon the profession's core competencies as articulated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The goals guiding the MSW program are to prepare advanced generalist practitioners who:

1. Identify as professionals, committed to social work's ethical principles, continuous learning and service that meets the needs of vulnerable and diverse populations (2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.1.5);
2. Demonstrate leadership across system levels through the ability to frame issues in ways that communicate their larger significance and a vision for change, and engage with others in ways that motivate and empower (2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.10a);
3. Integrate the strengths and person-in-environment perspectives with an array of theoretical models and intervention approaches to uniquely frame and address complex issues across diverse client systems (2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.7, 2.1.10b, 2.1.10c);
4. Use research to inform practice decisions as well as produce and analyze data to identify client needs, emerging trends and evaluate interventions (2.1.3, 2.1.6, 2.1.9, 2.1.10b, 2.1.10d);

5. Are able to autonomously navigate diverse, ambiguous and changing local, regional, and global contexts in developing and delivering interventions, policies, and programs that promote health and well-being of individuals, families, groups and society (2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.1.8, 2.1.5, 2.1.10c, 2.1.10d)
6. Promote social and economic justice through the provision of equitable and interculturally effective programs, policies and services (2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.8, 2.1.9, 2.1.10c).

MSW Program Competencies

In accordance with the School of Social Work's mission, the MSW Program seeks to facilitate the development of competent advanced generalist social workers. Upon completion of the MSW degree at UNR, students should meet each of the following ten competencies identified by the Council on Social Work Education.

- 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly
- 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice
- 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
- 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice
- 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice
- 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research
- 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
- 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services
- 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice
- 2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Please see Appendix "A" for a complete list of Program Competencies and Associated Practice Behaviors.

Programs of Study

The UNR School of Social Work offers three MSW programs of study, including:

- A two-year (62 credit) MSW program for students with non-social work bachelor's degrees and substantial preparation in the liberal arts who are enrolled full-time for two consecutive years.

- An extended three- or four-year (62 credit) MSW program that is designed for students with non social work bachelor's degrees whose time demands preclude enrolling full-time for two years. Applicants to the three- or four-year program must complete their coursework in a prescribed, educational sequence.
- An advanced standing (32 credit) MSW program, which is open only to students who have completed a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program within the last seven years. Applicants who completed their bachelor's degree in social work more than seven years ago many request an exception. In evaluating these requests faculty will assess the student's course work and work experience in light of the most current curriculum standards in Social Work education and make a determination regarding the most appropriate program of study for that prospective student.

MSW Admissions

- Students who wish to enter the MSW Program must be admitted to the University of Nevada, Reno in the status of a regular graduate standing student. To do so, they must complete a bachelor's degree and file the required credentials with the Graduate School. All Graduate School application forms must be completed online (www.vpr.unr.edu/grad2/).
- Prospective MSW students also must complete the materials included in UNR's School of Social Work's admission packet. The application materials are available online at www.unr.edu/socialwork.

Admission requirements for the **Two-year, Three-year, and Four-year** (62 credit) MSW programs of study include:

- A non-social work bachelor's degree (with substantial preparation in the liberal arts, including the social sciences, humanities, research, and human biology). In addition, an introductory research methods and an introductory statistics course are required;
- An overall undergraduate GPA of 2.75 (or 3.0 in the last two years of undergraduate study) and satisfactory performance on the verbal and quantitative sections of the aptitude portion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE);
- Evidence of the ability to formulate and present material logically and clearly in written and oral communication;
- Career goals and potential which are compatible with the program's approach to advanced generalist social work practice as characterized by: willingness to work with diverse populations; desire to work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations; maturity; commitment to social work; use of self in professional practice; commitment to social justice and social change; a broader focus than a population of personal interest; compatibility with social work values; and a well thought out plan for graduate education.

The **Advanced Standing** (32 credit) MSW program of study is open only to those students who have completed a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited social work program within the last seven years. To insure that students are not asked to duplicate content covered in their CSWE accredited undergraduate programs, these students must apply to the

32-credit, Advanced Standing MSW program of study option. Applicant requests for exceptions to the seven-year limit noted above are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Admission requirements for the 32-credit Advanced Standing MSW program of study include:

1. A minimum overall GPA of 3.0 with at least a "B" in each individual social work course;
2. Documentation of proficient performance in a BSW field experience as documented by the student's social work field supervisor; and
3. All other requirements for admission as listed in the 62-credit MSW programs of study.

Application Procedure

Applications for the School of Social Work must be received by January 15th of each year for enrollment in the following fall semester. Should January 15th fall on a weekend, application packets will be due by the end of business (5:00 pm P.S.T.) the last weekday BEFORE January 15th. Applications will only be processed if GRE test scores and all other documents are received on time. Applicants may be asked to schedule an interview with a faculty member as part of the screening process for admission to the MSW program.

In addition to applying to the School of Social Work, all applicants to the School of Social Work must also apply to the University of Nevada, Reno, [Graduate School](#). All applications to the University of Nevada, Reno, Graduate School must be completed online and with ample time for processing (Suggested completion date by December 15th).

The application materials for the School of Social Work consist of the following documents, which can be found on the School of Social Work website (<http://www.unr.edu/social-work/msw.html>). Before starting the application process, we strongly suggest that prospective students print out the MSW Admissions Checklist and use it to ensure that your application packet is complete.

- Application to the Master of Social Work Program (MSW Application);
- Three references using the program's recommendation form (MSW Recommendation Form) from professionals (e.g. supervisors, employers, professors) who can attest to the applicant's aptitude for graduate study and performance in social work roles and tasks. If applicant has a BSW degree, a fourth reference **must** be completed by the applicant's field instructor using the Field Instructor Recommendation Form;
- If applying for the Advanced Standing (32 credit) program of study, applicants must request that a copy of their field placement evaluation be forwarded to the University of Nevada, Reno, School of Social Work from the BSW program;
- Essay responses to questions on the MSW Application;
- Resume;
- Copy of Graduate School Application;
- Transcripts from all institutions attended;
- Scholarship request(s)/essay (optional); and

- Application for graduate teaching/research assistantship and all attachments as listed on the application form. (optional)

Send all application packet materials by January 15th to University of Nevada, Reno; School of Social Work/090; MSW Admissions Committee; Reno, Nevada, 89557-0090.

International Student Applications

The School of Social Work welcomes applications from international students. International students should visit the Office of International Students and Scholars website:

<http://www.unr.edu/oiss/> for current information on applying to the university.

International students who have graduated with a baccalaureate social work degree are eligible to apply for the Advanced Standing program if their program is recognized through the International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service, or is covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors.

Transfer Credit, Class Waiver, and Proficiency Examinations

The University of Nevada, Reno Graduate School allows no more than nine graduate credits to be transferred from another institution. Transfer credit is allowed only in cases where the courses are from an accredited program, the student received a grade of “C” or higher, and for courses that were completed within six years of the date of application to request credit transfer.

Consistent with this policy, the School of Social Work accepts no more than nine credits from another CSWE accredited social work program.

For requests that meet the above guidelines, student requests to transfer credits or to substitute a course are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students must submit course documentation (syllabus, bibliography, and assignments) for each course for which transfer credit is sought. Based on this material, the MSW Program Coordinator makes a determination regarding the course equivalencies. Only foundation-level courses may be considered for transfer credit or course waiver/substitution.

Proficiency examinations are not used for any MSW program of study.

Academic Credit for Life Experience

In accordance with CSWE accreditation standards, academic credit for life experience and previous work experience is not given under any circumstance.

Grad Special Status

In keeping with the Social of Social Work policy of accepting up to nine credits of course work, students who are not currently admitted to the MSW Program may enroll in designated foundation courses with the approval of the MSW Program Coordinator. Grad Special Status provides an avenue for students with a baccalaureate degree who are considering a career in social work to gain a better understanding of the nature of the profession and to gauge its fit for them personally.

MSW Advising

Students entering the Foundation Year are assigned an advisor. The student's Integrative Project or Thesis Committee Chair will act in the capacity of advisor for students in the Concentration Year. Academic advisors provide one-to-one advising on academic, professional, and career issues and provide information, as necessary, to address special academic needs or problems.

Students are encouraged to make appointments with their advisors to explore issues affecting their progress in the MSW program and the requirements of the School and University. The Academic Advisor does not provide personal counseling or social services. Students needing help with personal issues or emotional problems should contact the University Counseling and Testing Center, 775-784-4648.

Social Work Student Community

There are two student-run organizations that represent the graduate student body at the School Meeting—which is the policy making body of the School of Social Work. These student representatives are elected by their peers and serve on a voluntary basis. The School Meeting Representatives attend all regular School Meetings and special School Meetings at the request of the Director of the School of Social Work. He or she acts as the Associations' representatives to the School during such meetings and represent the best interests of the student body. These two student organizations, SWGSA and Phi Alpha, also coordinate social and community outreach events for the graduate students.

A faculty advisor is available to each of these student organizations. Students who serve in an active leadership position in either organization may be able to negotiate a one-unit Independent Study credit related to their leadership activities and learning.

The Social Work Graduate Student Association (SWGSA)

The Social Work Graduate Student Association is open to all MSW students, and all students are encouraged to participate. For more information about SWGSA please see the Student Organization page of the School of Social Work website at: http://www.unr.edu/social-work/student_org.html

Phi Alpha Honor Society

The UNR Chapter of Phi Alpha Honor Society was founded in 2002. Phi Alpha is a national honor society for social work students, with chapters at universities throughout the United States. Students are invited to submit their UNR transcripts once a year for consideration for induction into Phi Alpha. An application form is available at the School of Social Work office and on our website at: http://www.unr.edu/social-work/student_org.html. Students who are deemed eligible for membership are inducted into the organization during the spring semester. The cost for membership is \$25 for the first year and \$10 for each subsequent year.

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

Students are encouraged to join the NASW. NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies.

Students in an accredited program of social work education are eligible to join NASW at a discounted rate of \$48 per year. You can apply for membership online at www.naswdc.org. To learn more about NASW or to become involved at the local level, contact the Nevada chapter's office: <http://www.naswnv.org/> or call 702 791-5872.

Social Work Alumni Association

The Social Work Alumni Association offers graduates the opportunity to give back to, maintain connections and identify more closely with the School and University. Additionally, the Social Work Alumni Association provides a forum for alumni to network with professionals and advance the common goals of the profession. The mission of the Association is to unite graduates, faculty, and students of the UNR School of Social Work to maximize impact on social welfare policy, identify community needs, strengthen the community, and provide opportunities for continuing education and collaborative research. Students or graduates who are interested in joining the Social Work Alumni Association should call the School of Social Work at (775) 784-6542.

Scholarships and Financial Aid Information

Financing a graduate education is high on the list of most students' concerns. The School of Social Work encourages students to carefully plan for their graduate studies and to seek out information on scholarships and financial aid. Students occasionally ask us if it is possible to work more than half-time and attend graduate school. Our answer is always the same: we don't recommend it. As an MSW student you will be taking three to four graduate level classes each semester and working 15 hours a week in an internship. Graduate school is a transformative period in most students' lives; give yourself a chance to experience it deeply.

There are a limited number of Field Practicum placements that provide stipends. To learn more about these please contact the Field Education Program Coordinator in the School of Social Work (775) 784-6542.

You will find information on the School of Social Work scholarships available for students on our website at: <http://www.unr.edu/social-work/scholarships.html>. For more information on general university scholarships/financial aid please visit: www.finaid.unr.edu.

School of Social Work Scholarships

The School of Social Work at the University of Nevada, Reno, offers several different scholarships to juniors, seniors, and graduate students admitted to the social work program. A sample of scholarship awards are listed below, descriptions and criteria are listed on our website: <http://www.unr.edu/social-work/msw.html>

- ***Alicia Smalley Scholarship for Social Justice***
- ***Barbara West Larsen Scholarship***
- ***Heather Morsberger Memorial Scholarship***
- ***John and Louise Semenza Family***
- ***Kris Tower Memorial Scholarship***
- ***National Association of Social Workers Scholarship***
- ***School of Social Work Diversity Scholarship***

To apply for these scholarships, you must submit a one-page letter indicating the scholarship(s) of interest to you. Include a brief description of relevant activities, employment, and career plans. Each scholarship has slightly different requirements, so be sure to read the description carefully. All applications and letters of interest should be turned in to the School of Social Work Office, AB 523, no later than **January 15th**.

Graduate Research and Teaching Assistantships

Several part-time, research/teaching assistantships for graduate applicants are available in the School of Social Work. The number of Graduate Assistantship (GA) positions varies from year to year. Graduate Assistants typically work 10 hours/week. The most common type work is teaching or research related. In addition, GAs are expected to participate in recruitment efforts, orientation activities, and participate in other leadership roles within the School. Graduate Assistantships come with a partial tuition waiver. Out of state students with a GA position have their out of state tuition waived for the duration of the Assistantship.

Applications for Graduate Assistantships are due on April 15th. See sample duties, criteria for selection, and application form on our website at: <http://www.unr.edu/social-work/msw.html>.

The MSW CURRICULUM

Social Work Curriculum Overview

Once students apply to and are accepted into the Master of Social Work program, they will follow the MSW course sequence. This sequence is established in accordance with CSWE's (Council on Social Work Education) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Social work courses are designed to complement and build upon one another and therefore cannot be taken out of sequence. For example, SW 620 provides students with foundation practice skills for working with individuals. Students must therefore take SW 620 concurrent with their field placement, i.e., SW 680, so that they have the opportunity to implement and practice these skills and knowledge in their work with clients. Although requirements for both the University and the Master of Social Work do change, the table below provides an overview of the coursework currently required by students graduating with an MSW degree.

Social Work Field Practicum

The Field Practicum provides students with an opportunity to apply academic knowledge and practice skills gained in the classroom to authentic human service experiences. Field agencies offer guidance and supervision in preparing graduates for entry-level professional practice. University faculty members serve as liaisons between the agencies and the students. These faculty liaisons facilitate a weekly or bi-weekly seminar to aid students in the synthesis of classroom knowledge with their social service experience. Students enroll in four credits of Field Practicum (225 hours) per semester. Please visit the Field Practicum link (<http://www.unr.edu/social-work/field.html>) for all practicum related instructions, manuals and forms. Prior to placement, students are not permitted to contact agencies directly to discuss field practicum.

MSW Course Descriptions

The following are descriptions of required courses in the MSW program of study. Please note that students may choose either **Option A:** Thesis or **Option B:** Integrative Project to complete the culminating project requirement for the MSW degree. An overview of both options follows the program's course descriptions, and full descriptions of each option may be found on the School of Social Work website <http://www.unr.edu/social-work/msw.html>.

Required Foundation Courses

SW 610 HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT I STRUCTURAL FACTORS AND MACRO SYSTEMS

The first in a two-sequence course that promotes a multidimensional understanding of human functioning and behavior across systems and the life course. This course specifically examines human behavior manifested in larger systems as well as the reciprocal relationship between individual functioning and social institutions. In particular, the course orients students to social work perspectives that view human behavior as being influenced and impinged upon by environmental forces. The course advances students' ability to critically examine the role of power, privilege and oppression in shaping life experiences. **Prerequisite: Admission to the Graduate Program or Grad Special Standing**

SW 611 HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT II MICRO AND MEZZO SYSTEMS

The second course in a two-course sequence that promotes a multidimensional understanding of human functioning and behavior across systems and the life course. This course specifically examines human behavior and functioning among individuals and families. In particular, the course emphasizes an evidence-informed approach to assessing human functioning. The course advances students' ability to critically apply a range of theories and research to better understand and assess human behavior and development. **Prerequisite: SW 610**

SW 620 SOCIAL WORK METHODS WITH INDIVIDUALS

One of a four-course sequence that emphasizes the competent application of skills, knowledge and values to social work practice. This course focuses on developing competency in intervening with individuals. Students will learn how to engage in each stage of the social work intervention process with individuals, including: rapport building, exploration, assessment, planning, implementation, goal attainment, evaluation and termination. This course furthers students' understanding of the strengths-based, generalist social work perspective; in particular students will learn the various roles social workers may play in work with individuals. Special

emphasis is placed on analyzing the ways in which client characteristics (i.e., biological, psychological and socioeconomic factors as well as class, gender, ethnicity, culture, and sexual orientation) interact with the resources and demands of the environment in identifying appropriate intervention strategies. Students will be asked to use critical thinking skills to identify and implement interventions with individuals that are evidenced-informed, as well as contextually and culturally relevant. **Co-requisite: SW 624 and 680**

SW 621 SOCIAL WORK METHODS WITH GROUPS

One of a four-course sequence that emphasizes the competent application of skills, knowledge and values to social work practice. This course focuses on developing competency in intervening with small groups. Students will learn how to engage in each stage of the social work intervention process with groups, including: formation, initial/beginning stage, middle stage, termination stage and evaluation. Students will continue their use of an evidence-informed approach to practice through identification and critique of group curriculums. Special emphasis is placed on analyzing the ways in which member characteristics (i.e., biological, psychological and socioeconomic factors as well as class, gender, ethnicity, culture, and sexual orientation) influence communication, interaction and dynamics within groups. **Prerequisite: SW 620. Co-requisite: 680**

SW 623 SOCIAL WORK WITH ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNITIES AND LEGISLATURES

One of a four-course sequence that emphasizes the competent application of skills, knowledge and values to social work practice. This course focuses on developing competency in working with organizations, communities and legislative bodies. This course furthers the understanding of the strengths-based, generalist social work perspective. In this course students will learn public speaking, elements of grant writing, budgeting, advocacy, lobbying and written and oral persuasion techniques as methods of assessing and responding to community and organizational issues. Students will learn to attend to the cultural, ideological, and diverse nuances present in large groups of people and within complex problems while maintaining a critically reflexive position in relation to their own culture, privilege, ideology, personal values, and biases. Students will be asked to use critical thinking skills to identify and implement interventions with organizations and communities that are evidenced-informed, as well as contextually and culturally relevant.

SW 624 SOCIAL WORK METHODS WITH COUPLES AND FAMILIES

One of a four-course sequence that emphasizes the competent application of skills, knowledge and values to social work practice. This course focuses on developing competency in intervening with couples and families. Students will learn how to engage in each stage of the social work intervention process with couples and families, including: rapport building, exploration, assessment, planning, implementation, goal attainment, evaluation and termination.

This course furthers students' understanding of the strengths-based, generalist social work perspective. Special emphasis is placed on analyzing the ways in which client characteristics (i.e., biological, psychological and socioeconomic factors as well as class, gender, ethnicity, culture, and sexual orientation) interact with the resources and demands of the environment in identifying appropriate intervention strategies. Students will be asked to use critical thinking skills to identify and implement interventions with couples and families that are evidenced-informed, as well as contextually and culturally relevant. **Prerequisite: SW 620**

SW 630 SOCIAL WORK HISTORY AND SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

Explores the historical development of the social work profession and current policies governing the social service delivery system within the United States. Social policy is presented as a social construction influenced by a range of ideologies and interests. Special attention is paid to social welfare policy and programs relevant to the practice of social work, including poverty, child and family well-being, mental and physical disability, health, and racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities. The course includes a focus on the role of policy in creating, maintaining or eradicating social inequities.

SW 640 ELEMENTS OF EVIDENCE INFORMED PRACTICE I

This is the first in a two-course sequence that examines concepts, principles, and methods of scientific inquiry, emphasizing qualitative and quantitative designs, assessment of practice and program effectiveness, and critical use of existing research when working with individuals, couples, families, or groups. A key focus is on understanding the reciprocal relationship between practice and research. The goal of the course is to prepare competent research consumers who view evidence informed practice as a “process of inquiry,” and continually examine the foundations of “best practices.” Emphasis is placed on a) learning to formulate research and evaluation questions; b) conducting ongoing analysis and critique of research literature; and c) using empirically valid data to identify social problems relevant to practice. Additionally, the course introduces cultural and ethical issues present in all investigative endeavors and the unique issues involved in studying special populations and populations at risk. **Prerequisite: Introductory Research & Statistics**

SW 641 ELEMENTS OF EVIDENCE INFORMED PRACTICE II

This is the second in a two-course sequence that examines concepts, principles, and methods of scientific inquiry, emphasizing qualitative and quantitative designs, assessment of practice and program effectiveness, and critical use of existing research when working with organizations, communities and larger populations. A key focus is on understanding the reciprocal relationship between practice and research. The goal of this course is to prepare competent research consumers, who view evidence informed practice as a “process of inquiry,” and continually examine the foundations of “best practices.” Emphasis is placed on a) learning

to formulate research and evaluation questions; b) conducting ongoing analysis and critique of research literature; c) using empirically valid data to identify social problems relevant to practice. Additionally, the course introduces cultural and ethical issues present in all investigative endeavors and the unique issues involved in studying special populations and populations at risk. **Prerequisite: SW 640**

SW 680 FOUNDATION PRACTICUM I

Integration of professional content through a weekly one hour seminar and at least 15 hours of social worker supervised placement in an approved practicum site. **Prerequisite: Acceptance into the MSW Program. Co-requisite: SW 620.**

SW 681 FOUNDATION PRACTICUM II

Continued integration of professional content through a weekly one hour seminar and at least 15 hours of social worker supervised placement in an approved practicum site. **Prerequisite: SW 680. Co-requisite: SW 621.**

Required Concentration Courses

SW 710 PSYCHOPATHOLOGY IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Critical examination of the language and classification systems used in mental health.

This course introduces students to the concepts and language of mental health and mental disorders, and the influence of social structural factors on each. Structural inequalities in mental health diagnosis and treatment are covered, particularly among groups that historically have been oppressed and marginalized. In addition, the history of the classification system of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual is reviewed, as well as the tension between the use of a classification system based on the medical model, and the assumptions and values of the social work profession. Students will learn to distinguish mental health diagnostic categories and gain skills in the diagnostic process. As students deepen their understanding of mental health diagnosis, they will also gain an appreciation for the benefits and limitations of diagnosis as part of the helping process. The primary goals are for students to gain skills in using the DSM for assessment, treatment planning, and for conversing as a member of a multidisciplinary team—while maintaining a person-centered approach to helping clients. **Prerequisite: SW 311/611**

SW 712 INTEGRATIVE CASE FORMULATION

This course is a precursor to the advanced generalist practice courses that follow. The focus is on helping students develop a systematic approach for conceptualizing the issues that clients present with at each level of practice—micro, mezzo, and macro. Students will learn the case formulation process, beginning with the collection of assessment information from the client and others about predisposing stressors, precipitating events, cultural factors, supports and resiliency. Such information is often “messy” (Schon, 1983) and does not delineate a clear plan of action. In contrast to a mental health diagnosis or a psychosocial assessment summary, case formulation integrates all this information to tell a holistic, meaningful story of the client’s presenting problems. The problem may start with a behavioral or mental health issue. Through the assessment process, many other factors may emerge, such as domestic violence; limited access to treatment, unemployment, and homelessness. The problem that is identified after an assessment process may differ from the problem that is initially presented to the social worker. The connections between micro, mezzo and the micro factors in conceptualizing “what is really going on” are emphasized throughout. The goal is to use an integrated assessment approach to developing a client-centered treatment plan that honors the unique strengths of each client.

Prerequisite: SW 311/611

SW 720 INTERVENTION APPROACHES WITH INDIVIDUALS

Integration of theories of human behavior and select intervention approaches with individuals.

This is the first in a series of three direct practice courses with a focus on integrating advanced theory and evidence-informed knowledge with social work practice skills. Students will learn to implement three approaches that are used widely to understand psychological factors in helping individuals deal with obstacles and achieve their goals: relational, cognitive behavioral and narrative therapy. These practice approaches represent variants of the major psychological frameworks—psychodynamic, behavioral, and post-modern. Each supports social work’s person-in-environment perspective and the profession’s emphasis on resilience and strengths among oppressed and underserved populations. This course will provide students with opportunities for experiential learning and skill building in carrying out these intervention approaches. Professional responsibility for ongoing learning and self-development as a reflective practitioner is woven throughout the course. ***Co-requisite: SW 724 & SW 780***

SW 721 INTERVENTION APPROACHES WITH GROUPS

This is the third in a series of three direct practice courses with a focus on integrating advanced theory and evidence-informed knowledge with practice skills. The focus of this course is on students learning to develop and facilitate therapeutic groups from the perspective of selected

theoretical frameworks and with select populations. This course builds on students' knowledge of systems theory and of the special properties of groups that can be used as a mechanism for improved coping and change for group members. Students are given opportunities to practice group facilitation skills and experience group dynamics in a controlled setting. Special attention is paid to the influence of culture and diversity on group dynamics. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to critically examine the theoretical bases of group work models to determine their potential implications in work with vulnerable and at-risk populations.

Prerequisites: SW 421 or SW 621, Co-requisite: SW 781

SW 723 STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

One in a two-course sequence that prepares students to engage in advanced social work practice with macro systems. This course specifically focuses on the skills, theory, history, and strategies relevant to community organizing, and prepares students to work for community change in a culturally diverse society. Different models and methods of community practice will be examined, including grassroots organizing, social planning, political advocacy, community development, and liberation theology. The course places heavy emphasis on organizing with and on-behalf of disempowered groups for the purposes of establishing a more socially and economically just society. ***Prerequisites: Admission to the MSW Program***

SW 724 INTERVENTION APPROACHES WITH FAMILIES

This is the second in a series of three direct practice courses with a focus on integrating advanced theory and evidence-informed knowledge with social work practice skills. Students will learn to implement three approaches that are used widely to help families cope with obstacles and achieve their goals—multigenerational family therapy, structural family therapy, and feminist family therapy. These frameworks incorporate the group practice techniques that students learned at the foundation level, support social work's emphasis on resilience and strengths, and can be used with families across practice fields. This course will provide students with opportunities for experiential learning and skill building in carrying out these intervention approaches. Ethnicity, culture, gender, and family life course are central in this regard, as students learn to tailor family interventions to the needs of clients. Professional responsibility for ongoing learning and self-development as a reflective practitioner is woven throughout the course. ***Co-Requisites: SW 720 & SW 780***

SW 725 ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLICY PRACTICE

One in a two-course sequence that prepares students to engage in advanced social work practice with macro systems. This course focuses specifically on the knowledge and skills required to assume administrative and policy-practice roles within social service settings. In particular, the course highlights public and private budgetary processes as they influence and guide social service delivery, fundraising, management, program development, strategic

planning and policy analysis, development and implementation. Students will be encouraged to critically examine competing needs, differential power structures and value conflicts inherent to social service delivery within the United States in general and Nevada in particular.

Prerequisites: Admission to the MSW Program

SW 740 PRACTICE AND PROGRAM EVALUATION I

This is the first in a two-course sequence with the goal of developing evaluation practice skills. To this end, this course provides opportunities for students to integrate foundational knowledge of evaluation frameworks, skills as consumers of research, and experience in logic model development. The overall goal is to prepare students to become leaders in a social service and health care delivery environment that has become more research and outcomes oriented. A key focus of this course is on understanding the reciprocal relationship between practice and research. At the foundation level students learn to understand and selectively apply published research to practice. At the concentration level, emphasis is placed on applying research skills to improve practice. In this course, emphasis is placed on the beginning stages of evaluation, including learning to 1) collect and analyze administrative agency data; 2) access and analyze epidemiological data that is used to frame an evaluation issue; and 3) develop a logic model that lays out the components of an intervention and the relationships among these components which are theorized to lead to the desired outcomes. Additionally, the course addresses ethical, social justice, measurement, and data collection issues related to evaluation activities with minority or poor clients. ***Prerequisites: SW 640/641 or SW 440/441***

SW 741 PRACTICE AND PROGRAM EVALUATION II

This is the second in a two-course sequence with the goal of developing evaluation practice skills. In this course, emphasis is placed on middle and later stages of the evaluation process, including learning to 1) use a logic model to develop evaluation questions and an evaluation plan; 2) developing data collection plans for both process and outcome evaluations; 3) use multiple sources of data to triangulate evaluation findings and include diverse perspectives; 4) analyze qualitative and quantitative evaluation data using descriptive statistics and content analysis; and 4) present evaluation findings to a variety of audiences. Special attention will be paid to the purpose, context, and the interpretation of evaluation findings in a profession that serves disenfranchised populations. Thus values, ethics, issues of social justice and diversity will be incorporated throughout. ***Prerequisite: SW 740.***

SW 780 ADVANCED PRACTICUM I

Integration of professional content through a weekly one hour seminar and development of advanced generalist practice skills through supervised placement in community agencies.

Prerequisite: Completion of all required Foundation Level courses or acceptance into the Advanced Standing Program. Co-requisites: SW 720 and SW 721.

SW 781 ADVANCED PRACTICUM II

Continuation of integration of professional content through a weekly one-hour seminar and development of advanced generalist practice skills through supervised placement in community agencies. **Prerequisite: SW 780, Co-requisite: SW 722 and SW 781.**

SW 790 INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR I

This is the first in a two-course sequence that will provide students the opportunity to conceptualize and design a field-based Integrative Project (IP).

The integrative project (IP) draws upon theories that emphasize reflective, engaged, problem-based learning. The project becomes the medium through which students demonstrate mastery of advanced generalist competencies and associated practice behaviors in addressing real, complex, “ill-structured,” ever changing practice-based situations. **Co-Requisites: SW 780**

SW 791 INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR II

This is the second in a two-course sequence that will provide students the opportunity to conceptualize and design a field-based Integrative Project (IP).

The integrative project (IP) draws upon theories that emphasize reflective, engaged, problem-based learning. The project becomes the medium through which students demonstrate mastery of advanced generalist competencies and associated practice behaviors in addressing real, complex, “ill-structured,” ever changing practice-based situations. **Co-Requisites: SW 781**

SW 797 THESIS

Electives and Independent Study

Electives offered vary from year to year. Students may arrange with a faculty member to complete 1-3 hours of independent study. The Independent Study Application Form is available in the School of Social Work.

Culminating Project: Thesis (Option A) or Integrative Project (Option B)

Students in their concentration year are required to demonstrate their mastery of advanced generalist practice competencies through either the completion of a thesis or an Integrative project. See the Social Work website at <http://www.unr.edu/social-work/> for a full description of the goals and requirements of Options A & B.

Individual Thesis Option A

Students with specific research interests who possess significant knowledge of research methods and statistics can pursue an independent investigation as an alternative to the Integrative Project. Most MSW students do not have the research background sufficient to qualify for this alternative. Those who believe they do should start planning their research project in the fall semester of their foundation year. For Advanced Standing students, this most often means the final fall semester of their BSW program. During the following spring semester, the student would develop a preliminary thesis proposal with the assistance of a School of Social Work faculty member who has agreed to serve as chair for the student's Advisory-Examining Committee if his/her proposed project is approved. Students also must meet the May 1 deadline for filing the "Notice of Intent to Select Thesis Option" to proceed with Option A. If the MSW Program Coordinator approves the proposal, the student will work independently over the summer to develop a comprehensive literature review, a focused research question, and a preliminary IRB proposal. Students choosing this option should enroll in SW 797 (3 credits) fall semester and SW 797 (3 credits) spring semester of their concentration year.

Integrative Project (IP) Option B

The method of fulfilling the final year requirement of demonstrating mastery of AGP competencies and associated practice behaviors that is chosen by the vast majority of MSW students is the Integrative Project: Option B. Students who choose this IP option enroll in the Integrative Project Seminar (SW 790/791) during fall and spring semesters and complete the IP requirements during their final year.

The Integrative Project is directly connected to the student's field practicum placement and therefore linked to the student's ability to integrate the program Competencies and Practice Behaviors. Thus, a student who receives a grade of Unsatisfactory in the field practicum will automatically receive a grade of Unsatisfactory in SW 790/791.

School of Social Work Policies

Academic Integrity

The School of Social Work adheres to the University of Nevada Reno “Academic Standards Policy for Students” concerning issues of academic integrity. Please see the following website for a complete description, definitions and policies regarding class conduct and academic dishonesty: <http://www.unr.edu/student-conduct/policies/university-policies-and-guidelines/academic-standards/policy>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students who require additional support due to disabling conditions should discuss their needs with their instructors at the start of each semester. Accommodations for all reasonable requests will be made for documented disabling conditions. In addition, students are encouraged to contact the UNR Disability Resource Center at (775) 784-6000 to access a range of supportive services.

Attendance Policy

The faculty of the School of Social Work believe that classroom attendance and participation are critical aspects of professional socialization. Students are responsible for assisting in the creation of a learning environment that promotes such socialization. To do so, students should assume responsibility for their own learning by not being tardy or leaving early, by being prepared for and participating in class interaction and by consulting with the instructor regarding absences from class. Attendance and participation will be part of grading, as determined by the course instructor. Opportunities for make-up assignments are determined at the discretion of individual instructors.

Life Experience

In accordance with CSWE accreditation standards, academic credit for life experience and previous work experience is not given under any circumstance.

Confidentiality of Case Material

Confidentiality of Case Material Outside of an Agency: NASW Code of Ethics requirements regarding confidentiality of client information extend to the use of confidential information from field work in classes, seminars and in student assignments. Students may not divulge client, collateral or collegial information, disguising all names, demographic information and any case details that might identify a client or co-worker. Client files and records should never be removed from the agency for any purpose.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The programs of the UNR School of Social Work are conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, or sexual orientation. This policy applies to the baccalaureate and master's programs, the field education program, and all admission, employment, and financial aid decisions.

Retention

In its description of the Social Work major, the University of Nevada, Reno catalog states that:

“The admission and retention of students in the program is subject to the professional judgment of the social work faculty.”

Retention in the MSW Program at UNR is based on student performance in two general areas: *academics and adherence to professional values and standards of behavior*. Retention in the social work major requires students and maintain a 3.0 (B) overall grade point average—with a letter grade of “C” or higher in each of the graduate course, including the required 6 credits of electives. Additionally, students must adhere to the academic and professional standards outlined in *UNR’s Student Handbook*, which can be accessed @ (<http://www.unr.edu/student-conduct/policies/student-code-of-conduct>), the National Association of Social Workers *Code of Ethics* (<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>) and the State Board of Examiners for Social Workers *Standards of Practice* (<http://socwork.nv.gov/>).

Remediation and Termination Policy

The School of Social Work encourages students, staff, faculty, field instructors, and faculty liaisons to deal directly with concerns as they arise. The Remediation and Termination policy is applied when previous attempts to address an issue have not been successful. Concerns may include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, academic achievement (including field practicum achievement), and/or student conduct. As discussed below, the policy is applied in two phases. The first phase explores the situation further, while the second phase sets out to resolve the situation.

Exceptions to the procedures described below are allowed in cases where students have engaged in particularly egregious conduct, for example ethical or legal misconduct, actual or threatened physical or verbal aggression, academic dishonesty, or refusal to implement the recommended Action Plan. In such instances, the Remediation Committee may refer the student directly to the appropriate administrative, medical, and/or legal authorities.

Concerns are addressed according to two categories:

Low Level Concerns include but are not limited to behaviors in which there is:

- No evidence of harm or risk of harm to self or others, agency or university
- A specific identifiable problem area
- Demonstrated student awareness, initiative, and ability to resolve the issue
- Evidence that the impact is limited to the student directly involved in the issue

High Level Concerns include, but are not limited to, behaviors in which there is/are:

- Evidence of harm or risk of harm to self, others, agency or university
- Direct violation of UNR Student Code of Conduct, NASW Code of Ethics, agency policies or standards, other relevant policies governing social work practice
- Failure to demonstrate minimal level of competency on one or more of the CSWE and/or AGP identified practice behaviors
- Diffuse concerns and which affect multiple aspects of the learning environment
- Concern regarding how the student's behavior negatively impacts the learning environment for others
- Concern for a student already on remediation status- who failed to successfully remediate through his/her Action Plan
- Situations where additional performance concerns arise for a student currently or previously on remediation status

The following steps are employed to understand the situation further:

Phase One - Problem Exploration and Clarification

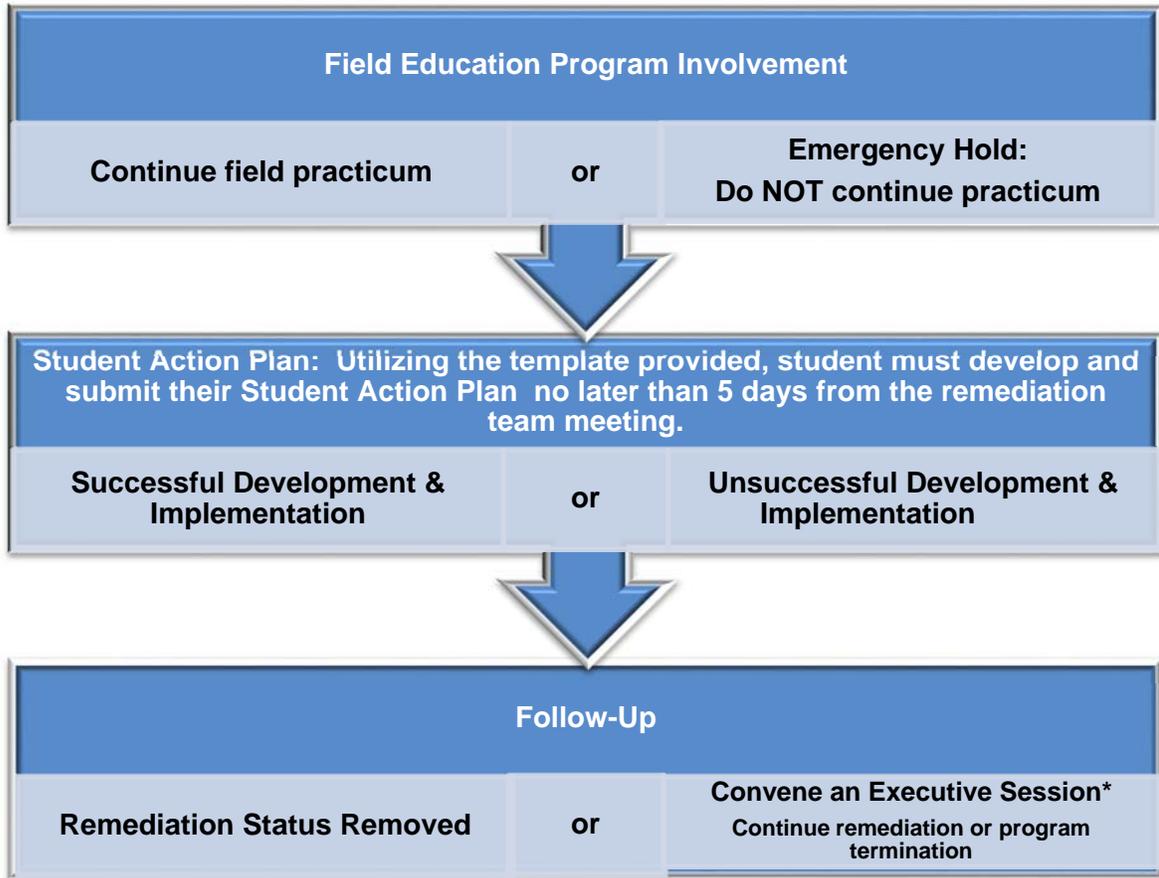
1. The Remediation Committee is convened specific to the student concern. The committee is convened by the BSW, MSW or Field Program Coordinator and includes the faculty member involved, the student's advisor(s), and any other University professional deemed appropriate given the nature of the concern;
2. The Remediation Committee identifies the relevant social work competency(ies) and associated practice behavior(s) that are not being demonstrated, and/or the professional ethical standard(s), agency standards/policies (i.e. HIPAA) and/or University standards for student conduct that are in question;
3. Student is notified of the concern(s) and Remediation Committee's assessment within 2 working days of the committee meeting and is invited to meet with the committee;
4. Student meets with members of the Remediation Committee to discuss the concern; and
5. Remediation committee determines:
 - a. No concern present, no further action needed; or
 - b. Level of concern is identified and student is placed on remediation status by Remediation Committee (proceed to Phase Two of the policy).

Should the student not agree with the Remediation Committee's assessment of the concern, they may grieve the decision (see grievance procedure on page 36).

Phase Two - Remediation

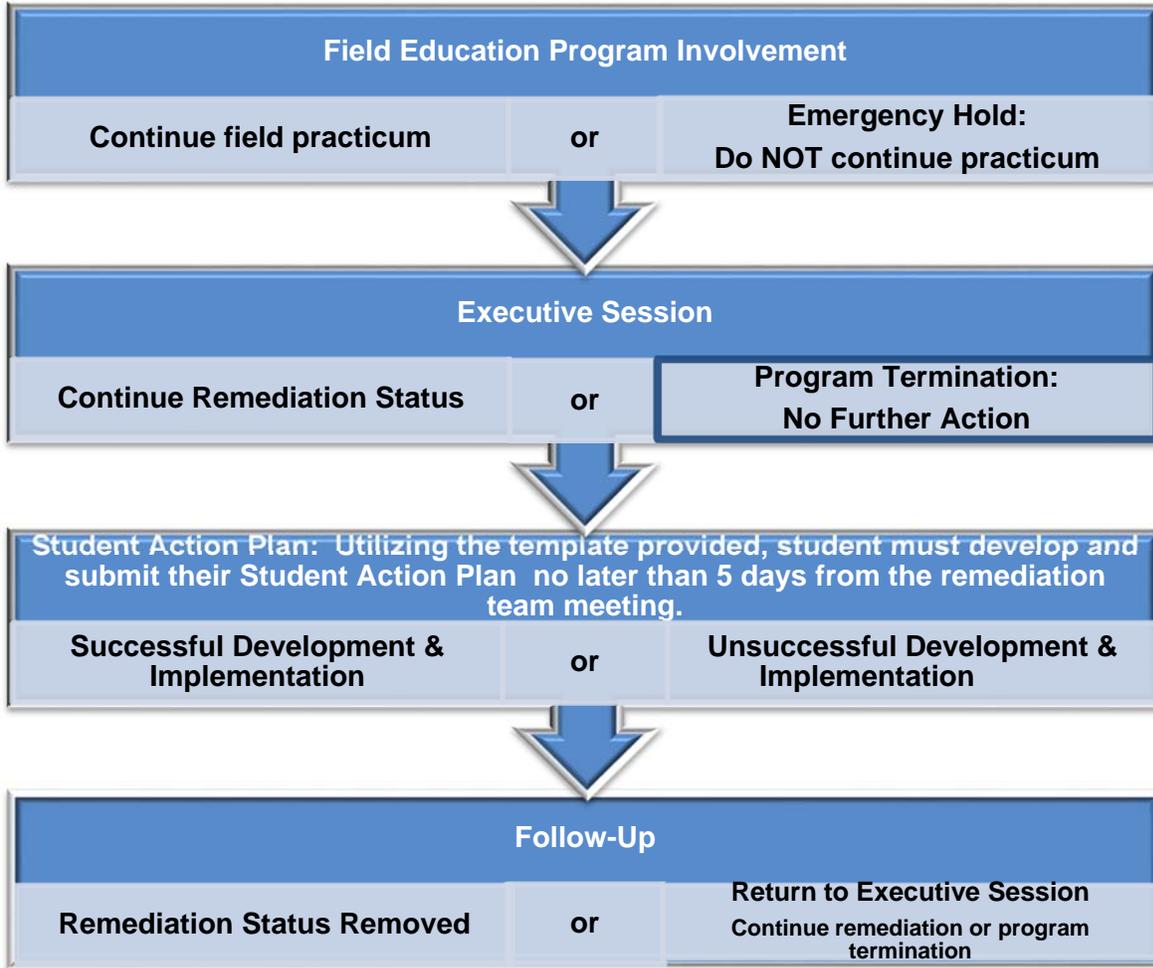
Once the situation and concerns have been identified, the remediation committee will work with the student through a series of decision points. The charts below highlight these decisions according to the level of concern that has been identified.

Low Level Concern



*An **executive session** is a closed meeting of the *faculty of the whole* in which student performance issues and/or progress are addressed.

High Level Concern



Grievance Procedure

Under the remediation policy, there are 4 points at which a student can initiate a grievance:

1. If the student believes that the behavior cited in the original concern is unfounded;
2. If the student believes that the Remediation Committee's identification of a relevant competency, practice behavior, code of conduct, ethical standard is inaccurate;
3. If the student believes that the remediation decision or Action Plan does not address the original concern; or
4. If the student believes that they are being held to a higher standard of performance than other students completing the same program of study.

The written grievance should be submitted to the Director of The School of Social Work no later than 10 working days following the decision point in question (see 1-4 above). The burden of proof during the grievance process rests with the student. If the Director determines that the student has provided adequate evidence to support his or her grievance, the Director may dismiss the issue with no further action required. Alternatively, if the Director determines that there is not adequate evidence to support the student's grievance, he or she will redirect the student to the Remediation Team for further steps/action. The Director will provide his or her decision to the student and Remediation Team in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the student's written grievance.

Grade Appeal Policy

The School of Social Work adheres to the University's policy by which students may appeal a grade. This policy states "...a grade assigned by an instructor is **only** subject to the appeals procedure if:

- There was a clerical/administrative error in the calculation and/or assignment of the grade;
 - The grade assignment was based on factors other than the student's performance in the course and/or completion of course requirements; or
 - The grade assignment meant that the student was held to more demanding standards than other students in the same section of the course.

The burden of proof of these conditions rests on the student." The policy advises students to begin the process by consulting with the course Instructor. If the issue is not resolved at that level students may proceed with filing a Grade Appeal Form. The full policy and procedures for filing a Grade Appeal can be found at under section 3,510 of the University Administrative Manual.

Appendix A

Foundation and Concentration Competencies & Associated Practice Behaviors

Competencies	Expected Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)
<p>2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly</p> <p>Foundation Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct & growth.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners identify with the human rights values of the social work profession, the centrality of relationships, and the interconnections between client issues and larger social problems. Advanced generalist practitioners take leadership in identifying and responding to needs and issues across system levels.</p>	F1 Advocate for client access to the services of social work.
	F2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
	F3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
	F4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
	F5 Engage in career-long learning.
	F6 Use supervision and consultation.
	C1 Initiate and facilitate socially responsive & just practices across systems.
	C2 Provide social work leadership within practice contexts and as a member of the profession.
	C3 Cultivate and apply leadership qualities of self-awareness and other-awareness.
<p>2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice</p> <p>Foundation Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards and relevant law.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners readily recognize the range of complex, multi-dimensional ethical dilemmas that often characterize practice settings. They are adept at utilizing the advanced conceptual frameworks required to explore, navigate and resolve these complex circumstances.</p>	F7 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
	F8 Make ethical decisions by applying standards of NASW Code of Ethics and, as applicable, principles of the International Federation of Social Workers and the Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in SW.
	F9 Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts.
	F10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
	C4 Is able to critique ethical issues within complex environments to formulate innovative responses and approaches.
	C5 Employ strategies of ethical reasoning in practice settings where policies or values conflict with the delivery of social work services, personal values, or professional ethics.

Competencies	Expected Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)
<p>2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</p> <p>Foundation Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires synthesis and communication of relevant information.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners synthesize multiple sources of information as they seek to understand “what is” and clarify “what’s possible” in addressing issues that arise across system levels. In turn, they effectively communicate this information to diverse client, multidisciplinary team, and stakeholder groups.</p>	
	<p>F11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.</p>
	<p>F12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.</p>
	<p>F13 Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.</p>
	<p>C6 Question, evaluate, synthesize and apply information from multiple sources in framing ill-defined, ever changing, multifaceted practice issues.</p>
	<p>C7 Question, evaluate, select and implement appropriate assessment, intervention, and evaluation strategies in complex, fluid, multidimensional practice situations.</p>
	<p>C8 Produce practice-ready presentations and documents (i.e., case presentations, intervention demonstrations, journal articles, grant applications, legislative briefs).</p>
<p>2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice</p> <p>Foundation Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization and alienation, as well as privilege, power & acclaim.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners recognize that human diversity includes and goes beyond conventional categories of ethnicity or culture and recognizes the intersectionality of human differences. Cultural humility characterizes their professional interactions across system levels.</p>	
	<p>F14 Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.</p>
	<p>F15 Gain sufficient self-awareness to recognize the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.</p>
	<p>F16 Recognize, value, and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.</p>
	<p>F17 View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as experts of their own circumstances/lives.</p>
	<p>C9 Demonstrate leadership in collaboratively examining underlying assumptions and developing interculturally effective policies, programs, & interventions.</p>

Competencies	Expected Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)
<p>2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice</p> <p>Foundation Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners identify, analyze, and address mechanisms of oppression and injustice embedded within social institutions, theoretical assumptions, research endeavors, intervention practices and policies. In doing so, they are able to analyze the complex political, economic, and social forces that influence the distribution of power and resources.</p> <p>2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research</p> <p>Foundation Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to knowledge building.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners critically appraise and integrate data from multiple sources to inform practice decisions. Advanced generalist practitioners also collect, analyze, interpret, and communicate data for program development, evaluation and ongoing improvement of services.</p>	
	F18 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
	F19 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.
	F20 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.
	C11 Approach practice with an understanding of the complex and interrelated factors impacting power and oppression (i.e., interconnected—local, regional, national & global—factors, both historic and contemporary).
	C12 Identify, develop, implement and evaluate strategies to address policies, practices, and language that are discriminatory and oppressive.
	F21 Use practice experiences to inform scientific inquiry.
	F22 Use research evidence to inform practice.
C13 Question and critically evaluate the strength and application of the evidence in regard to assumptions, context, and culture.	
C14 Employ evaluation frameworks in assessing the impact of interventions, programs, and policies.	
C15 Collaborate with the research enterprise in identifying and addressing questions emanating from the practice arena.	

Competencies	Expected Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)
<p>2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment</p> <p>Foundation Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners integrate multiple theories about human behavior and the social environment to complete comprehensive assessments and develop and implement intervention plans across system levels. Advanced generalists give equal importance to understanding individual uniqueness and the broader social issues that support or deter well-being.</p>	<p>F23 Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.</p> <p>F24 Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.</p> <p>C16 Integrate understandings from a variety of theoretical perspectives in formulating comprehensive, multidimensional assessments and interventions.</p> <p>C17 Identify and question underlying theoretical and ontological assumptions about human behavior guiding agency practices, programs and policies.</p>
<p>1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services</p> <p>Foundation Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery and they engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners utilize a range of analytical frameworks to assess the efficacy, costs and consequences of policy choices. In turn, advanced generalists use these data to develop and advocate for socially and economically just policies that promote the human rights and dignity of all.</p>	<p>F25 Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being.</p> <p>F26 Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.</p> <p>C18 Apply analytical frameworks to critically assess the intended & unintended outcomes of existing and proposed policies, especially with respect to vulnerable populations.</p> <p>C19 Formulate and advocate for policies that promote socially and economically just practices and services at all system levels.</p>

Competencies	Expected Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)
<p>2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice</p> <p>Foundation Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge & skill to respond proactively.</p> <p>Concentration Grounded in the profession's person-in-environment perspective, advanced practitioners recognize and attend to the cultural, organizational, and social elements that continually influence and shape social work practice.</p>	<p>F27 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.</p>
	<p>F28 Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.</p>
	<p>C20 Based on evidence, facilitate and formulate innovative responses within ambiguous and changing practice contexts.</p>
	<p>C21 Critically analyze and apply relevant data and emerging interventions and technologies to evolving practice contexts.</p>
	<p>C22 Analyze & effectively navigate contextual structures (e.g., power, resources) encountered in emerging practice contexts.</p>

Competencies	Expected Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)
<p>2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities</p> <p>Foundation Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client-goals; using research and technological advances; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.</p> <p>Concentration Advanced generalist practitioners are ethical, competent leaders who are able to practice reflectively and autonomously in complex environments across system levels with diverse groups. Advanced practitioners integrate the systems, person-in-environment, and strengths perspectives with an array of theoretical models and intervention approaches to collaboratively frame and address complex issues, questions and problems. Thus, advanced practice involves the continuous, dynamic interplay of engagement, multidimensional assessment, intervention and evaluation processes—across system levels.</p>	<p>2.1.10a Engagement F29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</p>
	<p>F30 Use empathy and other interpersonal skills.</p>
	<p>F31 Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes .</p>
	<p>2.1.10b Assessment F32 Collect, organize and interpret client data.</p>
	<p>F33 Assess client strengths and limitations.</p>
	<p>F34 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives.</p>
	<p>F35 Select appropriate intervention strategies.</p>
	<p>2.1.10c Intervention F36 Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals.</p>
	<p>F37 Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities.</p>
	<p>F38 Help clients resolve problems.</p>
	<p>F39 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients.</p>
	<p>F40 Facilitate transitions and endings.</p>
	<p>2.1.10d Evaluation F41 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.</p>
	<p>2.1.10a Engagement C23 Attend to the interpersonal dynamics, cultural & contextual factors that support or threaten client-worker relationships.</p>
	<p>C24 Establish a relationally based process that encourages clients to be equal participants in the establishment of intervention goals & expected outcomes.</p>
	<p>2.1.10b Assessment C25 Adapt, modify & use multidimensional tools in conducting comprehensive, culturally effective, integrative case assessments.</p>
	<p>C26 Identify client system strengths and coping capacities.</p>
	<p>C27 Assess client system readiness for change.</p>
	<p>C28 Select and modify intervention strategies based on continuous evaluation & assessment.</p>
	<p>2.1.10c Intervention C29 Critically evaluate, select and apply best practices and evidence-informed interventions.</p>
<p>C30 Capable of autonomous practice, in competently applying appropriate intervention techniques for a range of presenting issues, problems, or questions.</p>	
<p>C31 Develop and implement collaborative multidisciplinary interventions.</p>	
<p>2.1.10d Evaluation C32 Use process and outcome evaluation findings to inform and shape the ongoing development of social work interventions.</p>	
<p>C33 Work collaboratively with evaluators/researchers in identifying questions emanating from practice, as well as assessing intervention efficacy and effectiveness.</p>	