

Professor:
Email:
Phone: 616-331-6550

Credits: 3
Co-requisites: SW 492

MISSION AND GOALS

BSW Program Mission

As an established School of Social Work in the region, the mission of the GVSU BSW program is to develop well-rounded generalist social workers who recognize and understand the worth of all people, and are prepared to address the unique needs of vulnerable individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in West Michigan, the State, the Nation, and globally. We value diversity, serving our community, scientific inquiry, relationships, and ethical practice and are united by a commitment to our students, the profession, and the University. Graduates will be lifelong learners, prepared for advanced studies and a values-driven, service-oriented professional life. Through our ecologically-minded, research-informed, rights-based, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and social justice approach to education, graduates will be skilled and knowledgeable in ethical practice, comprehensive justice, cultural competence, and inclusion. Graduates will be prepared to apply their knowledge to serve their communities, enhancing human rights and relationships and fighting poverty. Our high-impact generalist curriculum, including field education, will produce skilled social workers with a well-rounded liberal arts foundation who are committed to enhancing the well-being and equity of all people and reflecting the values of the profession. (Adopted 12.2.2024)

BSW Program Goals

The BSW program's goals are derived directly from its mission statement and are designed to meet the social service needs of its Program location and beyond. They are:

1. To provide a generalist BSW curriculum in a high-quality learning environment that prepares students for entry-level social work practice and graduate education.
2. To prepare graduates for bachelor's level practice that promotes social, economic, racial, and environmental justice and endeavors to address poverty and other social problems within individual, family, group, organizational, and community contexts in local, regional, statewide, national, and international settings focused on improving the quality of life for all persons.
3. To award the undergraduate degree to individuals who are competent generalist practitioners, adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, promote human rights, incorporate anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion into their practice, and advance the profession's reputation and knowledge base locally, nationally, and globally.
4. To instill the value of lifelong development of professional social work knowledge and practice through supervision, scholarly inquiry, research, and ethical use of emerging technology. (Adopted 3.18.25)

FIELD EDUCATION: THE SIGNATURE PEDAGOGY

Field Education is the signature pedagogy of social work education and offers students opportunities to fully integrate and practice the skills necessary to demonstrate achievement with the School of Social Work's core competencies and practice behaviors. Field Education provides practical application of values, skills, and knowledge introduced to students in foundation and advanced coursework. Using carefully selected community partnerships and at the direction of qualified field instructors, students become participating members of the social work community while learning to apply the ethics and values needed for effective service delivery with populations at risk. Participation in the guided seminar class assists the student in assimilating course content with community-based learning.

FIELD EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

In keeping with the most recent practice standards outlined by the Council on Social Work Education, the Grand Valley State University School of Social Work recognizes the centrality of field education curriculum in addressing competencies at the MSW and BSW levels. Field Education curriculum provides students with an experiential and imitative learning opportunity to explore and use Social Work ideas, concepts and behaviors first encountered in the classroom.

These learning opportunities are designed to further develop professional social work identity, self-reflection and self-awareness, and practice competence in each student. In each semester of field placement, students develop concrete and measurable activities that address the competencies using the learning contract and evaluation. The development and monitoring of these activities requires the collaboration of the student, the agency-based field supervisor, and the university-based faculty liaison. This model of collaborative competency-based Field Education is implemented at both the BSW and MSW levels.

Additional emphasis on the integration of coursework into Field Education is provided by the guided Field Education Seminar coursework, which provides students with the opportunity to actively reflect on the connection between classroom theory and agency application. Furthering the centrality and integrative nature of the field experience is the use of tenure and tenure-track faculty actively engaged in teaching. This faculty further ensures the reciprocal nature of field practice in courses and the field experience.

This Field Education course requires concurrent attendance with SW 492, a Field Education Seminar designed to integrate classroom teaching, supervision, and evaluation with the student's placement in a social agency.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Competency 1:

Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2:

Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 3:

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

Competency 4:

Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5:

Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6:

Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 7:

Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 8:

Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 9:

Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course requires 200 hours of involvement in social work activities per semester in a School of Social Work approved field education site. Students have opportunities to apply theories, techniques, and concepts through observation and participation in supervised assignments and show evidence of skill acquisition through supervisor assessment and evaluation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After successful completion of the course the students will be able to:

1. Application/Apply:

Apply values, skills, and knowledge introduced to students in foundation and advanced coursework.

2. Adaptation/Develop:

Develop professional social work identity, self-reflection and self-awareness, and practice competence in each student.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Field Education I requires 215 clock hours in a Field Education setting approved by the School of Social Work. Fifteen hours of the 215 are earned in Field Education Seminar (SW 492). Field Education and Field Education Seminar are inextricably related and must be completed simultaneously in order to receive credit for Field Education.

- a. Students will complete a Learning Contract based on the CSWE competencies and behaviors that demonstrate achievement of the prescribed benchmark for each.
- b. Students will meet all University and Placement Site Health Compliance Requirements.
- c. Students will write journals as arranged and/or required by the Field Supervisor and/or Faculty Liaison.
- d. Students will participate in an end of semester performance evaluation meeting with their Field Supervisor and Faculty Liaison each semester.
- e. Students will complete a Field Education Evaluation each semester.

Recommended text(s)

Grand Valley State University [GVSU], School of Social Work. (2025). Bachelor of social work field education manual: Policies and procedures. Grand Rapids, MI: GVSU.

National Association of Social Workers. (2021). Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

Poulin, J., Matis, S., & Witt, H. (2023). The social work field placement: A competency-based approach (2nd ed.). Springer Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1891/9780826137531>

Switzer, H.F. & King, M.A. (2014). 4th edition. The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional, and Civic Development in Experiential Learning. Belmont CA: Brooks/Cole.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING

Non-Discrimination and Diversity

Every aspect of University life should be free from discrimination because of age, color, disability, familial status, height, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veteran status, or weight. Student housing, organizations, athletics, classes and University community facilities should be open to all who desire to participate. - Student Code Section 100.01

The School of Social Work at Grand Valley State University is committed to anti-racism, diversity, inclusion, and equity. Faculty work collectively and continuously to define these terms as they relate to social work education. You can find these working definitions here: [ADEI Definitions](#). We infuse our commitment into explicit and implicit in classroom and field education. It is expected that students demonstrate respect for diversity, consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics, in their academic and professional performance.

SSW Handbook and GVSU Student Code

The [School of Social Work Handbook](#) and [GVSU Student Code](#) include all policies, practices, and procedures. These policies include your rights and options as a student, as well as student responsibilities. All the policies outlined in these sources apply to courses and participation in the BSW and MSW Programs. Faculty in the School of Social Work will follow the [Academic Misconduct Procedures](#) (STU 6.1) related to cheating, collusion, dual submission, falsification and fabrication, and plagiarism. The use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT, GPT, DALL-E, GitHub, and Copilot without the instructor's explicit permission falls under plagiarism. (SSW Adopted 12/10/24)

Student Accessibility Statement

Grand Valley State University strives to provide an inclusive environment across campus that is accessible to all individuals with a diverse range of abilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate opportunities within all class activities and programs because your success is important to me. If you are encountering difficulties that are interrupting your learning experience, please feel free to make those known to me as soon as possible, as early planning is essential. If you feel that you need accommodations in this course, you must present a memo to me from Student Accessibility Resources, indicating the existence of a disability and the approved accommodations. If the class meets in person, you should schedule a meeting with me during office hours to discuss your accommodations. If your class is online or hybrid, please forward your memo to me in an email and schedule a virtual or phone appointment with me to discuss your accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive. If you have not already done so, please contact the Student Accessibility Resources office (215 CON) by calling (616) 331-2490 or by email access@gvsu.edu. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the Accessibility Resources issued memo. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency, please make me aware so that the university and I can develop a plan to assist you. All discussions will remain confidential. (GVSU Revised 8/26/24)

Student Well-Being

You may experience a range of issues that can negatively impact your learning, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal or sexual violence, difficulty eating or sleeping, loss/grief, and/or alcohol/drug problems. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and affect your ability to participate in day-to-day activities. In order to support you during such challenging times, GVSU provides a number of confidential resources to all enrolled students, including the University Counseling Center (<https://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/> or (616) 331-3266) and the Student Ombuds, Takeelia Garrett (garrettt@gvsu.edu). Additional resources include the National Suicide Prevention 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached by calling or texting 988.