

**MSW Generalist (SW 894A/B) Competency Descriptions/Behaviors and Example Activities**

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession’s history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

**Behavior 1.1:** make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.

**Activity:** use the ethical decision-making model from SW 845 class to work through 3-4 ethical dilemmas faced during the semester and share the process with her instructor.

**Activity:** use an ethical decision-making model to work through 3-4 ethical dilemmas including cultural/racial strengths and share the process with field instructor.

**Behavior 1.2:** demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.

**Activity:** implement field instructor’s feedback (based on observation) related to professional judgment and behavior throughout the semester.

**Activity:** review characteristics of white supremacy; discuss and implement feedback regarding strengths and limitations in supervision throughout the semester.

**Behavior 1.3:** use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.

**Activity:** identify technologies to increase clients’ access to services, improve clinical outcomes and share findings with instructor, 2-3 times this semester.

**Activity:** identify cultural factors involved in using various technologies and potential impact on outcomes.

**Behavior 1.4:** use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

**Activity:** review characteristics of white supremacy and discuss and implement feedback regarding strengths and limitations in supervision throughout the semester.

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

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

Social workers:

**Behavior 2.1:** advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels.

**Activity:** identify white supremacy characteristics in 3 social policies that impact human rights and advocate for change.

**Activity:** review agency’s policy/procedural manual and identify 2 items that may create barriers, impact human rights and advocate for change.

**Behavior 2.2:** engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

**Activity:** routinely report incidents pertaining to recipient's rights violations and/or reports of abuse and/or neglect.

**Activity:** empower clients to advocate for themselves, when appropriate, to foster self-determination and independence.

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

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

Social workers:

**Behavior 3.1** demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels.

**Activity:** identify white supremacy characteristics in 3 social policies that impact human rights and advocate for change.

**Activity:** review agency’s policy/procedural manual and identify 2 items that may create power and privilege resulting in systemic oppression.

**Behavior 3.2:** demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

**Activity:** reflect upon personal biases and discuss how one’s culture and values may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

**Activity:** discuss in supervision how a constituent’s lived experiences differ and is similar to one’s own and how that influences their biases.

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

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

**Behavior 4.1:** apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs.

**Activity:** regularly incorporate anti-oppressive best practices based on literature and discuss implications on services from diverse sources.

**Activity:** repeatedly document engaging questions based on intentional client interaction.

**Behavior 4.2:** identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

**Activity:** gather relevant real-life /lived experiences from constituents for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance social justice.

**Activity:** frequently engage others by using best practice methods that are culturally sensitive.

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

**Behavior 5.1:** use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.

**Activity:** consistently identify policies and laws at the local, state, and federal level and summarize inequities for oppressed individuals with a medical illness.

**Activity:** review child welfare intake and assessment forms for culturally relevant assessment questions; share findings with field instructor; advocate for revisions where indicated.

**Behavior 5.2:** apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

**Activity:** continually educate patients about policies in the healthcare system and empower them to advocate for themselves.

**Activity:** regularly articulate the impact polices that favor the dominant culture have on the well-being of organizations, communities, and the social work profession.

**Activity:** analyze impact of 3 policies that privilege the dominate culture and discuss in supervision.

**Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

**Behavior 6.1:** apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies.

**Activity:** apply relevant theoretical perspectives to effectively engage with constituents at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels 2-3xs this semester.

**Activity:** review 2 theories about culture and discuss implications for engagement.

**Behavior 6.2:** use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

**Activity:** reflect upon personal biases in development of engagement skills to work effectively diverse constituents and adjust engagement style to form effective relationships across system levels 2xs/semester.

**Activity:** reflect upon personal biases and strategically engage in anti-racist practices to form effective relationships across system levels 2xs/semester.

**Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

**Behavior 7.1:** apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies.

**Activity:** identify and apply relevant theoretical frameworks to analyze assessment data at the micro, mezzo and macro levels and report finding by mid-semester.

**Activity:** use two theories to analyze assessment data and discuss different findings in supervision.

**Behavior 7.2:** demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

**Activity:** develop mutually agreed-on goals based on continual assessment of strengths, needs that are culturally sensitives across system levels 2-3xs/semester.

**Activity:** identify/expand viable choices for clients to promote client autonomy and self-determination.

**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities** Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

**Behavior 8.1:** engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals.

**Activity:** repeatedly select evidence-informed anti-racist interventions that provide choice at the micro, mezzo, and macro level to achieve outcomes and enhance capacity.

**Activity:** identifies and applies culturally sensitive theoretical frameworks to intervene at the micro, mezzo and macro levels and report finding by mid-semester.

**Behavior 8.2:** incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

**Activity:** use culturally sensitive transition strategies to support the client in achieving goals.

**Activity:** identifies and applies culturally sensitive theoretical frameworks to intervene at the micro, mezzo and macro levels and report finding by mid-semester.

**Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities** Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

**Behavior 9.1:** select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes.

**Activity:** routinely identify, discuss with supervisor, and implement various approaches to best evaluate outcomes for patients.

**Activity:** routinely identify, discuss with supervisor, and implement culturally responsive evaluation methods.

**Behavior 9.2:** critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

**Activity:** 2-3xs/semester analyze patient satisfaction surveys and make recommendations to improve to service delivery.

**Activity:** 2-3xs/semester analyze patient satisfaction surveys and make recommendations to improve equitable and inclusive service delivery.