

ADVANCED SPECIALIZATION CLINICAL FIELD EDUCATION COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Advanced Clinical Practice year, field education is designed to educate students to intervene culturally appropriately with individuals, couples, families, and relevant social systems. Utilizing an eco-systemic and strengths perspective, students build on their generalist year knowledge in the development of skills in different practice modalities such as individual, group, and family work, while enhancing skills in engagement, assessment, and use of self in the relationship. Students also continue to expand their knowledge of, and skills within, additional theoretical frameworks and associated intervention techniques (e.g., Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Relational Approaches, Psychodynamic Formulations).

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.

Clinical social workers recognize the central importance of relationships with clients, colleagues, and related systems. They work to engage in professional relationships with trustworthiness, sensitivity in communication, openness to feedback, attention to strengths, and antiracist and anti-oppressive critical attention to interpersonal and systemic power. Clinical social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, outlined in the National Association of Social Workers' (2021) Code of Ethics, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the clinical, organizational, and broader policy levels. Clinical social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and seek supervision and consultation when necessary for applying principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice. Clinical social workers are knowledgeable about the impacts of direct, secondary, and vicarious trauma on individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations, and work to engage in ethical decision-making cognizant of power dynamics and potential re-traumatization in helping relationships. Clinical social workers are reflective of their own trauma histories, power, and positionalities. They work to recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Clinical social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills and awareness in supervision, consultation, and training to ensure they are relevant and effective. Clinical social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 1.1** Identify and address ethical considerations including maintaining physical, interpersonal, spiritual, emotional, and psychological boundaries for clients and client systems, face-to-face and virtual, and demonstrate the ability to assess and address barriers to safety for clients across the lifespan, in consultation with the principles and standards of the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).
- 1.2** Engage in self-reflection and self-care practice including reflective supervision to prevent and address secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma,

and burnout.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity, Difference, and Reflexive Use-of-Self.

Clinical social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Clinical social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, alienation, and heightened exposure to trauma as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Clinical social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression, discrimination, and traumatization in relationships and systems and recognize the extent to which a society's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, traumatize, or create privilege and power. Clinical social workers reflect on their own intersectional positionalities in interactions with clients in helping relationships as a vital component of antiracist, anti-oppressive, and trauma-informed clinical social work practice.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 2.1 Reflect on their own intersectional positionalities in interaction with those of the client to inform and support culturally responsive and anti-oppressive clinical social work practice.
- 2.2 Develop cognitive self-awareness and affective self-regulation in response to the influence of personal biases and values in working inclusively with clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice.

Clinical social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Clinical social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Clinical social workers understand strategies designed to acknowledge and work to repair colonialist, racist, and oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Clinical social workers also recognize that clinical social work has been historically complicit and part of oppressive practices. Clinical social workers understand the importance for care and healing in recognizing, redressing, and transforming injustice and violations of human rights at interpersonal and systemic levels to facilitate recovery, resilience, and growth.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student can demonstrate the following:

- 3.1 Reflect on issues of oppression and human rights to advocate for a strengths-based approach in clinical work with individuals, families, and/or groups.
- 3.2 Implement and encourage practices and policies that facilitate empowerment, resilience, and posttraumatic growth.

Competency 4: Critically Examine and Apply Practice-Informed Research & Research-Informed Practice for Advanced Clinical Social Work.

Clinical social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing the science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Clinical social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Clinical social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice, and that insights and dialogue in the field with clients and other stakeholders must also inform research for practice, centering the voices and perspectives of people and communities most impacted.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 4.1 Inform intervention with use of research evidence, theory, and the perspectives of impacted people and communities.
- 4.2 Apply theory and research to adopt, modify, and translate practices and policies that are most appropriate to practice settings and diverse populations.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice for Advanced Clinical Social Work.

Clinical social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels that bear heavily on clients' presenting concerns as well as practice constraints and opportunities faced in clinical social work practice. Clinical social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 5.1 Assess the impacts of agency policies, as well as relevant local, state, or federal regulations that influence clients' presenting concerns as well as practice constraints of the agency.
- 5.2 Identify ways to advocate with the agency and/or within the broader community to support more equitable and just outcomes and systems of care.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals and Groups for Clinical Social Work Practice.

Clinical social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of clinical social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers value the importance of human relationships. Clinical social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers recognize the importance of trauma-informed and relationship-based strategies, including working toward empathic recognition and connection, genuineness and use of self, collaborative and reflective contracting with consent and transparency, and reflexivity about interpersonally and systemically experienced dynamics of power and oppression.

Clinical social workers understand strategies to engage clients and constituencies with shared and different intersectional social identities to advance antiracist, anti-oppressive, and trauma-informed practice effectiveness. Clinical social workers understand how their own experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with clients and constituencies. Clinical social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 6.1 Demonstrates attentiveness to factors that enable and constrain engagement in clinical social work practice with individuals, families, and/or groups.
- 6.2 Shows capacity to assess and respond to multilevel factors that may influence clients' motivations and help-seeking and help rejecting behaviors.
- 6.3 Uses supervision to reflect on effective use of self and effective self-regulation while navigating the engagement process.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals and Groups for Clinical Social Work Practice.

Clinical social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of clinical social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities with shared and different social identities and experiences.

Clinical social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers understand the importance of assessing the potential biological, psychological, social, and spiritual impacts of trauma for individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers understand methods of assessment with clients and constituencies with sensitivity to clients' needs and choices to promote autonomy and advance antiracist, anti-oppressive, and trauma-informed practice effectiveness. Clinical social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in

this process. Clinical social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 7.1 Ability to conduct a multidimensional assessment to inform intervention planning.
- 7.2 Select and use empirically sound assessment techniques that are culturally and developmentally appropriate for the client and demonstrate sensitivity to clients' lived experiences, including strengths and possible traumatic experiences.
- 7.3 Demonstrate awareness of ways in which one's own biases, experiences, potential countertransference processes, and values can affect the assessment process.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals and Groups for Clinical Social Work Practice.

Clinical social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of antiracist, anti-oppressive, and trauma-informed clinical social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers understand that relationships are central to trauma-informed intervention, and that these helping relationships must be developmentally sensitive and strive to develop safety, respect, and trust. Clinical social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers understand relational, developmental, psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and person-in-environment, and trauma theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Clinical social workers work to use interventions that affirm and support the self-determination and choices of their clients. Clinical social workers understand that trauma-informed interventions depend on trauma-informed systems and organizations. Clinical social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Clinical social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, and supervision and consultation, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 8.1 Critically appraise possible intervention approaches in response to assessment of clients and use of theory-driven and evidence informed approaches for intervention planning.
- 8.2 Implement developmentally and culturally appropriate evidence-based interventions in conjunction with practitioner expertise and client preferences.
- 8.3 Modify and adapt interventions if needed to address cultural differences or contextual and environmental challenges with awareness of the need for continual evaluation.
- 8.4 Mobilize the strengths of clients and systems to increase individual, group, family, and community resilience.
- 8.5 Develop and use self-care strategies that support resiliency and wellbeing, to address the impact of compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals and Groups For Clinical Social Work Practice.

Clinical social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance trauma-informed practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Clinical social workers understand the impacts of trauma and trauma-informed practice, as well as theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Clinical social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

At the completion of the advanced specialization year, the student is able to demonstrate the following:

- 9.1** Engage in ongoing reflection on clinical processes and outcomes incorporating clients' reflections about progress and change.
- 9.2** Use supervision, process recordings, and additional opportunities to promote attention to clinical intervention process and outcomes.
- 9.3** Demonstrate ability to critically appraise strengths and learning goals for clinical practice.