

**University of Nevada, Reno
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
MSW PROGRAM**

Integrative Project Option

The *Integrative Project Option* is designed for students who wish to demonstrate their mastery of advanced generalist practice competencies through the completion of a field-based project. Students choosing this option enroll in **SW 790 Integrative Project Seminar I** and **SW 791 Integrative Project Seminar II** during the final fall and spring semesters of their concentration year of study.

The Integrative Project (IP) provides the basis for evaluating a student's ability to integrate and apply advanced generalist practice competencies to a field-based issue, problem, or question. Briefly, these competencies include:

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

The IP must be based in the student's field practicum and result in a permanent product that "gives back" to the professional arena. The IP is part of an overall philosophical move toward reflective, engaged, problem-based learning—where the project becomes the medium through which students develop the knowledge and skills needed to address real, complex, "ill structured," ever changing practice situations.

Forming the Graduate Advisory-Examining Committee

During the first semester of their concentration (700) year studies, students electing the *Integrative Project Option* will be assigned a graduate *Advisory-Examining Committee (AEC) Chair* from the social work faculty. In turn, each student—in consultation with their committee chair—will select a second social work faculty member and a graduate school representative (i.e., a graduate faculty member from another academic unit) to serve on the AEC.

Details Surrounding the Integrative Project

- 1.) The student, in consultation with her/his committee chair, field instructor, and other appropriate field placement personnel, identifies the focus of the *Integrative Project (IP)*. In turn, the nature and scope of the integrative project must be approved by the full AEC.

Examples of previous integrative projects, include:

- Program development (e.g., piloting a new intervention approach, developing a new curriculum, introducing a new program component—program design)
 - Grant proposal
 - Case study
 - Program Evaluation
 - In-service training with CEUs
 - Critical analysis of “best practices” relevant to the field site
 - Research or Manuscript for journal submission
 - Video or photographic essay
- 2.) Throughout the concentration year of study, students will assemble an **integrative portfolio** consisting of:
 - a. Designated **assignments** from select concentration-level courses (i.e., SW 720, SW 721, SW 722, SW 730, SW 740, SW 741, SW 780) through which the student demonstrates achievement of competencies specific to that course.
 - b. A **written report** that describes the application of the advanced generalist competencies to the integrative project in narrative form.
 - c. Written **feedback from field** regarding the impact of the student’s IP.
 - 3.) The student, in consultation with the field instructor and committee chair will decide the venue and format for showcasing the completed integrative project. Second and third members of the student’s AEC are invited, but not required to attend this “field-based” presentation.
 - 4.) During their last semester of their concentration year of study students will complete an **oral defense** at the university. This defense will be attended by the full AEC with agency representatives invited, but not required to attend.

Evaluation

Given its grounding in practice, the oral and written portions of the IP will vary from project to project. Expectations regarding the specific format, style, length and tone of the student’s paper and oral defense are collaboratively defined—between the student and his/her AE committee members—as the project evolves. The AEC considers all pieces as a whole (i.e., the portfolio and oral defense) in determining if a student has demonstrated mastery of the advanced generalist practice competencies noted above. Both the oral and written portions of the student’s IP are evaluated on a pass/fail basis and recorded by the AEC on the graduate school’s Master’s Degree Notice of Completion form.