

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK



WINONA STATE UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Graduate Student Handbook

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Practicum Education Manual

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WELCOME!

Dear MSW Student,

Thank you for choosing the WSU MSW Program to pursue your graduate social work goals. We are excited to partner with you on this journey. The faculty at WSU are committed to providing a quality MSW Program that creates a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment that will challenge and support you in your personal and professional growth in become graduate level social workers.

During your time in the MSW Program, you will be assigned a faculty guide. Your faculty guide will help advise you on academic matters and mentor you on professional matters. Please utilize the expertise of your assigned guide and reach out to them when you have questions or concerns.

As the Program Director, my door is always open. I am also here to support you and value your feedback on how to continually improve our program. To improve our program, I encourage you to participate in the program surveys. Your feedback matters to us, and we can only get better if we know what we need to address.

Again, thank you for investing in the WSU MSW Program and allowing us to help you achieve your graduate social work goals.

Sincerely,

 PhD LICSW

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Program Mission Statement and Goals

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) states that “The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet basic and complex needs of all people, with a particular focus on those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty (NASW). The Winona State University Master of Social Work Program emerged from a joint desire of the WSU Social Work Faculty and regional social work leaders and practitioners to develop an MSW program that applied the profession’s mission to address the needs and strengths of our region. The collaborative concluded that our region has a profound shortage of clinical social workers to provide for the mental health, healthcare, and child welfare social work services needed by our rapidly growing and diversifying population. Also acknowledged was that, despite the shortage of practitioners, our region has a wealth of expertise in these areas reflected by centers of excellence such as Olmsted County Community and Social Services and the Mayo Clinic. The collaborates also acknowledged the vital role of trauma in the issues confronted by clients across areas of social work practice.

The resulting WSU MSW Program states its mission as follows:

The Winona State University Master of Social Work Program (located within a regional public university that is committed to community engagement and service) has a diverse, distinctive, and caring faculty who collaborate with eminent community partners to prepare trauma-informed clinical social workers with a distinctive synthesis of knowledge, skills, practice wisdom, and immersive experiences to:

- promote client empowerment and social justice through applying an honoring, strengths-based orientation to increasingly diverse, disparate, and ever-evolving individuals and communities;
- integrate with, expand, and enhance existing communities of practice; and
- develop, utilize, and assess innovative and research-informed practices.

The program mission statement’s first bullet that reads, in part, “promote client empowerment and social justice through applying an honoring, strengths-based orientation,” reflects the program’s orientation to the profession’s mission to “enhancing] human well-being.” The program mission statement’s references to collaboration, a distinct synthesis, integration, expansion, and enhancement indicate the primary means used to prepare our students to address client system’s basic and complex needs. That is, the program collaborates with community strengths to help develop practitioners well-versed in tools and skills needed to address basic and complex needs. The program mission statement’s focus on trauma-informed clinical social work emerged from the consensus that the region’s shortage of clinical social work services and exposures to trauma were especially profound among ethnic/racial minorities, immigrants and refugees, women, children, the LGBTQ+ community, rural populations, and those facing various forms of economic hardships.

PROGRAM GOALS

Reflecting the program's mission and the core values of the social work profession, the program's goals are stated as follows.

The WSU MSW Program strives to:

- 1. Produce trauma-informed clinical social workers who are effective, self-reflective, and ethical.*
- 2. Be an agent of social justice and social change, particularly with diverse and vulnerable populations.*
- 3. Offer an integrated curriculum that incorporates our practice communities' expertise, with a curriculum that models the interrelationship between knowledge, research, and practice wisdom.*
- 4. Provide a center of social work innovation and excellence that promotes evidence-informed practice, practice-informed research, and life-long learning.*
- 5. Maintain a faculty of distinction who are diverse in demographics, teaching and practice experiences, research interests, and theoretical perspectives.*
- 6. Promote a nurturing academic environment where strengths are honored to support the learning and professional growth of students.*

PROGRAM-DEFINED COMPETENCIES

The Winona State University MSW Program has extended and enhanced the nine Social Work Competencies stated in the 2022 EPAS to fit its area of specialization, Trauma-Informed Clinical Practice. To underscore their connections between the generalist competencies and their related practice behaviors of EPAS 2022, the program's specialized competencies and related practice behaviors follow much of the form and content of the EPAS counterparts. However, given the program's clinical orientation, specialized competencies 6-9 focus only on the individual client system level. Below are each of the programs' Trauma-Informed Clinical Social Work competencies, extended and/or enhanced from the 2022 EPAS competencies. Related practice behaviors are identified.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Trauma-informed clinical social workers understand the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, relevant policies, and laws, and they employ this understanding to make their clinical social work practice informed and distinctive from other clinical professions. Trauma-informed clinical social workers use clinical supervision and consultation, employ critical thinking skills, and apply frameworks of ethical decision-making in trauma-informed clinical practice, intra- and inter-agency relationships, research and evaluation, and policy arenas. Trauma-informed clinical social workers recognize the impact of their family of origin and developmental history on their perspective and practice, the inherent power dynamics of clinician-client relationships and engage in reflective practice to ensure professional, effective, and proactive engagement.

Trauma-informed clinical social workers demonstrate dedication to life-long learning and professional improvement, and they are committed to maintaining up-to-date and effective practice skills. Trauma-informed clinical social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and make appropriate, effective, and ethical use of technologies in practice. Trauma-informed clinical social workers are mindful of the potential impacts of trauma on all dimensions of practice. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- use clinical supervision and consultation to continuously examine professional roles and boundaries and apply self-reflection to their practice to help ensure that their trauma-informed clinical social work practice is well-aligned with social work values and ethics;
- regularly and effectively apply ethical decision-making strategies and skills to their trauma-informed clinical social work practice; and
- demonstrate awareness of one's family of origin's cultural, psychodynamic, and behavioral attributes; one's developmental history; one's trauma history; as well as one's mental health—and reflect on how those factors impact one's ability to well-apply trauma-informed clinical social work services to clients.

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

Trauma-informed clinical social workers operationalize the core social work value of recognizing each person's inherent dignity and worth by employing an empowering approach in their practice. Their empowering approach addresses marginalization, oppression, discrimination, and systemic bias by focusing on client strengths and successes, and capacities for ingenuity, community, culture, political action, and direct action as possible means for client goal attainment as well as advances in social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Trauma-informed clinical social workers are attentive to issues related to historical traumas and micro-aggressions. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- contextualize all assessments utilizing lenses of social justice with awareness of the impacts of identity, micro-aggressions, historical traumas, recent traumas, social isolation, marginalization, discrimination, oppression, and inequitable distributions of material and social resources;
- advocate for social justice; and
- empower clients to effectively self-advocate and advocate for others.

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

Trauma-informed clinical social workers understand how racism and oppression characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity, life chances and experiences, emotional and physical well-being, social challenges and successes, and clinical social worker-client system relationships. Trauma-informed clinical social workers demonstrate humility, respect, and understanding that diversity comprises an intersectionality of diversity domains, and are actively aware of historical and ongoing interpersonal and structural systems of marginalization, oppression, discrimination, and privilege that contribute to the context and content of client experience to help them provide effective clinical services that honor and center

the lived experience of their clients. Trauma-informed clinical social workers are attuned to the impacts of White supremacy, colonization, and privilege on client trauma histories, perceptions, and impacts as well as appropriate ways to address trauma with different/diverse client populations. Social workers:

- apply trauma-informed clinical social work theories and modalities in manners that are culturally appropriate and responsive to members of diverse, marginalized, and oppressed groups;
- indicate awareness of one's intersectionality and cultural, developmental, and trauma histories and how such factors may affect one's trauma-informed clinical social work practice;
- acknowledge the impact of clients' intersectional, cultural, developmental, and trauma issues on clients' well-being; and
- utilize clinical supervision to increase self-awareness and address any biases that may impact one's trauma-informed clinical social work practice.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Trauma-informed clinical social workers utilize and assess scholarly literature, professional trainings, and their own practice evaluations that are ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches to guide their development as practitioners. Trauma-informed clinical social workers maintain awareness of current and emerging evidence-informed practices. Trauma-informed clinical social workers use their ever-expanding knowledge, awareness, and practice wisdom to collaborate with clients to identify and employ effective strategies for goal attainment. Trauma-informed clinical social workers recognize the bio-psycho-social-spiritual nature of trauma and utilize evidence-informed approaches to address the various dimensions of trauma. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- actively pursue knowledge of current advances in trauma-informed clinical theories and practices, systemic interventions, and evidence-informed practices in trauma-informed clinical social work and related professions that are *ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive*.
- demonstrate the ability to critically assess, select, and implement appropriate tools for use with various client populations while using a trauma-informed lens;
- regularly evaluate client progress and the effectiveness of one's trauma-informed clinical social work practice; and
- share practice experiences, developments, and knowledge with others.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Trauma-informed clinical social workers recognize how policies and laws can constrain or enhance clients' life conditions and opportunities as well as their own practice. Trauma-informed clinical social workers view themselves and, potentially, their clients as active, important participants in the policy evaluation, formation, and implementation processes. Trauma-

informed clinical social workers understand their role in advocating for policy and legal reforms that better serve their clients and contribute to greater social, economic, and environmental justice. Trauma-informed clinical social workers strive for policies that promote and make more readily available evidenced-informed approaches that are rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist to heal trauma. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- are aware of policies, laws and other socio-structural factors that affect client welfare, assess the impacts of these policies and laws on client welfare and re-traumatization, and advocate for change that would enhance client welfare; and
- engage in creative, collaborative, political, and/or direct actions to raise awareness and forward change of unjust policies and laws and their adverse and prohibitive effects on client and other populations.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals

Trauma-informed clinical social workers recognize the importance of establishing effective client relationships to clients' collaboration and their identification and attainment of goals. In order to effectively engage with diverse sets of clients, clinical social workers understand the importance of differential use of self, appreciation of difference, and other clinical skills to effectively engage with different individual clients whose identities may reflect diverse families, groups, organizations, and communities. Trauma-informed clinical social workers understand the special complexities that may mark effective relationships with clients who have trauma histories. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- establish honoring trauma-informed clinical relationships with clients;
- identify ways to promote trauma-informed clinical collaboration with clients and promote their empowerment;
- demonstrate an ecological understanding of the transactional relationship between emotional/behavioral difficulties, trauma, and social issues and incorporate this understanding into client engagement;
- utilize culturally responsive engagement with clients who have trauma histories and/or are members of marginalized and oppressed groups; and
- reflect on their own issues of power and privilege and on how these issues may impact the trauma-informed clinical relationship.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals

Trauma-informed clinical social workers utilize an ongoing culturally responsive assessment process with their clients that informs their service provision. Clinical social worker assessments are multi-dimensional and holistic, addressing biological, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual life dimensions with foci including client strengths, resiliencies, coping strategies, intergenerational family patterns, oppression and discrimination experiences, and trauma history and adaptive responses. Trauma-informed clinical social workers may rely upon the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders with awareness of its strengths, shortcomings, and appropriateness. Trauma-informed clinical social workers engage clients in the assessment process to acquire data, to understand the meaning of the acquired data, and to

understand the meanings and implications of the assessment. Trauma-informed clinical social workers efficiently and effectively communicate assessments with other professionals as appropriate. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- demonstrate an ecological understanding of the transactional relationship between emotional/behavioral difficulties, trauma, and social issues and incorporate this understanding into culturally responsive assessments;
- appropriately select and modify clinical assessment tools with clients, especially those who have trauma histories and/or are members of marginalized and oppressed groups;
- incorporate an understanding of issues of trauma, social justice, and inequities impact clients' difficulties into action planning; and
- reflect on their own issues of power and privilege and on how these issues may impact the trauma-informed clinical relationship.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals

Trauma-informed clinical social workers utilize effective culturally responsive service modalities informed by extant research and multidimensional client assessment. Trauma-informed clinical social workers' service provision also reflects their knowledge and understanding of various psychotherapeutic theories and practices, crisis intervention techniques, community, and environmental resources. Trauma-informed clinical social workers value and incorporate collaboration with clients and other professionals to create and coordinate action plans. Trauma-informed clinical social workers continuously engage in assessment of their services and make revisions in actions plans with the goal of improving outcomes. Trauma-informed clinical social workers are familiar with and capable of effectively use a variety of evidenced-informed trauma services. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- select and utilize culturally responsive and effective trauma-informed clinical interventions based on a critical knowledge of theory, research, and practice experience that reflect multidimensional assessment of the client system that addresses histories of trauma and oppression;
- shift perspectives and interventions to meet the needs, trauma histories, and feedback of clients while recognizing the importance of using multidimensional assessment to drive perspective and intervention selection; and
- demonstrate an ecological understanding of the transactional relationship between emotional/behavioral difficulties, trauma, and social issues and incorporate this understanding into their clinical social work interventions.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals

Trauma-informed clinical social workers continuously evaluate their practice using anti-racist and anti-oppressive methods and informed by evidence-based practice standards and/or peer-reviewed research, consultation and supervision, and other professional development activities. Trauma-informed clinical social workers recognize the importance of incorporating client feedback into their evaluations, especially when assessing outcomes and effects of difference and diversity. Trauma-informed clinical social workers also recognize that practice evaluation

must include examining barriers that may limit service availability and/or effectiveness. Trauma-informed clinical social workers refine their sensitivity to and skillsets for working with clients with a trauma history through ongoing assessment of practice. Trauma-informed clinical social workers:

- select and utilize culturally responsive methods to critically evaluate trauma-informed clinical social work intervention outcomes;
- select and utilize culturally responsive methods to critically evaluate trauma-informed clinical social work practice;
- evaluate programs to assess their effectiveness in meeting trauma-informed client (and community) needs; and
- demonstrate culturally responsive and trauma-informed design for research projects and evaluation studies.

COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

The WSU MSW Program recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. In this program, people of all ethnicities, genders and gender identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. If you feel your differences may in some way isolate you from the MSW program's community, or if you have a need for any specific accommodations, please speak with your instructor and/or your Guide early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help you become an active and engaged member of our program and community (Modified from the WSU "Commitment to Inclusive Excellence" statement).

Students' Relationship with the Program

The WSU MSW Program values an empowered student body and strives to encourage and maintain empowerment through explicit statements of students' rights and responsibilities and through providing explicit paths for student involvement in the program's governance and operations and in WSU student life.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights

WSU MSW students have the right to:

- Receive a high-quality clinical social work education;
- Learn in an environment that is respectful, that values diversity and difference, that encourages excellence, and that is free from harassment;
- Engage in free and respectful exchanges of ideas;
- Have their voice thoughtfully heard by faculty and staff;
- Participate in MSW Program governance;
- Organize to form a collective voice on academic and non-academic issues;
- Participate in course and program assessments;
- Access to Academic Records per FERPA;
- Expect reasonable access to faculty for academic and professional guidance; and
- Expect faculty to be prepared and knowledgeable to teach effectively.

Responsibilities

WSU MSW Students are responsible for:

- Becoming familiar with the MSW Program policies and procedures by reading the MSW Student Handbook and Practicum Manual and by reading official program information distributed through US Mail, e-mail, and other means.
- Participating in courses and Professional Development Labs in manners that demonstrates mental and emotional preparation to be an open and engaged learner.
- Communicating with faculty when an issue arises that may pose unique challenges to their learning and professional development.
- Performing in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and the WSU Student Conduct Code in all relationships with and within the program and its partners.

STUDENT ORGANIZING AND EMPOWERMENT

The MSW Program views organizing as a fundamental right and as an important means of claiming power in all social arrangements. The program is also aware of challenges to student organizing posed by the online nature of the program delivery. Therefore, the program provides various means of support to the students (including remote access to technology to help students communicate remotely with one another).

Shared Governance

The WSU MSW Program is committed to supporting and incorporating students' voices through shared governance in key MSW Program operations.

Roles in MSW Program Operations

The program provides a voice for students to express and advocate for their interests through the following program structures:

- The MSW students can share input on policy formation and evolution.
- The MSW students may provide input on non-adjunct faculty searches.
- The MSW students may provide input on curriculum development for desired electives and professional development trainings.

Other MSW Student Organizations

The MSW Program supports and encourages the formation and operation of other student organizations. These organizations may focus on action regarding a particular issue, on social justice matters, on student-specific issues, on an affinity of a group of students, or on any other matter of concern to students. MSW faculty supports these organizations as appropriate and pending their availability as long as the organization abides within the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics. Any student organization may seek faculty sponsorship toward official WSU student organization status.

WSU Student Senate

MSW students may run for a seat in the university's Student Senate. Program faculty are committed to supporting any MSW student who wishes to pursue this role. The Student Senate has a voice in the amount of student service fees collected along with tuition and the utilization of those funds. The Student Senate also has input on a variety of other university-wide policies.

Student Resources

ADVISOR/GUIDE

The WSU MSW Program recognizes advising as a faculty privilege and responsibility. We view advising as a supportive process in which students of diverse backgrounds are guided toward success in our program and in their professional social work careers. The supportive relationship between advisor and student is particularly important in a hybrid program wherein students may have limited face-to-face contact with faculty and fellow students. Our commitment to professional and academic advising is reflected in our program's advisement structure and policy.

Students are assigned a "Faculty Guide" (i.e., advisor) as they begin the MSW curriculum. Typically, this Guide will be with the student through graduation. It is expected that students will have one Guide throughout their MSW program. However, a student may be assigned a different Guide at the discretion of the MSW Program Director, and program staffing issues may require Guide changes. Only regular (i.e., non-adjunct) faculty who have been trained in the roles and responsibilities of a guide serve as a faculty guide (unless staffing issues dictate otherwise). The MSW program's advising policy mandates regular and ongoing contact with their guides. Each student is encouraged to have at least one online meeting with their Guide each semester. Guides and their student advisees may have additional meetings as needed and/or desired. In the role of professional development course instructor, the Guide:

- assists students in developing academic and professional goals and monitoring progress towards reaching these goals;
- helps students integrate different components of the curriculum and professional experiences into a cohesive professional social work identity; and
- supports students' integration of their curricular and practicum accomplishments into a professional development portfolio.

The Guide also will perform the role of academic monitor and advisor through:

- monitoring a student's performance in courses;
- involvement in discussions with a student about significant academic performance concerns, through helping a student navigate the curriculum; and,
- advising on the students' requests for adjustments or exceptions to program policies.

Finally, the Guide will perform the role of professional advisor to:

- help a student connect course content to a student's specific professional interests;
- guide a student in preparation for an appropriate and successful practicum;
- coach a student in the development and demonstration of internalized professional values and ethics; and
- plan for professional social work employment and ongoing career development.

WSU RESOURCES

Below is a list of resources available to WSU MSW students and brief descriptions of each resource. Click on the resource name to visit a webpage with corresponding information. In situations where program information differs from the information found in these university-wide sites, please follow official program information.

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>
<u><i>Access Services</i></u>	Access Services serves Winona State University students and faculty by providing academic accommodations for students who present qualifying documentation.
<u><i>Brightspace (D2L)</i></u>	Brightspace (aka “D2L”) is the online home of most of your coursework.
<u><i>Counseling Services</i></u>	Counseling & Wellness Services supports the WSU community by offering a range of mental health services designed to enhance student growth and success.
<u><i>Discounted Software Purchases</i></u>	Winona State offers students a variety of software to use. Some of this software is distributed through a service called On the Hub that you can access with this link. By using On the Hub, one can save a lot of money by getting a discounted price on select software (e.g., MS Office, VMWare).
<u><i>Financial Aid Office</i></u>	This is a great place to start answering your questions about financial assistance through WSU.
<u><i>Graduate Assistantships</i></u>	This link takes you to the official Graduate Assistant procedures document that details eligibility and compensation rates.
<u><i>Graduate Student Forms</i></u>	On this page, one can find links to any WSU graduate student form one can imagine.
<u><i>Health and Wellness Services</i></u>	This office provides proactive physical and mental health care to Winona State University on campus and via distance.
<u><i>Health Insurance</i></u>	This site provides information on the health insurance exchanges available in Minnesota and neighboring states.
<u><i>ID Cards</i></u>	This link provides you with a form to get your WSU ID card from off-campus.
<u><i>Inclusion and Diversity Services</i></u>	At this site, you will find information about our programs and services, scholarships, cultural diversity and outreach, cultural clubs, and a calendar of events.
<u><i>Laptop Leasing Program</i></u>	WSU MSW students can lease a laptop (Mac or Windows) from WSU.

<u>Library</u>	The Darrell W. Krueger Library is the center of research, discovery, and creative output at Winona State University with a mission to provide the WSU community with the information resources and services they need in an easily accessible online environment.
<u>Minimum Personal Computer and Internet Standards</u>	Learn what you need to successfully participate in online learning at WSU.
<u>Registrar (Record and Registration)</u>	Find information about your academic records, DARS, Grades, etc.
<u>School of Graduate Studies</u>	Policies and services offered by the WSU School of Graduate Studies (of which the MSW program is a part) can be found here.
<u>Student Senate</u>	Student Senate is the governing body of the Winona State University Student Association. In its capacity, Student Senate acts as the recognized voice and bargaining unit for all students at WSU.
<u>Tech Support</u>	The Technical Support Center (TSC) assists, educates, and serves students, faculty, and staff with hardware and software. Tech Support helps all students access email, connect to wi-fi, learn to use campus-supported software, and print from their personally owned devices, and it provides wrap-around tech support for students leasing laptops from WSU.
<u>Technology Survival Guide</u> <u>Mac</u> or <u>PC</u>	These pages are designed to give students more information on how to perform important tasks on a Mac or PC that will be crucial to their time as a WSU student.
<u>Tuition Costs</u>	This page displays estimated tuition and fees.
<u>Veteran's Affairs</u>	The Winona State Veterans Affairs Office was created in cooperation with the Office of Admissions to provide information and assistance for veterans and their families as they pursue their education at the university.
<u>Writing Center</u>	The Writing Center offers free, individualized instruction online during any stage of writing, reading or research.
<u>WSU Academic Calendar</u>	Here you can find a calendar listing all official WSU dates, including official holidays. Please note that because of the "block" structure of the MSW program course offerings, some listed dates may not align exactly with Program dates. In case of such conflicts, please follow Program (and course) dates.
<u>WSU Academic Policies</u>	This site lists all standard academic policies for the WSU School of Graduate Studies. Please note that MSW students accepted into the Full-time pace program tracks can take more than 12 credits per term.

<u><i>WSU Student Conduct Code</i></u>	Here you can find basic expectations of the conduct of all WSU students.
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OTHER RESOURCES

[*Association of Social Work Boards \(licensing exam study guides and more\)*](#)

[*Council on Social Work Education*](#)

[*CSWE Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards*](#)

[*Iowa Board of Social Work*](#)

[*Minnesota Board of Social Work*](#)

[*Minnesota Department of Human Services*](#)

[*NASW Code of Ethics*](#)

[*NASW Joblink*](#)

[*National Association of Social Workers*](#)

[*Wisconsin Board of Social Work*](#)

Admission

HOW TO APPLY

Using the following link provided, log in and begin using the [WSU School of Graduate Studies Online Application](#). You will either use your existing StarID or you will be prompted to create a new StarID.

More detailed and the latest application instructions are available on the [WSU MSW Program Admission website](#).

BASIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS/CRITERIA

Admission to the WSU MSW Program is granted on a selective basis. Applicants for admission must have:

- A baccalaureate degree earned from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association.
- Undergraduate coursework in the liberal arts that address socio-cultural, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and diverse cultures, social conditions, and social issues. Below is a table of generally accepted courses for each of these content areas. Other courses may be considered, if petitioned by the applicant.

Content Areas	Examples of Generally Accepted Courses
Sociocultural Determinants (2 courses minimum)	Intro/General Sociology; Social Problems; Intro Sociocultural Anthropology
Psychological Determinants (2 courses minimum)	Intro/General Psychology; Comparative Psychology; Evolutionary Psychology; Developmental Psychology
Biological Determinants (1 course minimum)	Human Biology; Human Anatomy & Physiology; Behavioral Biology; Evolutionary Ecology
Human/Social Diversity (1 course minimum)	Comparative Sociology; Race and Ethnicity; Human Diversity; Cross-Cultural Anthropology; Designated Social Work Diversity Course

- Personal values that are consistent with professional social work values and ethics.
- Personal qualities needed for agency-based clinical social work practice with oppressed and disadvantaged populations.
- Demonstrated and/or well-reasoned commitment to the practicum of social work.

REGULAR STANDING AND ADVANCED STANDING STATUS ADMISSIONS

One can apply for admission to the MSW program as either a Regular Standing student (60 credit program) or an Advanced Standing student (42 credit program).

Regular Standing Status Admission

Regular Standing students are admitted to the MSW program each year. In addition to the basic admission criteria described above, eligibility for Regular Standing admission also includes:

- An overall GPA of 3.0 or better. Applicants with an overall GPA below 3.0 may be admitted provisionally. Students accepted provisionally must achieve a GPA of 3.2 or better in their first 11 MSW credits to be fully accepted into the program.

A person who holds a baccalaureate degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program (includes degrees recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors) may not be admitted as a regular-standing student; they must apply for Advanced Standing status.

Advanced Standing Status Admission

Advanced Standing students are admitted into the MSW program each year. Advanced Standing students complete 42 credits (as opposed to 60 for Regular Standing students) to earn their MSW degree. This credit reduction helps to ensure that students who have earned a BSW from a CSWE-accredited program (includes degrees recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors) do not repeat what has been previously mastered in their BSW education.

Eligibility for Advanced Standing admission consideration is determined as follows:

1. An applicant who earned their BSW from a CSWE-accredited program (*includes degrees recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors*):

Students who did not earn an undergraduate social work GPA of at least 3.4 are eligible for provisional admission consideration.

NOTE: A provisionally admitted student must attain a GPA of at least 3.2 in their first 11 credits of MSW coursework in order to proceed in the program without provisions.

The program recognizes that a potential Advanced Standing applicant who does not meet the above criteria may still be a good candidate for admission to our program. We strongly encourage such potential applicants to pursue a petition for applicant eligibility in which the potential applicant provides additional information that documents their achievements in their undergraduate social work program. A faculty member will be happy to provide guidance regarding their preparation of a petition. Submitted petitions are reviewed by the Program Director and one other faculty and result in:

- unconditional application consideration eligibility to apply to the program;

- conditional application consideration eligibility that promises application consideration eligibility after the demonstration of sufficient achievement in the completion of specified additional educational requirements that address areas where sufficient achievement is not evidenced; or
- denial of application consideration.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

A completed application consists of:

- Solicited demographic and educational information;
- Official transcript copies from all attended higher education institutions;
- Admission to the WSU School of Graduate Studies;
- Video Personal Statement
- Written Personal Statement
- Three completed Recommendation Forms
 - At least 1 reference must be from a supervisor of a volunteering, employment, or internship experience;
 - Other references may be prepared by other supervisors, instructors, social work professionals, etc., and;
 - References from family members, close personal friends, or WSU MSW Faculty will not be accepted.
- Statement of part-time or full-time preference
 - Indication of preference for completing the program at the part-time pace (i.e., 1 course plus practicum per 7-week block) or at the full-time pace (i.e., 2 courses plus practicum per 7-week block).

Application Processing

- Only completed applications are reviewed.
- Complete applications are accepted and processed until all spaces in the program are awarded to other applicants.
- Each completed application is reviewed by one non-adjunct Faculty.
- Final admission decisions are non-negotiable.
- Applicants who are not admitted may be offered the opportunity to be placed on a wait list from which top-ranked applicants will be admitted to any positions open.
- Application review will cease when all available program spaces have been filled or no less than 6 weeks prior to the beginning of the term when the applicant would begin the program.

TRANSFER CREDITS

The WSU MSW Program is structured differently from most MSW programs and has a trauma-informed clinical specialization. As a result, requests for acceptance of transfer credits will only be considered if the credits were acquired within the previous 3 years from a CSWE-accredited MSW program and for the courses the following courses: Social Work Foundations (MSW 510),

Human Behavior Across Diverse Contexts (MSW 515), and Understanding Social Work Research (MSW 530).

Procedures Related to the Transfer of Credits

- All requests for transfer credit acceptance regarding one of the above three courses must be submitted in writing, be accompanied by syllabi, and other supportive material as applicable.
- The MSW Program Director will review all requests for transfer credit acceptance and decide whether to accept each proposed course.
- The director may consult with faculty who have experience teaching the course(s) for which a transfer request is being made.
- If not satisfied by the director's determination, the person requesting the transfer of credits may request that their request be brought to the entire MSW program faculty.
- A decision made by the entire MSW program faculty is the program's final decision.

Program Standards, Policies, and Procedures

Winona State University and the WSU School of Graduate Studies publish minimum standards and policies for academic performance and student conduct. The MSW program implements several policies that complement, extend, and/or further specify the standard institutional academic standards and policies. The standards, policies, and procedures stated below apply to all students enrolled in WSU's MSW Program. The program's general orientation is to support the learning and growth of students who demonstrate academic and professional issues requiring improvement. However, in some circumstances disciplinary action may be necessary to ensure the well-being of other students, faculty, staff, the program, clients, partner agencies, and/or the community.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Honesty and integrity are a cornerstone for learning and an ethical principle of the social work profession; therefore, honesty and integrity are expected of all participants in the MSW program (i.e., students, staff, faculty, and guests). Concerns about dishonesty outside of participation in a particular course should be directed to the Program Director. Dishonesty in a particular course should be reported to the course instructor. Examples of course-based dishonesty include:

- Plagiarism;
- Misrepresentation or alteration of any materials related to academic records, and;
- Any form of cheating.

Failure to abide by principles of academic integrity will be met with consequences determined by the course instructor, who may consult with the student's Guide, other MSW faculty, the Practicum Director, the Program Director, and/or the Department Chair. Refer to the WSU's [Student Academic Integrity Policy](#) for definitions, examples, consequences, and student rights and appeals.

Credit for Life Experience

The WSU MSW Program does not grant credit for life experience under any circumstances. The program's policy on credit for life experience aligns with CSWE Accreditation Standard 4.1.5.

Grading

All courses must be taken on a letter grade basis. A student has the right to appeal a final course grade in the event the student feels their academic work was evaluated unfairly. Refer to the Student Appeal Policies and Procedures section below.

The following grading scale is used:

Letter Grade	Definition	Grade Points
A	Substantially Exceeds Expectations	4
B	Meets Expectations	3
C	Does Not Meet Expectations, but Acceptable	2
<C	Not Acceptable/Fail	0

ACADEMIC STANDING POLICY

The MSW Program's *Academic Standing Policy* is based upon the Academic Policies in the [WSU Graduate Academic Catalog](#).

1. A student receiving a grade of a "D" or below will be placed on program academic probation and must repeat the course before moving forward in their program of study; thus, a Leave of Absence may be required as coursework is sequence developmentally. Students should meet with their Faculty Guide to outline a plan for improvement and adjust their program of study to incorporate retaking the affected course. Any subsequent grade of "D" or below will result in dismissal from the MSW Program.
2. The first incidence of a student receiving a grade of C in any one course or whose cumulative GPA is lower than a 3.0 will result in the student being placed on program academic warning. An email will be sent to the student by the MSW Program Director notifying the student of their status and to contact their Faculty Guide to outline an academic improvement plan for returning the student to good program standing. A copy will be placed in the student's file.
3. The second incidence of a student receiving a grade of C in any one course or whose cumulative GPA is lower than a 3.0 will result in the student being placed on program academic probation. An email will be sent to the student by the MSW Program Director notifying the student of their status and to contact their Faculty Guide to outline an academic improvement plan for returning the student to good program standing. A copy will be placed in the student's file.
4. The third incidence of a student receiving a grade of C in any one course or whose cumulative GPA is lower than a 3.0 will result in the student being dismissed from the MSW program. A dismissal email will be sent to the student by the MSW Program Director notifying them of their dismissal and a copy placed in the student's file.

An In-Progress (IP) grade may be granted by the instructor for special cases when circumstances prevent the student from completing course requirements by the end of the semester, and the student has completed at least 50% of their work product for the course and has earned a passing grade for the sum of that work product. Within these parameters, the issuance of an IP is at the discretion of the instructor. The instructor must use a student's WSU email address to notify a

student receiving an IP of that fact and of the terms required to satisfy the IP, as well as the consequences of not fully addressing the IP satisfaction terms. A copy of this informational e-mail will be added to the student's program file. An IP grade must be resolved by the end of the semester (including summer) after the semester in which the IP was issued, or the course grade becomes an F. A grade of IP may inhibit the student's progress in their program of study if prerequisite courses are not completed prior to the next sequenced course. This could result in the student requiring a leave of absence.

STUDENT APPEAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Grade Appeal Policy

Students have the right to appeal a grade when they feel their academic work was evaluated unfairly. The MSW Program follows the WSU's Grade Appeal Policy. Students are encouraged to talk to their instructor before starting this process to resolve the issue informally. If the student and faculty member do not come to agreement, the student may file a written grade appeal. Refer to [WSU's Grade Appeal Policy](#) for detailed timelines and procedures.

Graduate Student Appeal Process

WSU graduate students have the right to appeal academic decisions (i.e., academic standing, any other non-grade issue with faculty, staff, or administration, or a program policy). The MSW Program follows the WSU's Graduate Student Appeals Process. Students are encouraged to meet within 14 calendar days on an informal basis with the faculty, staff, Program Director, Department Chair, or Dean directly involved in the situation in an attempt to address the matter and resolve the issue(s). If the student is not comfortable working with the faculty or staff member, the student may invite a neutral party to meet with the faculty or staff member, or if the student is not able to get a response within this period of time, they may appeal to the next higher level of authority. Refer to the [WSU's Graduate Student Appeals Process](#) for detailed timelines and procedures.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

A student may request to take an Independent Study course with an MSW program faculty member. An independent Study course is meant to provide a student with a unique, in-depth learning opportunity that does not replicate the content of other courses. An Independent Study course may be taken as an extra elective, or it can substitute for a course in the MSW 650-679 sequence. A student must receive approval from both his/her Guide and the proposed instructor prior to registering for the Independent Study.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student who wishes to take a leave from their MSW education may petition to do so through their Guide. A student on an approved leave of absence can register for courses upon their return without special registration permission. A student may be granted up to three semesters (i.e., equivalent of one calendar year) of approved leave. A student who leaves the program for two semesters without approval will be dropped from the MSW program.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAB ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Professional Development Labs (PDLs) comprise a unique and core attribute of the WSU MSW Program. Their purpose is to provide valuable professional growth and development opportunities to our students from experts in the social work field.

Student attendance and participation in the PDL is a program requirement. There is one PDL scheduled during the academic year during the fall semester for all students. There is one PDL for graduating students during the spring semester that helps them prepare for the license examination. This policy is enforced through the Professional Development Project course sequence. Students are enrolled in a Professional Development Project course each semester, and 40% of a student's grade in that course is derived from a student's attendance and participation in the *entirety* of the semester's Professional Development Lab. Therefore, if a student does not attend and participate in the entirety of a PDL, the student will be at risk for failing that semester's Professional Development Project course. As stated in the program's Academic Standing Policy, a failing grade automatically places a student on program academic probation.

The program recognizes that a personal emergency, weather emergency, and/or other factors may interfere with a student's ability to attend a PDL in its entirety. A student who is unable to attend and participate in an entire PDL for reasons such as those just noted and can provide documentation of the reason(s) will receive a non-negotiable 20% grade penalty in their Professional Development Project course rather than the standard 40% grade penalty. Any subsequent absences (full or partial and regardless of reason) from a PDL will receive the full 40% grade penalty without exception.

PROGRAM COMPLETION TIMELINE

A student must complete their MSW within seven calendar years (including any Leaves of Absence) from the date of their initial enrollment into the MSW Program. This aligns with the WSU Graduate Catalogue's Time Limitation policy.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

As described in the MSW Program Admissions Policy, students can be accepted into the program as either "Advanced Standing" or "Regular Standing" (see Admissions Policy for further definition of these options). Regular and Advanced Standing status is determined at time of admission. Course sequencing has been carefully planned, therefore students must follow the program of study for the program option for which they were accepted.

All admitted students are expected to follow either a part-time pace or a full-time pace. Part-time students will enroll for between 3 and 10 credits each semester as specified in their program of study. Full-time students will enroll for between 11 and 16 credits each semester as specified in their program of study. Deviations from a student's program of study will only be granted in extraordinary circumstances, and the program makes no guarantees of curricular offerings for

students who do not follow the prescribed programs of study. However, a student may petition to switch their pace status. Petitions are submitted through the student's Guide. If the Guide supports the student's petition, it will be approved on a space-available basis.

A Regular Standing student who is provisionally admitted must meet any specific terms of their provisional admission (e.g., complete unmet prerequisites, complete undergraduate degree) and earn a 3.2 or better GPA from the first 14 credits of the MSW Program. Failure to meet these terms will result in either Program Academic Warning, Probation, or Dismissal.

An Advanced Standing student provisionally admitted must meet any specific terms of their provisional admission (e.g., complete undergraduate degree) and earn a 3.2 or better GPA from the first 11 credits of the MSW Program. Failure to meet these terms will result in either Program Academic Warning, Probation, or Dismissal.

WRITING STANDARDS

Clear and effective written communication is required in the social work profession. Students should be committed to continuous improvement of their writing skills. Toward that end, all students are encouraged to make use of online writing tutorials offered by the WSU Writing Center (<https://www.winona.edu/english/writingcenter.asp>) and of the Tutor.com offered through D2L Brightspace (<https://winona.learn.minnstate.edu/d2l/home>). A student whose writing is poor and not improving may be placed on probation and asked to provide their Guide with a detailed writing improvement plan.

PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS POLICY

Students are expected to comply with all Professional and Ethical Standards. Non-compliance of the Professional and Ethical Standards Policy *and/or the NASW Code of Ethics* can result in an academic standing status change or an immediate dismissal in instances of harm, threats of safety, or egregious breach of professionalism or ethics.

Demonstration of Social Work Values and Ethics

All students agree to abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Social workers, including MSW students, have ethical obligations to clients, colleagues, practice settings, as professionals, the social work profession, and the broader society. Students should read the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) and consult with your Guide or other social work faculty regarding any questions.

Appropriate Self-Care, Self-Regulation, and Self-Awareness

Social work can be a demanding profession. Successful strategies for maintaining emotional well-being are needed to provide optimal services to our clients. Strategies include practices that support self-care, self-regulation, and self-awareness. Many of us in this profession have histories that make these practices even more important. Sufficient demonstration of these practices by students is required and is an ethical obligation required by the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

Students should *consult your Guide if you are struggling with self-care, self-regulation, and/or self-awareness.*

Conduct/Behavior with Others

Collegial respect is another cornerstone for learning and for the social work profession, as delineated in the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Collegial respect does not mean mindless acceptance of, or passive agreement with course material, other's opinions, rules, and regulations, etc. It does include engagement in respectful, thoughtful, and open debate, completing required coursework, avoidance of intentionally disruptive behaviors that interfere with the coursework and/or the learning of others, and avoidance of discriminatory or abusive language and/or behavior.

The abilities to demonstrate empathy, project warmth, and to develop trusting relationships with a diverse array of individuals, groups, and organizations are cornerstones of professional social work practice. MSW students should be able to form close, trusting, professional relationships with clients and others, and they should be able to manage intense emotional expressions that may come from people utilizing social work services. MSW students should recognize, develop, and maintain appropriate boundaries with clients.

Social Media Use

Students are expected to adhere to the standards and guidelines of the social work profession when interacting with classmates, MSW Supervisors, and colleagues using social media or social networking sites. Establishing informal relationships with faculty and clients through social media and networking sites can make it difficult to maintain professional boundaries and are thus not appropriate during your program of study.

Students should be aware that all social networking postings can potentially be made available to the public at large including their prospective clients, employers, and colleagues. Privacy settings are never absolute, and confidential or personal information about peers, clients, co-workers, and faculty should not be posted online. Students should follow confidentiality standards in face-to-face and online environments.

Before communicating online, students are cautioned to think through carefully their postings which reflect on themselves, their practicum agency, WSU, the WSU MSW Program, and the social work profession itself. All postings should be professional and respectful in tone including those "private" posts between site members.

PROCEDURES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

Concerns with professional and ethical behavior in the practicum setting will follow the policy and procedures outlined in the Practicum Education Handbook.

Step I

If a student is believed to be out of compliance with the Professional and Ethical Standards, it is the responsibility of the person who observes the issue to address the compliance issue directly with the student. This approach models the *NASW Code of Ethics*, section 2.11 c. The observer should meet with the student to ensure that the student understands the violation and to get the student's perspective on the violation. The observer and student develop a corrective action plan to address the violation. The observer will document in an email to the student the violation of the policy and the agreed upon corrective action plan. The MSW Program Director will be notified of the violation and the action taken to resolve it to ensure compliance with MSW program and University policies. In some exceptional cases, where the violation by the student potentially affects the student's academic standing status in the program, the process will proceed immediately to Step II.

Step II

If the student continues to be out of compliance, or if the incident potentially affects the student's academic standing status in the program, then the observer should bring the issue directly to the attention of the MSW Program Director. The observer should provide in writing information about the student's actions that violate the Professional Standards Policies. The MSW Program Director and the student's Guide will meet with the student to discuss the violation. If a determination is made that the violation has factual merit, an ad hoc MSW Faculty Committee will be formed to review the violation and make recommendations for the corrective action plan and/or possible academic standing status changes. The plan will indicate specific behaviors that the student needs to correct and skill areas where they need to improve and include an agreed upon timeline for improvement. The student and all parties involved in developing the plan will be emailed a copy of the plan. This plan will be placed in the student's file. As part of the plan, the Guide will closely monitor the student's compliance until the student graduates from the MSW program. The Guide will meet with the student at least once per semester to ensure compliance.

Step III

Failure to reestablish compliance within the agreed upon timeline will result in consideration of dismissal from the program. An ad hoc MSW Faculty Committee will be convened by MSW Program Director to determine if the student will be dismissed from the program. If dismissal is decided, the MSW Program Director will send a written recommendation of dismissal via email to the Dean of the College outlining the initial violation, corrective action taken, and continuing issues of non-compliance. Copies will be emailed to the student and the Guide. A copy of the letter will be placed in the student's file. The Dean of the College will make the final determination regarding dismissal.

Practicum Education

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has identified practicum education as the signature pedagogy for social work education. Practicum education is an integral component of Winona State University's MSW social work curriculum. It engages students in supervised social work practice and provides them with the opportunity to integrate knowledge and skills from the curriculum to the practicum setting. It is an opportunity for the developmental mastery of the requisite knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes needed for competent professional clinical social work practice. Winona State University's MSW program uses the CSWE's 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to ensure students demonstrate core and specialized competence upon the completion of MSW practicum placements.

The practicum education section of the student handbook outlines the structure, policies, and expectations of the Winona State University MSW practicum education program.

OVERVIEW OF WSU MSW PRACTICUM EDUCATION

Winona State University's MSW practicum education component is grounded in the concept that practice-based learning is the signature pedagogy of social work education. The practicum practice experience and agency MSW Supervisor are vital in the development of a professional social worker. The practicum is where the social work student learns how to exercise the combination of knowledge, skill, and values learned in the content courses; utilizes cognitive and affective processes to operationalize and demonstrate multidimensional proficiency in the core competencies; and is socialized into the profession. The overall quality of the Winona State MSW program is highly dependent on a strong practicum education component.

Winona State University's MSW practicum education program requires a minimum of 1000 hours of practicum education, so students have opportunities to demonstrate clinical social work practice skills, knowledge, values, and cognitive and affective processes in their practicum. Those students admitted in the regular standing program must complete a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised practice to graduate. Those students admitted in the advanced standing program must complete a minimum of 600 hours during their clinical practicum placements for graduation. The minimum number of hours for regular standing (1000 hours) and advanced standing students (600 hours) remains the same for those entering the MSW program part-time and those in employment-based placements.

The first two practicum courses in the MSW curriculum for regular standing students, Foundation Practicum/Seminar I/II (MSW 590/591) provide learning focused on generalist social work practice in an agency under the supervision of a licensed MSW Supervisor. Students complete a minimum 400 practicum hours over two semesters, or an average 200 hours for each semester. Students in foundation practicum stay in the same placement setting through both semesters. Students complete an average of 12-15 hours each week in their foundation practicum.

Foundation Practicum/Seminar I and II offer opportunities for students to develop generalist practice opportunities to demonstrate the nine social work competencies. These nine social work competencies from EPAS 2015 include: (1) Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior; (2) Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; (3) Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice; (4) Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice; (5) Engage in Policy Practice; (6) Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; (7) Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; (8) Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; and (9) Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

The last two practicum courses in the MSW curriculum for both regular and advanced standing students, Clinical Practicum/Seminar I/II (MSW 690/691) provide advanced learning focused on clinical social work practice in an agency, under the supervision of a licensed MSW Supervisor. Students complete a minimum of 600 practicum hours over two semesters, or an average of 300 hours each semester. Students in clinical practicum stay in the same placement setting through both semesters. Students complete an average of 18-20 hours each week in their clinical practicum. Clinical Practicum/Seminar I and II offer opportunities for students to develop specialized trauma-informed clinical practice skills through mastery of the program's specialized competencies which extend and enhance the nine social work competencies.

Winona State University's MSW program recognizes the importance of connecting the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the classroom with the students' practicum experiences through online practicum seminars. The foundation and clinical practicum placements have associated practicum seminars that provide students opportunities to incorporate and apply generalist and clinical social work theories and concepts into their practicum placement experiences. The instructor of the seminar courses serves as the faculty liaison between the practicum placement setting and the MSW program. The practicum seminars require MSW students to utilize critical thinking skills in the areas of self-awareness, relationships with others in social work practice settings, social work theories and their relationship to working effectively with diverse populations, and practice skills needed for competent social work practice. It also allows students to engage in clinical consultation with their peers through reflection upon events, experiences, and feelings pertaining to one's practicum; the process of analyzing best practices; exploring how social work concepts can help one work effectively; and ethical consultations. A final way the practicum program connects the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the classroom and practicum is through the continuous sequence of professional development courses that is aimed at integrative professional development. Each semester a student is enrolled in the program; they are enrolled in a professional development project course. An ongoing assignment in the professional development courses is a comprehensive professional development portfolio. The instructor of these courses is the faculty guide who assists with helping students integrate the knowledge and skills from coursework and practicum experiences into their portfolios. This further supports the integration of content course theory, practice, policy, and research concepts into practice work.

PRACTICUM EDUCATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of Winona State University's MSW Program to maintain a curriculum and practicum education program that prepares students for clinical social work practice that meets the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education and aligns with the program's mission. The following section describes the criteria, roles, and responsibilities of the various practicum education participants.

Criteria and Responsibilities for Practicum Placement Settings

It is the policy of Winona State University's MSW Program that all practicum sites and agency MSW Supervisors are assessed for their ability to meet the criteria set forth in the MSW Student Handbook and by the Council on Social Work Education's criteria for practicum placements. To be accepted as a practice site, each setting must be able to meet the program's practicum setting requirements and must demonstrate the ability to provide educational experiences that complement and support curricular requirements in accordance with CSWE accreditation standards. The MSW Practicum Director and/or MSW Practicum Coordinator connects with potential practicum settings and instructors and is responsible for ensuring that continuing agencies meet program criteria.

A wide range of practicum sites offering a variety of settings, contexts, and diverse client groups provide students with the ability to demonstrate the core and specialized competencies. When recruiting and approving practicum agencies for foundation and clinical practicums, the program ensures that agency sites can provide foundation and/or clinical social work practice opportunities. For the foundation year practice settings, the program requires that opportunities exist at the practicum placement for students to apply the generalist social work practice model of planned change. For the clinical year practice settings, the program requires that settings offer opportunities for students to build upon generalist skills to demonstrate specialized competency in the areas of engagement, assessment, intervention, and/or evaluation using evidence-based and best practice models. Practicum placement settings must utilize supervision and consultation and adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* to ensure their services are aligned with social work values and ethics. Out-of-state and international practicum placement settings must comply with the program's practicum requirements and demonstrate the ability to provide competency-based educational experiences, in accordance with CSWE accreditation standards. The following criteria are used in the selection of practicum placement settings:

- Practicum settings must provide direct services to individuals, families, organizations, communities, and/or groups to improve quality of life and functioning.
- For the *foundation year* practice settings, it is required that opportunities exist for students to apply the generalist social work practice model of planned change.
- For the *clinical year* practice settings, it is required settings offer opportunities for students to build upon generalist skills to demonstrate competence in the trauma-informed clinical areas of engagement, assessment, intervention, and/or evaluation using evidence-based and best practice models.

- Practicum settings should identify a licensed (unless included in a legal exemption category through the Board of Social Work in the state in which they are employed) MSW Supervisor and/or task supervisor (if applicable). In some settings, students may have a *MSW Supervisor* who guides and provides the weekly MSW supervision and a *task supervisor* who oversees the student's daily activities but does not meet the criteria to be the MSW Supervisor. The MSW Supervisor and task supervisor (if applicable) work collaboratively in monitoring the Learning Contract and evaluation of the student's performance.
- Practicum settings or students can identify an off-site MSW social worker to fulfill the MSW Supervisor role if the practicum setting does not have an on-site MSW Supervisor.
- Practicum settings must sign an affiliation agreement with Winona State University that outlines the responsibilities and liability of the agency, student, and University.

New practicum settings come to the attention of practicum staff through faculty, students, MSW Supervisors, professional networks, agency outreach, and referrals. Interested practice settings are requested to complete an electronic practicum site profile application using Tevera, WSU's online practicum management software program. The Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator reviews the application and reaches out to the prospective agency for further information and to conduct initial screening. The Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator connects with the prospective practicum setting either in-person, virtually face-to-face, and/or via Tevera and provides further information on the WSU practicum policies, procedures, and protocols and assesses the agency's ability to meet practicum criteria. All practicum agencies are required to sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) or clinical contract reviewed by Winona State University's legal affairs office. The MOA outlines the responsibilities and liability of the agency, student, and University. Once a signed MOA by both parties is completed, then the practice setting can be approved in Tevera, and a student can be placed at the agency. The approved agency is then provided with access to Tevera, where they can receive student referrals for placement and update the site profile as needed. Practicum settings who have not met specified criteria above are notified and are not approved until the criteria are met.

Criteria and Responsibilities for MSW Supervisors

The following criteria must be met to be eligible to be a MSW Supervisor for the MSW program:

- Have an MSW or MSSW from a CSWE accredited social work program;
- At least 2 years of post-master's social work practice experience;
- Be licensed through the Board of Social Work in the state in which they are employed at the graduate level or above, unless they are included in a legal exemption category;
- Agree to provide a minimum of 4 hours a month of supervision either in-person, via phone, or virtually face-to-face;
- Agree to meet with student and WSU faculty liaison for site visits a minimum of once during each academic semester either in-person or virtually face-to-face; and
- Agree to complete documentations and evaluations in a timely manner.

MSW Supervisors are licensed professional social workers who guide and teach students how to apply social work knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes in professional settings. MSW Supervisors agree to assume the primary responsibility, in consultation with their assigned faculty liaisons, for designing practicum learning opportunities for students to demonstrate program competencies. MSW Supervisors help students structure their learning opportunities to develop proficiency in the nine core or specialized competencies, expertise in social work practice, and assist in socializing students into the profession. They use supervision and consultation by applying the *NASW Code of Ethics* and frameworks of ethical decision making to practice. They partner with students to develop the Learning Contract, identify generalist or clinical learning opportunities, provide feedback on activities, and assess student progress. MSW Supervisors working with students in their clinical placements agree to provide students with experiences and learning opportunities needed to develop clinical knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes to demonstrate competence in trauma-informed clinical practice.

It is the policy of Winona State University's MSW program to have a MSW Supervisor and faculty liaison monitor students' practicum placement experiences. Monitoring student performance in practicum is primarily the responsibility of the MSW Supervisor and the faculty liaison. MSW Supervisors and faculty liaisons serve an important role in monitoring students through the supervisory process. MSW Supervisors are required to provide supervision for a minimum of 4 hours a month while a student is placed with the agency. This supervisory time is intended to allow students the opportunity to discuss experiences, review the Learning Contract, receive feedback on practicum performance, and ask questions concerning professional and ethical issues. MSW Supervisors use the Learning Contract to monitor students, provide feedback on activities, and assess student progress towards social work competence. The Learning Contract is an ongoing, working document that is actively and consistently used and modified. Students document learning activities throughout their practicum as placement circumstances evolve. At the end of the practicum, the Learning Contract is used as an assessment and becomes the final evaluation of the students' performance in practicum.

Once a student is placed in a practicum setting with a MSW Supervisor, all new MSW Supervisors review online MSW Supervisor orientation modules. With the orientation modules being online, it is available as an ongoing resource for all new and experienced MSW Supervisors. The purpose of the online orientation modules is to assist new and experienced MSW Supervisors in understanding and implementing the policies of the MSW practicum experience. The following topics are covered in the orientation modules:

- Overview of WSU's MSW program practicum education structure and processes;
- Roles and responsibilities of the MSW Supervisor, student, faculty liaison, task supervisors, MSW practicum director, and MSW practicum coordinator;
- Requirements of MSW Supervisors, faculty liaisons, and students for foundation and clinical placements;
- Overview of CSWE 2015 EPAS, specialized competencies, and associated dimensions;
- Learning Contract and evaluations;

- Identifying agency-based social work activities students can engage in to demonstrate competence in each of the social work competencies;
- Student orientation to the practicum setting;
- Usage of Tevera, the online practicum management program; and
- Responding to practicum issues and WSU's MSW practicum policies and procedures when concerns arise.

MSW Supervisors who complete the orientation modules are provided with access to Tevera to obtain practicum documents related to current policies, evaluations, and other resources containing pertinent information for MSW practicum instruction. In addition, the MSW practicum director, practicum coordinator, and faculty liaisons are available to respond to MSW Supervisors' questions regarding any aspect of MSW practicum education. In addition to the online MSW Supervisor orientation modules, the MSW program offers online resources and modules for MSW Supervisors. The resources and modules provide additional learning opportunities for MSW Supervisors related to the 2015 EPAS, effective supervision skills, and evaluation using the Learning Contract. The resources utilize asynchronous material to allow as many MSW Supervisors to participate.

The MSW program provides professional development labs during the Fall and Spring semester to MSW students and any interested MSW Supervisors. The professional development labs are opportunities for MSW Supervisors to earn Continuing Education Units (CEU's). The variety of workshops offered focus on current social work practice that is beneficial for practitioners. The participation of MSW Supervisors and agency staff at professional development labs is voluntary; however, it allows them to further support our students and enhance their own professional knowledge and skill development.

Responsibilities of the MSW Practicum Director

The MSW Practicum Director provides leadership in the ongoing oversight and implementation of the MSW practicum education program in accordance with CSWE accreditation standards. The MSW program Practicum Director directs all aspects of MSW practicum education and practicum experiences and works closely with the MSW Practicum Coordinator and MSW Program Director. It is the responsibility of the MSW practicum Director to:

- Provide administrative oversight of the MSW practicum program;
- Provide academic leadership for planning, implementation, and evaluation of the MSW practicum education program;
- Monitor and approve the practicum placement of MSW students;
- Identify, develop, monitor, and evaluate practicum education opportunities in collaboration with the MSW Practicum Coordinator and BSW Practicum Director;
- Oversee and coordinate Tevera practicum placement management software to streamline the student placement process, workflows, document delivery, communications, MSW Supervisor and agency databases, evaluation, data reporting, and CSWE accreditation standards compliance;

- Develop, implement, and revise the MSW Practicum Manual, practicum policies, and practicum procedures;
- Recruit, train, and oversee MSW faculty liaisons;
- Engage in curriculum development, revision, and evaluation of MSW practicum education courses;
- Oversee and report on practicum education assessment data in accordance with CSWE accreditation standards;
- Write CSWE accreditation self-study documents related to practicum education and respond to CSWE Commission on Accreditation requests to maintain MSW program accreditation;
- Oversee resolution of student issues in practicum;
- Facilitate communication among faculty, students, university administration, and external stakeholders to support practicum program planning, development, delivery, and evaluation;
- Participate in the establishment of practicum education goals and strategic plan for the MSW program;
- Facilitate and coordinate the MSW practicum advisory board;
- Collaborate with administration, faculty, students, and community, and professional leaders to promote practicum education, the MSW program, the department, the university, and the profession of social work;
- Guide and advise students on practicum-related matters; and
- Instruct practicum courses in the MSW program.

Responsibilities of the MSW Practicum Coordinator

The MSW Practicum Coordinator serves as part of the MSW practicum placement team and coordinates the MSW practicum placement process in accordance with CSWE accreditation standards. The MSW Practicum Coordinator works closely with the MSW Practicum Director in the delivery of the MSW practicum education program. It is the responsibility of the MSW Practicum Coordinator to:

- Recruit new MSW Supervisors and forging new partnerships with organizations to establish practicum placement sites;
- Strengthen existing relationships with practicum placement sites and MSW Supervisors;
- Facilitate on-going communication between MSW students, MSW Supervisors, faculty liaisons, and the MSW program;
- Conduct practicum orientation modules prior to the start of the practicum for MSW students;
- Guide and support MSW students during the practicum placement search process;
- Conduct online practicum orientation modules for agency MSW Supervisors;
- Educate and train MSW Supervisors and practicum placement agencies on the mission and goals of the program as well as the core competencies as established by CSWE;
- Assist the MSW Practicum Director in implementing and coordinating practicum placement management software to streamline the student placement process,

workflows, document delivery, communications, MSW Supervisor and agency databases, evaluation, data reporting, and CSWE accreditation standards compliance;

- Work with the MSW Program's administrative assistant and the university's legal analyst on the development and maintenance of clinical contracts for placement sites;
- Monitor student progress and engaging in resolution of student issues in practicum;
- Provide practicum instruction through individual and group supervision with MSW students placed in settings without qualified MSW Supervisors;
- Guide and advise students on practicum-related matters; and
- Instruct practicum courses in the MSW program.

Responsibilities of the WSU Faculty Liaison

Once a practicum setting is approved and students are placed, faculty liaisons are the primary contact for MSW Supervisors and MSW practicum students. Faculty liaisons bridge the gap between the MSW program and the practice setting through regular communication with the student and MSW Supervisor. The faculty liaisons encourage, support, and provide information to agency MSW Supervisors and students to help connect evidence-informed models and practices to the practicum practice experience. It is the responsibility of the WSU faculty liaison to:

- Serve as the instructor of the foundation and clinical practicum/seminar course to facilitate the integration of the MSW curriculum and practice arenas;
- Monitor student progress in practicum through online seminar discussions and assignments, consultation, reviewing student learning contracts, and agency site visits;
- Meet with students and the agency MSW Supervisors a minimum of once during the academic semester either in-person or virtually face-to-face;
- Make additional site visits to monitor and address concerns of placement with an agency or student as they are warranted;
- Assist students with the learning contract and ensure core and specialized practice competencies are accomplished in practicum;
- Confirm students have opportunities in their practicum placements to engage in social work activities and self-reflection to ensure their practice is aligned with NASW ethical standards and best practice models;
- Connect academic and practice arenas by communicating with agency MSW Supervisors, completing site visits to the agencies, reviewing students' learning contracts, and providing information and identifying with MSW Supervisors social work activities;
- Communicate pertinent information or concerns to the MSW Practicum Director regarding students and/or placement settings; and
- Assign a final grade for MSW 590/591 or MSW 690/691, incorporating the final practicum evaluation completed by the MSW Supervisor and successful completion of seminar assignments.

Responsibilities of the Student

MSW students are expected to take an active role and assume initiative for their learning in the practicum. It is the responsibility of the MSW student to:

- Follow the MSW program's practicum process and procedures for finding a practicum setting and MSW Supervisor to secure a practicum placement approved by WSU;
- Complete the MSW practicum application, resume, and CastleBranch national criminal background check;
- Complete the MSW practicum orientation modules, contact settings of interest for placement, and attend a practicum interview(s) with potential MSW Supervisors;
- Abide by the NASW Code of Ethics;
- Always maintain confidentiality, including at the practicum setting, in online seminars, and within course assignments;
- Maintain self-care and emotional well-being to provide optimal service to clients;
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with the MSW Supervisor, placement setting staff, clients, and the faculty liaison;
- Develop a learning contract that includes activities that demonstrate each of the core and specialized competencies;
- Adhere to the social work setting's work schedule, personnel practices, policies and procedures;
- Complete the required hours per week according to the schedule developed with the MSW Supervisor;
- Notify the MSW Supervisor as early as possible whenever unable to be present as scheduled;
- Submit all required forms and complete assignments for the practicum/seminar course by established deadlines;
- Participate in required site visits with the MSW Supervisor and faculty liaison;
- Seek consultation and demonstrate willingness to accept supervision for continual growth;
- Actively participate and meet a minimum of four hours per month with the MSW Supervisor for supervision;
- Maintain ongoing communication with the faculty liaison about any potential problems or concerns;
- Actively participate in the associated online practicum seminars; and
- Follow all Winona State University and the MSW program policies and procedures.

PRACTICUM PLACEMENT PROCESS

It is the policy of Winona State University's MSW program to place students in a practicum setting that fits their professional interests, experience, and learning goals through a collaborative process. This process requires consistent and timely communication between the student and the MSW Practicum Director and MSW Practicum Coordinator. It is the student's responsibility to find a practicum setting and MSW Supervisor; however, the MSW Practicum Director and/or MSW Practicum Coordinator will support the student and guide them throughout the process to secure a placement. The MSW program uses an online practicum management program, Tevera, to streamline the process of placing and monitoring students in practicum. The practicum

placement process begins upon admittance to the MSW program for regular and advanced standing students.

To be eligible for practicum placement, students must be admitted in the WSU MSW program. In order to be admitted in the MSW program students must have a minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 and a minimum undergraduate social work GPA of 3.4 for advanced-standing admissions. Upon admittance to the MSW program students are informed about the practicum placement process and criteria, which are detailed below.

Regular standing students complete online practicum orientation modules and an online foundation practicum application using Tevera upon admittance to the MSW program and complete the online clinical practicum application the semester before the start of their clinical practicum placement. Advanced standing students complete online practicum orientation modules and an online clinical practicum application using Tevera during their first semester in the MSW program. To be eligible for clinical practicum placement (MSW 690/691) students must have successfully completed their foundation practicum placement (MSW 590/591) with a C or better or be admitted as an advanced standing student.

Only students who have met the practicum placement criteria are allowed to enroll in practicum courses and complete the MSW practicum orientation online modules. Students must complete two required steps before seeking a practicum placement:

1. Complete the practicum orientation sessions through D2L, which covers the placement process, available resources and program guidelines
2. Submit and receive approval for their MSW practicum application in Tevera

While students may research potential practicum opportunities, they cannot schedule interviews with agencies until completing both requirements. Failure to follow this process may result in delayed placement or program suspension.

Along with the practicum application, students submit a resume and results of the CastleBranch national background study. The practicum applications are reviewed by the Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator to guide the placement process and ensure the criteria have been met to start practicum placement. Approval of the foundation/clinical practicum application by the MSW Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator, students identify agencies of interest for placement by researching agencies online, viewing site profiles in Tevera, accessing professional networks, and/or guidance from the MSW Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator. Using the suggestions and guidelines provided during the practicum orientation, students contact agencies of interest to explore potential placements and schedule interviews. After the student is interviewed, if both parties agree that the placement is compatible, the student submits a placement recommendation form via Tevera to notify the MSW Practicum Director and Practicum Coordinator. The student also submits the email addresses of the site representative

and MSW Supervisor in Tevera. The site contact and MSW Supervisor will be asked to complete profile applications also in Tevera.

After an interview, if a student is not accepted by a MSW Supervisor, students will need to seek additional site interviews with agencies of interest. Once the MSW Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator is notified of the placement recommendation form in Tevera, the Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator contacts the organization to answer questions, request the completion of forms, and finalize the placement. All practicum agencies are required to sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with Winona State University. The MOA outlines the responsibilities and liability of the agency, student, and university. The determination of an approved practicum placement is made by the Practicum Director and/or Practicum Coordinator.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The Learning Contract and Evaluation of Student

It is the policy of Winona State University's MSW program to use the foundation and clinical Learning Contracts as the primary source for guiding student learning and evaluating student progress. The Learning Contract is a tool created to assess student progress in practicum. It is structured around each of the nine core competencies, associated behaviors, and integrated dimensions. At the beginning of each foundation and clinical practicums, the student and agency MSW Supervisor use this tool to collaboratively identify agency-based activities the student can engage in to develop competencies in each of the CSWE nine core or specialized competency areas. It is a working document that is actively and consistently used and changed throughout practicum placements. During the practicum placement, the student, MSW Supervisor, and faculty liaisons review the Learning Contract to assess student progress on the learning goals and ensure opportunities are provided to complete activities and develop professional competency.

The Learning Contract is a working document that is actively and consistently used and changed throughout practicum placements. It serves as a guide for both the agency MSW Supervisor and the student, and to assess and ensure the student develops competency in social work skills and ability to integrate theory and practice. Students may change learning activities under the competencies as placement circumstances evolve. The specific nature of the learning experiences varies with placement sites; however, the Learning Contract completed by each student in practicum identifies how competencies are demonstrated in the practicum setting.

MSW students are evaluated by their MSW Supervisor and complete a self-evaluation using the Learning Contract twice during each practicum experience. The first evaluation occurs near the end of the first semester when the student has completed approximately half their hours (200 hours at the foundation level and 300 hours at the clinical level). The final evaluation occurs near the end of the second semester when the student has completed their required hours (400 hours at the foundation level and 600 hours at the clinical level). The foundation and clinical Learning Contract evaluation are completed by the MSW Supervisor using Tevera. The evaluation consists

of a Likert scale for each of the competencies. The rating scale shown below is used by the MSW Supervisor and student to assign numeric scores in assessment of overall competency.

4 Exceeds Competency Expectations: Performance is above expectations for students at this level. Student demonstrates the integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice with expertise. The student is able to teach others. Student works autonomously and independently. Student demonstrates the ability to apply skills in complex situations and shows consistent growth and change.

3 Meets Competency Expectations: Performance meets expectations for students at this level. Student demonstrates the ability to independently apply skills in simple situations and moderate growth and change. Student demonstrates ongoing progress and adequate performance. The student usually demonstrates integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills in practice with sufficient mastery.

2 Partially Meets Competency Expectations: Performance shows signs of competency, but does not fully meet expectations for students at this level. Student demonstrates beginning level of skill development, but needs continued practice and supervision. The student inconsistently transfers knowledge and skills in practice, but continues to show improvement.

1 Does Not Meet Competency Expectations: Performance is not meeting expectations for students at this level. Student demonstrates little knowledge or skill, limited evidence of growth or change, or rarely demonstrates progress. Student needs constant supervision or repeated guidance. The student is not able or rarely able to demonstrate integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills in practice.

A score must be present on each of the core or specialized competency areas, identifying the student's strengths and growth areas. It is expected that student learning will increase over the course of the practicum. The standard by which an MSW student is to be compared is that of a beginning level generalist or clinical social worker. The learning contract evaluations also contain a comment section for the MSW Supervisor to clarify or elaborate upon their scores. The MSW Supervisor also provides a recommendation if the student does or does not meet expectations, indicating if the student will be a competent generalist or clinical social worker. The MSW Supervisor and student sign the evaluation to attest having reviewed the evaluation jointly before it is submitted to the faculty liaison via Tevera.

At the agency site visits, the MSW Supervisor, student, and faculty liaison review the Learning Contract and evaluation of the student's performance. At the first site visit, if any competency areas lack related activities for demonstration, the faculty liaison works with the MSW Supervisor and student to identify agency-based social work activities the student can engage in to demonstrate competence during the second half of the practicum experience. The site visit is also an opportunity to review the evaluation and identify any competency areas the student is rated at or below "partially meets competency expectations". Special attention is warranted to

these competency areas, and the MSW Supervisor, faculty liaison, and student develop a plan to help the student improve his or her performance in practicum.

Evaluation of Practicum Placement Setting

It is the policy of Winona State University's MSW program to evaluate practicum setting effectiveness through agency site visits and students' evaluation of practice settings. Practicum settings are required to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* to ensure their services are congruent with social work values and ethics. The MSW program's evaluative process for practicum setting effectiveness is gauged through students' evaluation of practice settings and agency site visits.

The student evaluation of a practice setting is completed by each student at the end of their practicum placement and submitted using Qualtrics to the MSW program. The evaluation is intended to provide feedback to the MSW program regarding (a) the agency setting's overall suitability as a practicum site, (b) the assistance provided by all practicum personnel in the satisfaction of competencies, (c) the quality of practicum instruction, and (d) the agency's capacity to provide learning opportunities for the student to demonstrate competence. The students' assessments are based on their perceptions and experiences of the entire practicum experience. The data obtained through the students' evaluation of practice settings are an important source of information for the MSW Practicum Director and Practicum Coordinator to use in determining if a practicum site needs consultation and/or whether a continuing partnership should be maintained. The MSW program also uses the data for program evaluation and improvement.

Additionally, faculty liaisons are required to meet with practicum placement settings either in-person or virtually face-to-face a minimum of once during the academic semester. During site visits, faculty liaisons assess practicum setting effectiveness at providing opportunities for students. Liaisons review the Learning Contract with MSW Supervisors and students and assist them in identifying agency-based social work activities the student can engage in to demonstrate competence in each of the social work competencies. Faculty liaisons encourage, support, and provide information to MSW Supervisors to assist with their setting effectiveness. If concerns arise regarding the agency's effectiveness, the faculty liaison should contact the MSW Practicum Director to discuss. Faculty liaisons may make additional site visits to monitor and address concerns of placement with an agency as they are warranted. The MSW Practicum Director and/or Practicum Coordinator will work with the practicum setting to improve its effectiveness in providing adequate learning opportunities.

PRACTICUM POLICIES

Practicum settings without an MSW Supervisor

The MSW Supervisor is most often employed by the practicum setting where the student is placed; however, if the practicum setting does not have an MSW social worker who can serve as a MSW Supervisor and the practice site can offer students appropriate practice opportunities, an off-site MSW social worker can fulfill the MSW Supervisor role. Off-site MSW Supervisors are required to meet the same criteria and have the same roles and responsibilities as an on-site

MSW Supervisor. In this situation, students and practicum settings identify an off-site MSW supervisor who provides MSW supervision and an on-site task supervisor who provides the student's guidance and daily supervision. The off-site MSW Supervisor and the on-site task supervisor work collaboratively in monitoring the Learning Contract and evaluation of the student's performance. The MSW Supervisors are responsible for providing at least 4 hours per month of supervision and completing the students' practicum evaluation. They are also the contact person for the faculty liaison.

Evaluation of a student's progress in demonstrating the CSWE competencies is done by the MSW Supervisor. The MSW Supervisor must work with the site and the student to gather information to accurately assess their progress. Direct payment from students to MSW Supervisors for supervision is generally discouraged. Any compensation arrangements must be reviewed and approved by the MSW program in advance.

Winona State University's MSW program does not place students with MSW Supervisors who do not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree or who do not have the required practice experience. All MSW Supervisors (on-site and off-site) are licensed MSW social workers with a minimum of 2 years of social work practice experience. Situations may arise when a MSW Supervisor needs to end their role as a MSW Supervisor prior to a student completing their practicum. If so, the faculty liaison and/or MSW Practicum Director/Practicum Coordinator will work with the placement setting to identify a qualified (on-site or off-site) replacement MSW Supervisor to reinforce the social work perspective during the gap period, until a replacement MSW Supervisor begins providing practicum instruction for the student.

Continuing Dialog with Practicum Settings and MSW Supervisors

Beyond the initial contact with the MSW Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator and MSW Supervisor orientation modules, ongoing dialogue occurs with practicum settings and MSW Supervisors. The MSW Practicum Director and/or Practicum Coordinator maintains contact with new and established practicum settings through site visits, via Tevera, and regular communication to provide support and demonstrate appreciation for their efforts a minimum of every three years. Opportunities for MSW Supervisors to provide feedback via a survey and/or meeting will be provided annually and upon request. During a student's placement, faculty liaisons are the primary contact for MSW Supervisors to support student learning. They bridge the gap between the University and agency through regular communication with students and MSW Supervisors. Faculty liaisons are required to meet with students and MSW Supervisors a minimum of once each academic semester. Faculty liaisons and the MSW practicum director may make additional site visits to address concerns of placement with a practicum setting or student as needed.

Ongoing communication with practicum settings and MSW Supervisors also occurs at structured activities and events of the MSW program, such as professional development labs and practicum advisory meetings. Professional development labs are offered to all MSW Supervisors and practicum setting staff and provide an opportunity for continuing dialogue. The Practicum Advisory Committee is comprised of MSW Supervisors, students, faculty liaisons, and WSU MSW faculty. The practicum advisory committee meets a minimum of twice a year to discuss emerging

issues and program developments related to practicum education. The MSW Supervisors who serve on the practicum advisory committee advise, recommend, and provide feedback to the WSU MSW practicum education program. The continuing dialogue with the practicum advisory committee members is an integral part of the MSW practicum education program.

Informal contact with practicum settings and MSW Supervisors also occurs, as the MSW Practicum Director, Practicum Coordinator, and faculty liaisons participate on several practicum agency boards, committees, MSW advisory meetings, and through attending community events.

Employment-Based Practicum Placements

Winona State University's MSW program defines an employment-based practicum as a placement in an organization that already employs the student on a full- or part-time basis and financially compensates the student in the form of a salary and/or benefits. Practicum settings and students may request an employment-based placement; however, specific policies and procedures described below must be met before a student is approved for an employment-based placement. Students in employment-based placements must complete the same number of hours and are assessed on the nine core and specialized competencies exactly as students in non-employment practicum placements. In accordance with CSWE criteria, the MSW program does not accept equivalency or life experience work for MSW 590/591 or MSW 690/691 practicum courses.

To support the learning of MSW students, the following are requirements of employment-based practicums:

- Students will be permitted to receive supervision from an employment supervisor if they meet the criteria for MSW Supervisor (licensure of social work in the state that they practice, except for those who are legally exempt, completion of a Master of Social Work degree from a CSWE-accredited program and at least 2 years post-Master of Social Work experience)
- The practicum setting must provide new and different social work learning opportunities from the student's current employment (such as a new population, division/department, treatment focus, or practice arena), unless it is a new position started within 3 months of the start of practicum in which case it can be a paid practicum due to the learner focused nature of new positions.
- The practicum setting must demonstrate that the student's current employment assignments are different from the proposed practicum placement assignments, unless it is a new position started within 3 months of the start of practicum in which case it can be a paid practicum due to the learner focused nature of new positions.
- The learning contract must be learner-focused and the emphasis of the practicum placement hours.
- Paid practicum placements are permitted, if the student role is defined as student learner during the practicum hours.

Below are the procedures if a student desires an employment-based practicum:

- If a student wants to explore a possible employment-based practicum, they must identify this on their foundation/clinical practicum application and be informed of the MSW program's policies and procedures regarding an employment-based practicum placement.
- If the proposed practicum setting meets the above criteria, the student can submit in Tevera (WSU's practicum management program) an Employment-Based Recommendation Form. The proposal must contain approval by the employment agency, clearly differentiate between practicum and employment assignments, and demonstrate new learning opportunities for the student.
- The proposal must be submitted by stated deadlines in the MSW practicum calendar to allow sufficient time for the MSW Practicum Director or Practicum Coordinator to assess the viability and approve an employment-based practicum.
- If an employment-based practicum is approved, the faculty liaison closely monitors the experience to ensure the student is defined as a learner and provided new learning opportunities to demonstrate social work competence separate from their employment responsibilities.

Student Safety

Winona State University's MSW program has several policies to support student safety in a practicum setting. The following policies ensure the MSW program supports student safety:

- It is a policy of the MSW program to require each practicum placement setting to provide agency safety training for students during their agency orientation.
- It is a policy of the MSW program to require student safety content in the student MSW practicum orientation and MSW Supervisor orientation modules.
- It is the policy of the MSW program that student safety is addressed in Foundation and Clinical Practicum/ Seminar I and II (MSW 590 and 591 & MSW 690 and 691) courses.
- It is the policy of Winona State University that the University purchases student professional liability insurance for MSW students throughout the duration of their practicum.

The WSU MSW practicum education program supports student safety knowing the risk in providing services to clients can create potential hazards to professional social workers and students. Risk management and safety issues are relevant in all practice settings and client populations. Each practicum placement setting is required to provide agency safety training for students during their agency orientation. Winona State University purchases liability insurance on all MSW students prior to placement in a practicum agency. Students are covered by the University's professional liability insurance policy throughout the duration of their practicum.

Student safety is discussed in the student MSW practicum orientation and MSW Supervisor orientation modules. The National Association of Social Workers provides guidelines for safety in the workplace, which provides the basis and content for the modules. Students, MSW Supervisors, and faculty liaisons are provided access to the NASW [*Guidelines for Social Worker*](#)

[Safety in the Workplace](#) In both the MSW student practicum orientation and MSW Supervisor modules, guidelines are provided to students and MSW Supervisors around University safety procedures. If a safety issue or concern arises in a practicum placement, students and/or MSW Supervisors are required to follow agency notification protocols and contact WSU's faculty liaison.

Student safety is also addressed in Foundation and Clinical Practicum/ Seminar I and II (MSW 590 and 591 & MSW 690 and 691). Course assignments and reviewing Learning Contracts require students and MSW Supervisors to discuss the critical importance of being aware of their surroundings, being intentional and instinctive, and using clinical safety practices with clients. Additionally, in both Foundation and Clinical Practicum/ Seminar I/II (MSW 590 and 591 & MSW 690 and 691), a two-week module is focused solely on the use of reflection, self-care plans, recognizing compassion fatigue, and addressing vicarious trauma which affects the social worker's wellness and safety. Supporting student safety is also done through promoting resources and access to healthcare and mental health services on campus and in the community.

Placement settings are required to provide students with training regarding safety and risk management. Students and MSW Supervisors should document on the Learning Contract the placement setting safety training occurred. Placement settings are expected to uphold [The National Association of Social Workers Guidelines for Social Worker Safety in the Workplace](#). These NASW guidelines provide a standard to signify student safety in practicum settings. In order to maintain quality practicum settings where safety is a priority, the program obtains an evaluation of practicum settings completed by students. This evaluation is intended to provide feedback to the MSW program regarding the agency setting's overall suitability as a practicum site, which includes upholding safety in the learning environment as a priority.

Hours

The first two practicum courses in the MSW curriculum for regular standing students, Foundation Practicum/Seminar I/II (MSW 590/591) provide learning focused on generalist social work practice in an agency under the supervision of a social work MSW Supervisor. Students complete a minimum of 400 practicum hours over 2 semesters at one practicum site, or an average of 200 hours for each semester. Students complete an average of 12-15 hours each week in their foundation practicum.

The last 2 practicum courses in the MSW curriculum for both regular and advanced standing students, Clinical Practicum/Seminar I/II (MSW 690/691) provide advanced learning focused on trauma-informed clinical social work practice in an agency, under the supervision of a social work MSW Supervisor. Students complete a minimum of 600 practicum hours over 2 semesters at one practicum site, or an average of 300 hours each semester. Students complete an average of 18-20 hours each week in their clinical practicum.

Students consult with their agency MSW Supervisors to develop a weekly schedule conducive to the agency setting to meet the minimum number of practicum hours each semester. This ensures students and MSW Supervisors agree regarding students' time commitment to their practicum.

Hours are to be scheduled consistently across the 2 semesters of the practicum placement. Students are *allowed to begin their practicum hours 2 weeks prior to the start of the fall semester* and no earlier. Winona State University's professional liability insurance for MSW students begins 2 weeks prior to the start of the semester and continues throughout the duration of their practicum. Students are allowed to *end their practicum hours no earlier than 2 weeks prior to the end of the spring semester and no later than graduation. Students are expected to continue provide services at their practicum site during the winter break, though they are allowed to take time off as mutually agreed between the practicum site and the student.*

MSW Supervisors and students identify the breakdown of hours and learning activity tasks that would support the development and demonstration of the core or specialized competencies. Indirect contact and/or off-site practicum hours such as orientation, trainings, community meetings, staff meetings, etc. can be included as practicum hours if it relates to practicum responsibilities and the learning activities are demonstration opportunities documented on the learning contract. In addition, supervision time with the MSW Supervisor is also to be included in total practicum hours. These activities and supervision time are opportunities to demonstrate the social work core or specialized competencies.

The required hours are tracked by students, MSW Supervisors, and faculty liaisons using timesheets in the online practicum management program Tevera. Students are required to make up any missed hours or days and work closely with their MSW Supervisor to meet the needs of the agency. Should unforeseen circumstances arise for a student that interfere with completing the required hours in a semester the student, MSW Supervisor, and faculty liaison work closely with the MSW Practicum Director and/or Practicum Coordinator to identify a plan for completion of missed hours.

Enrollment in Concurrent MSW Courses

While in practicum, students are required to be enrolled in concurrent MSW courses and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. If a student drops a concurrent course, they must also drop their practicum and thus cease hours at the agency setting. Also, if a student earns a third C in MSW courses, they will be dismissed from the program, and therefore, will not be allowed to continue in their practicum placement and must cease hours at their practicum setting. To drop courses, students need the approval of their Faculty Guide. Faculty guides ensure that students maintain their academic eligibility for practicum placement and coordinate with the Practicum Director if a student becomes ineligible for admission or continuing at a placement. A GPA of 3.0 or higher in the WSU MSW Program is required for admission to practicum and continual enrollment in practicum courses.

Enrollment in Practicum Seminar Courses

Students will enroll in MSW 590/591 or MSW 690/691 while in their practicum placement. Students will be informed approximately a month before the start of the semester which section of the course they should enroll in. Students are not able to switch sections of the course beyond what they are assigned for spring semester.

Changes in Practicum Placement

Students must remain at the same practicum placement setting over the 2 sequential semesters in order to maximize learning opportunities. The continuity of placement is critical to the development of the signature pedagogy that is practicum education. For this reason, a change in practicum is not allowed. However, there may be situations that warrant a change in placement and will follow a review process by the faculty liaison, MSW Practicum Director, and MSW Practicum Coordinator. The faculty liaison will explore with the MSW Supervisor and student any concerns that arise regarding the setting to explore options and promote continuity of the placement.

Students cannot unilaterally decide to change practicum once they have started their placement. If a student feels that they are unable to continue in a placement for any reason, they should immediately reach out to their Faculty Liaison to discuss potential options.

Placement Disruptions

There are three ways that a placement can be disrupted:

1. **Self-dismissal or replacement:** This is a situation where a student has determined that a placement is not right for them or that they are not able to finish a placement due to life circumstances, such as a health condition or personal reasons. In this situation, students can choose to end a placement and start their practicum experience over the following academic year. Students are not able to count the hours previously completed towards the hourly requirement of the replacement practicum experience.
2. **Practicum Placement dismissal:** This is a situation where the practicum placement has decided that a student may no longer be in practicum with their organization. This may be due to performance concerns, issues with professionalism or attendance, or because they have violated a guideline/requirement of the organization. Organizations can make this determination, but we ask that practicum sites work with the liaison and the student to create a plan that would allow the student to continue if feasible prior to deciding to dismiss a student from their practicum placement. If the organization does dismiss a student from practicum, the student will not be able to start another practicum placement at that time and will have to start their practicum experience over the following academic year.
3. **University dismissal:** This is a situation where the university has determined that a student is not eligible to continue in their practicum placement. This may be due to failure to complete assignments, receiving a failing grade in a course, or falling below the required GPA to participate in practicum. In this situation, the university faculty will meet with the student to explain the reason and options available to them. The student will have to address the reason that warranted the dismissal.

There are extremely limited situations in which students would be allowed to replace their practicum placement. One example is if an agency closed, and the practicum opportunity

no longer existed. When these events occur, the student is to inform their faculty liaison and the MSW Practicum Education team as soon as possible.

Problem Resolution

If at any time during a practicum placement an MSW student has concerns with a MSW Supervisor, a practicum placement setting policy, another agency staff member, practicum expectations or responsibilities, or any other significant concern, the following steps should be followed to address the concern:

1. MSW Student and Supervisor address in supervision
2. MSW Student or Supervisor request assistance from the Faculty Liaison
3. Faculty Liaison meets with the MSW Student and/or MSW Supervisor
4. Faculty Liaison meets with the MSW Student and Supervisor together
5. Faculty Liaison informs the Practicum Education Team of the issue
6. A problem-solving team meeting with the Practicum Education team, Faculty Liaison, MSW Supervisor and MSW student, and other involved parties to address concern.

During the practicum placement, most problems can be resolved collaboratively with proactive intervention, open communication, problem-solving techniques, or other informal processes. Nonetheless, some situations require further attention following formal procedures. The MSW practicum education program follows the WSU MSW Procedures for Non-Compliance with Professional and Ethical Standards as outlined in the MSW Student Handbook. The MSW practicum education program also adheres to the WSU MSW program's student grievance policy and grade appeals policy as outlined in the MSW Student Handbook.

Dismissal of Placement by Practicum Setting

An early termination of the practicum by a placement setting may occur if concerns remain unresolved after prior remediation efforts. If this occurs, the MSW Supervisor is required to document carefully and consult with the WSU faculty liaison, MSW Practicum Director, and/or Practicum Coordinator. The documentation should include the student's Learning Contract evaluation and other relevant materials that substantiate the basis for the dismissal. The documentation also should give details on all factors, including assignments, supervision, presenting problems, student's response to feedback, etc. It should be written firmly and yet, still with compassion and respect for the student.

Dismissal may also occur if a student's behaviors have resulted in a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics, WSU student code of conduct, MSW program's professional standards and policies, practicum placement setting's policy, or state or federal laws. Termination from practicum automatically results in an assessment of student performance in order to make decisions about the student's continuance in practicum education and the MSW program. The assessment of student performance process for MSW students is outlined in the Practicum Roles and Responsibilities Section of MSW Student Handbook.