



Agency Based Education Manual
Master of Social Work Program

Howard University School of Social Work 601 Howard Place, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20059
(202) 806-4723 (Office) (202) 806-7300 (Message)

Any questions regarding the handbook can be directed to the following contact information:

The Office of Agency Based Education

Janice M. Davis, Ph.D., MSW, LCSW-C
Director of Clinical Education
202-806-4723
jm_davis@howard.edu

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Agency Based Education (ABE) is a critically important part in our Master of Social Work curriculum. It provides a wide range of opportunities for students to develop their practice skills and become competent in advanced social work practice. The concurrent placement and class experiences are interactional, with the placement experience component serving as a mechanism for integrating the knowledge; skills, values, and cognitive and affective thought processes that comprise professional practice.

The placement experience provides a critical vehicle for the application of theoretical knowledge within a professional work environment. It is an educational process where educational assumptions about how integration of learning occurs and where students have an opportunity to explore their professional selves in accordance with the total curriculum and its goals and objectives.

The contribution of numerous social workers from more than 350 agencies and programs located in the Washington-Virginia-Maryland area, make it possible to provide the excellent quality of education currently offered to our student population. Professional education requires close collaboration and cooperation between the School of Social Work and the larger social work community. A productive partnership between participating agencies and the school is an integral part of the educational process.

The Howard University School of Social Work is grateful to all the agencies, Supervisors, and other providers of community resources whose invaluable contributions have helped the school to develop and maintain an Agency Based Education program which students assume leadership roles nationally and throughout the global community.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) affirms that Agency Based Education is the signature pedagogy. Our Agency Based Education partnerships, informed by our unique curriculum, create a learning environment that translates into excellence in practice with a special commitment to oppressed, vulnerable, and underserved populations.

Sheara Jennings, Ph.D.
Dean

Janice M. Davis, Ph.D., MSW, LCSW-C
Director of Clinical Education

THE PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

The Agency Based Education Manual (ABE) has been designed to make the job of the Supervisor less complicated. It also serves as a guide to students, faculty, and supervisors for understanding Agency Based Education at Howard University School of Social Work. It provides information related to all aspects of Agency Based Education including documents, the different forms required by Supervisors, and explanations as to how they should be used. It also describes all key persons and processes accountable for student learning. Finally, it explains policies and procedures governing the student learning process.

All students enrolled in Agency Based Education, all Faculty Consultants, and all Supervisors are issued a manual upon entering the program, which addresses and explains matters pertaining to Agency Based Education. Manuals are also available to other interested parties, i.e. faculty and administrators who need the information for facilitating the integration of Agency Based Education requirements with other parts of the curriculum. This assures that all parties have the information necessary for understanding fully the requirements of the Agency Based Education component of the Master of Social Work education program. The manual also provides a general description of the policies and procedures governing Agency Based Education. In instances where policy changes occur subsequent to the publication of the Agency Based Education Manual, students and agencies will be informed by the Director of Clinical Education.

MISSIONS STATEMENT AND THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE

Howard University School of Social Work is committed to educating future social work leaders for the purpose of changing and transforming those human, organizational, social and economic conditions which impact the quality of life of African Americans, other people of color, and the global community. Consistent with the mission of Howard University, the School of Social Work is dedicated to the pursuit and advancement of knowledge through discovery, research, partnerships, innovative practices, and other scholarly and educational endeavors of its faculty, students, and graduates. The School of Social Work places a high priority on advocacy for social justice and commitment to lifelong learning through community service, international linkages, public policy and utilization of technology. The School's mission is an expression of the Black Perspective, which evolved from the experiences of African Americans and African people throughout the Diaspora.

Further, the mission of social work is an expression of our guiding philosophy, known as the Black perspective. This perspective is described in the following six statements of Principles.

Principle 1 ~ Affirmation: The Black Perspective is an affirming and profoundly liberating stance both at the individual and collective levels. It celebrates the richness, productivity and vigor of the lives of African Americans and Blacks in other parts of the world. The school is committed to imbuing social work practice and theory with this perspective, which means a commitment on our part to using increasing levels of rigorous scholastic productivity, teaching effectiveness, and social work practice as tools to advance the contemporary African American agenda. This includes a special commitment to public social services, a service arena of importance to many African American communities.

Principle 2 ~ Strengths: Precisely because the Black Perspective is first an affirmation of strength, it insists on delineating ways in which that strength can be used to respond to the continuing oppression of African American people. The search for the causes, consequences and elimination of oppression is inherent in all areas of social work practice, research and education.

Principle 3 ~ Diversity: The Black Perspective is distinctive, but not monolithic. Simplistic, global characterizations of African American individuals, families, groups, and communities are intolerable. It is equally unacceptable to overlook the genuine cultural, economic, political and social bonds of distinctiveness that do exist. Producing social work practitioners, researchers and educators who are faithful both to the commonalities of interest and experience and to the rich and complex diversities within the African American community is a challenging task. Knowledge about diversities and commonalities is constantly expanding. Keeping abreast of that knowledge, contributing to it, and shaping social work practice to it are prime elements of our mission.

Principle 4 ~ Inclusion: The Black Perspective is an inclusive framework. Inherent in this principle is belief that all people have the right to participate fully in society without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ability, or genetic information. This principle also recognizes that people do not experience their lives based on their membership in a single demographic category, but that intersectionality influences experiences of both privilege and oppression. The principle of inclusion creates a welcoming environment for all persons in the human service workforce, including social work professionals, professionals from other disciplines and those with lived experiences with social services.

Principle 5 ~ Social Justice: The Black Perspective means a special sensitivity to the experiences of all oppressed and underserved groups in American society. There is no contradiction between giving primacy to the African American experience and being responsive to the experiences of other groups who have been subjected to oppressive forces. Howard University's heritage as a leader in the struggle for social justice places the School in a uniquely advantageous position to work with all groups seeking equality and freedom from oppression.

Principle 6 ~ Internationalization: An international dimension with special emphasis on Africa and the Caribbean areas is intrinsic to the School's Black Perspective. The school has a mission to educate international students for positions of direct social work practice and leadership roles in social welfare administration and policy in their home countries. A second aspect of the international dimension is developing that area of social work practice dealing with refugees and other displaced populations—both those individuals displaced within their own countries and those displaced to the United States and other countries. A final aspect of the international dimension is the school's desire to foster in its graduates a sense of involvement and commitment to other parts of the world as an element of their professional identity. This is especially important for those areas where issues of social justice and social welfare for people of color are crucial.

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION TO AGENCY BASED EDUCATION

Howard University School of Social Work seeks to prepare, through classroom and placement experiences, advanced social workers (direct service practitioners, administrators, and community organizers) who possess the analytic skills and substantive knowledge needed to address social problems at all levels of modern society, using current social work intervention techniques and theories.

Agency Based Education (Field Education) is the “*signature pedagogy*” of social work education. It takes place in an agency setting under the instruction of an experienced social worker who holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. The placement experience is structured in accordance with the mission of the School, its curriculum and educational goals, and current knowledge about the integration of placement and practice.

Agency Based Education (ABE) seeks to develop social workers who identify with the social work profession, as a whole and who in practice, are task oriented in addressing human needs and problems, rather than limiting themselves to the exclusive use of one method of intervention. Agency Based Education gives students an opportunity to test their commitment to social work, and to evaluate their ability to meet the demands and challenges of a professional career.

In Agency Based Education, students are engaged in actual practice to learn about how to work with clients. Agency Based Education represents a significant portion of the two year master’s program, with performance expectations increasing between the first year and second year of study. During the two years of study, the emphasis is placed on practice, the application of knowledge, social work values, and appropriate professional behavior.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of Agency Based Education is to provide opportunities for students to develop competence in practice skills within the framework of social work values and ethics. More specifically, the primary objectives for Agency Based Education are to:

1. provide a structured experiential learning experience;
2. promote students’ integrative learning;
3. provide ways for students to:
 - a. develop self- awareness and make increasing disciplined use of self in professional relationships,
 - b. learn and apply concepts and principles of social work practice through knowledge of the professional code of ethics and the ability to solve and understand ethical dilemmas,
 - c. integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to demonstrate competency
 - d. acquire understanding of a range of theoretical perspectives and conceptual skills for critical thinking in providing Direct and Community, Administration, & Policy social work practice, inclusive of community organization,
 - e. promote professional behavior in all practice settings, e.g. telehealth, office visits, home visits, etc
 - f. increase empirical and practice-based knowledge and increase competence in working with populations-at risk and people from diverse backgrounds, and promote economic, anti racist and social justice, and
 - g. recognize the impact of racism, sexism, ageism and other social, economic, and political factors have on social work,
4. provide a mechanism for validating the relevance of curriculum content for practice.

The preceding objectives are consistent with current and projected needs in social work practice and with the requirements of the educational program. They seek to produce social workers capable of progressive, independent, self-directed, self-evaluative practice, who are capable of focusing creatively on the interplay between people and their social environments, and who are capable of accepting responsibility for working for social human rights, social economical, anti-racist, and environmental justice, as well as personal change. Students, within this context, are expected to move toward higher levels of proficiency in advanced practice in their respective areas of concentration, to develop competency in evaluating their own practice skills, and to demonstrate leadership.

CHAPTER II: AGENCY BASED EDUCATION OVERVIEW

The social work program at Howard University is a concurrent program where theoretical knowledge is taught in a classroom setting at the same time it is being applied to actual practice situations in a community based site. All full-time students, both first and second year, are expected to enroll in concurrent placements. Students involved in unique projects, (i.e. special grant projects) may be assigned to block placements. ***Please note that professional practice is expected even with the changing landscape of practice that includes telehealth visits. Students must maintain professional behavior in dress and comportment which includes but is not limited to screens on, backgrounds blurred, etc.***

The first year Agency Based Education (ABE) courses support the first year generalist curriculum; and, the second year Agency Based Education courses support the practice method and fields of practice concentration programs selected by students.

All students enrolled in Agency Based Education courses are placed at generalist sites for the first two semesters of their first year of placement. During their second year, the placement experience training is more advanced and the focus shifts to the students' areas of concentration. Advanced standing students are the exception. They enter the program as second year students. To ensure that these policies are implemented, the Director of Clinical Education or her designee approves and assigns all Agency Based Education placements.

Placement Requirements

All traditional MSW students are required to complete a total of 1,000 clock hours of Agency Based Education. First year students are expected to spend two days (16 clock hours) per week in their placement sites (**a total of 208 hour per semester**) while second year students are expected to spend 2 1/2 days (20 clock hours) per week in their sites (**a total of 260 hours per semester**).

Most Agency Based Education assignments occur on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for first year students and on Wednesdays (1/2 day), Thursdays and Fridays for second year students. Arrangements for other times must be agreed upon by all parties involved with the placement. If a consensus cannot be reached regarding modifying the student's schedule, the student, and agency must adhere to the regularly assigned days and times.

While the first year students attend a total of four integrated seminars, second year students attend three seminars. The dates and times associated with these seminars are provided on the calendar for the School and the calendar for Agency Based Education. The seminars are taught by Faculty Consultants. The additional hours that make up the total of 1000 hours are earned through required orientations, seminars, and additional training opportunities approved by the Office of Agency Based Education. Therefore, **a student who does not complete orientation and seminars cannot earn enough hours to meet this minimal requirement.**

Faculty Consultants can be full-time faculty members or part-time adjunct faculty members who have been hired to work exclusively with placement students.

Faculty Consultants follow course outlines which were developed by the Director of Clinical Education in conjunction with the Agency Based Education Advisory Committee with feedback from the chairs of the Direct Practice and Community, Administration, & Policy Practice sequences. All course outlines are approved by the Curriculum Committee and faculty members. Each seminar extends from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The seminars are planned integrative seminars where placement experiences and educational content is discussed, and where theoretical frameworks are applied and integrated through the learning contract developed by the school's Agency Based Supervisors, and students. Students are encouraged, in these seminars to discuss their professional development, problem solving techniques, and to explore alternative ways of using theories in an applied setting. Agency Based Education seminars offer an excellent opportunity for students to enhance and expand the knowledge base they have gained in their placement experiences.

All absences in placement or in Agency Based Education seminars must be compensated for per the

requirements of the respective Supervisor and Faculty Consultant. Extended absences in Agency Based Education adversely affect the learning experience and the quality of services provided. Absences should therefore not be taken lightly. Special care must be given to assure that the services provided to the client population are not disrupted. Adherence to this standard is essential to optimal professional development. Every effort should be made to sustain consistent services during placement assignments.

The School places its students in a wide range of institutional settings. Most of the agencies are located in the greater Washington metropolitan area; however, some are located in Maryland and Virginia. These settings include non-profit and for-profit agencies, public and private agencies, and local, state, and federal agencies of the U.S. government.

Students are expected, once assigned, to understand the professional commitment they make when entering placement. Since their focus should always be on providing quality services to clients, personal issues cannot impede or interfere with the client-student- agency relationship, or violate standards set by the NASW Code of Ethics. Students who do not adhere to professional standards may be asked to leave the placement (See Student Review Committee Process on **Page 10**).

If personal issues negatively impact the performance of a student, the Agency Supervisor must inform the Faculty Consultant, who, in turn, sets up a conference between the Agency Supervisor and the student. If the concerns cannot be resolved, the Faculty Consultant develops a written report and submits it to the student's academic advisor and to the Director of Clinical Education: at this time, a decision may be made to send the case to the Student Review Committee for academic planning for the student. The Student Review Committee then assesses the situation and makes recommendations to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

GENERALIST AGENCY BASED EDUCATION

Overview of Agency Based Education I & II

Agency Based Education I is taken concurrently with the practice methods foundation courses. The learning experiences are developed to enable students to gain competency in generalist knowledge of concepts, skills, theories, behaviors, and values used in social work practice. Students are introduced to competency based education through the interrelated nine core competencies and component behaviors outlined by the Council on Social Work Education. Instruction provided in the placement allows students to apply the theoretical knowledge gained in generalist methods courses to clients within agency settings under the close supervision of qualified MSW Supervisor. The goal is to prepare students for entering second year Agency Based Education where students select their methods of practice. Methods of practice include Direct Practice (Micro Practice) and Community, Administration, & Policy Practice (Macro Practice). All assignments in Agency Based Education are designed to explore problem solving and strengths based strategies utilized at various levels of the system in which social workers operate.

All assignments in Agency Based Education I are designed to identify and assess the students demonstrated ability to explore problem solving skills and strategies that are utilized in various social work systems that address issues important to populations at risk, i.e., lesbians, gays, and other diverse populations, women and religious groups are covered. The Black Perspective is also emphasized.

The objectives of Agency Based Education I are to:

1. explore the nature, value base and ethical issues of social work practice;
2. examine the development of an awareness of self in social work practice as it relates to establishing professional relationships;
3. analyze the problem-solving process and strengths perspective for micro, mezzo, and macro, social work practice levels;
4. explore the knowledge and skills needed as a generalist foundation social work practitioner.

5. examine oral, written and electronic communication skills germane to the professional of social work;
6. assess the implementation and evaluation of agency policies to address and promote social, anti racist and economic justice using the Black Perspective; and
7. identify and develop strategies for integrating practice and theory from the Black Perspective.
8. introduce student to the integration of core competencies and component behaviors in micro, mezzo and macro level practice.

The educational outcomes expected of all students who satisfactorily complete Agency Based Education I include:

1. demonstrate understanding of the nature, value base and ethics of the social work profession (Competency 1);
2. demonstrate ability to identify, and solve ethical dilemmas, and other issues related to race, ethnicity, and gender (Competencies 1, 2);
3. demonstrate ability and skills in the appropriate use of self as it influences client intervention and building relationships(Competency 1); ;
4. demonstrate knowledge, skills, cognitive and affective processes in the use of the problem solving process and strengths perspective for micro, mezzo, and macro practice (Competency 1);
5. demonstrate developing competency in the utilization of the social work practice approaches in developing generalist knowledge and skills (Competencies 1, 4, 6, 7, 8);
6. demonstrate knowledge, skills cognitive and affective processes in the effective use of oral, written and electronic communication germane to the field of social work (Competency 1);
7. demonstrate developing competency in the development, implementation and evaluation of agency policies and their relationship to ethical guidelines (Competencies 1, 3, 5, 9); and
8. demonstrate an ability to identify and develop strategies for integrating practice and theory from the Black Perspective(Competency 2) .

Agency Based Education II:

In the second semester of the first year of study, students explore both Direct Practice (Micro), Community, Administration, & Policy Practice (Macro). Consequently, equipping every student with a fundamental understanding of both practice areas.

The learning objectives of Agency Based

Education II are:

1. assess social work ethics and values and assess methods used to resolve ethical dilemmas with special emphasis on social, anti racist, and economic justice;
2. apply assessment techniques and skills by critically analyzing client needs and identifying helping modalities relevant to various system levels;
3. analyze skills needed for interviewing, collecting, and interpreting significant information necessary to engage client systems in the problem- solving process using strengths based perspectives;
4. explore theoretical frameworks as a means of addressing client needs by using knowledge of bio-psychosocial environmental factors;
5. examine and master oral, written and electronic communication skills germane to the field of social work as evidenced by process recordings and case documentation;
6. assess the approaches used in implementing, maintaining, and evaluating agency policies from an ethical and legal perspective as a means of improving students' ability to solve ethical dilemmas and advocate on behalf of diverse populations using the Black Perspective; and
7. explore the concepts of transference and counter transference as they relate to clients and other systems;

8. explore the use of core competencies and component behaviors in the method concentration.

The expected educational outcomes of Agency Based Education II are:

1. demonstrate beginning competence in the ability to complete psycho-social assessments using current techniques and theories (Competencies 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9);
2. demonstrate beginning competence of knowledge skills, value and ethics of the social work profession (Competencies 1, 2, 3);
3. demonstrate an ability to identify and assess client needs by utilizing the biopsychosocial environmental and cultural theoretical frameworks (Competencies 1, 2, 3);
4. demonstrate ability and skills in the appropriate use of self as it influences client behavior (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 7);
5. demonstrate knowledge and skill in the use of strengths based and problem solving models and strategies (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8);
6. demonstrate knowledge and skills in the effective use of oral, written and electronic communication skills used by social work practitioners (Competency 1); and
7. demonstrate an ability to develop, implement and evaluate policies, programs and legislation governing, or used by the agency in providing services (Competency 4, 5, 9).

Advanced Agency Based Education

At the beginning of the second year of study, students are expected to switch from focusing on generalist practice to focusing on specialized areas of concentration (Direct Practice of CAP Practice). While the Direct Practice concentration provides a rich and varied body of practice theory and practice opportunities for learning to work with individuals, families, and small groups from diverse populations, the CAP Practice concentration prepares students to intervene, as practitioners, in larger systems of society, such as large groups, institutions, organizations, and communities. The systems subject to such intervention are communities, institutions, and private/public social welfare organizations, as well as the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government.

Each second year student is expected to enroll in and complete Agency Based Education III and IV. These courses build on the generalist curriculum, through special knowledge and education in a practice method class (micro or macro) plus an assignment of a field of practice. Fields of practice include family and child welfare, social gerontology, social work in mental health settings, social work with displaced populations, social work in health care settings, and social work in criminal justice. Agency Based Education I and II are prerequisites for Agency Based Education III and IV. Agency Based Education courses are taken sequentially with their respective methods courses.

Agency Based Education III and IV provide opportunities for students to grow and develop in the application of professional values, knowledge, skills and strategies essential for engaging in advanced social work practice. Learning experiences are selected to give students opportunities to develop, demonstrate, and apply their competencies in an actual social work environment. This includes the changing landscape of practice that includes telehealth visits. Students must maintain professional behavior in dress and comportment which includes but is not limited to screens on, backgrounds blurred, etc.

The overall objectives of Advanced Agency Based Education III are as follows:

Direct Practice Student

1. assess skills in planning, implementing and evaluating various models of intervention;

2. assess knowledge, values, skills cognitive and affective process needed in applying strategies and techniques related to various models of intervention;
3. examine and evaluate historical models of intervention to assess sensitivity and relevance to oppressed people, people of color, women, and at-risk populations; and
4. analyze skills cognitive and affective process needed in applying theoretical knowledge, social work values and ethics to various models for intervention to promote social and economic justice.

Community, Administration, & Policy Practice Student

1. examine the historical and theoretical frameworks and functions for managing human service organizations;
2. analyze professional and personal values and ethics needed in developing managerial leadership skills in settings serving oppressed people, people of color, women, and at-risk populations;
3. examine the planning and budgeting processes for human service organizations; and
4. analyze strategies utilized in practice/program evaluations, (i.e. needs assessments, process evaluations, outcome evaluations and cost-benefit analysis).
5. successfully integrate core competencies and component behaviors
6. examine the impact of social welfare and economic policies on access and delivery of social services

The expected educational outcomes of Advanced Agency Based Education III are as follows:

Direct Practice Student

1. demonstrate competence in implementing, planning and evaluating various models of advanced intervention (Competencies 4, 6, 7, 8, 9);
2. demonstrate advanced skill in the systematic examination of one's use of self in advanced direct practice to ensure effectiveness (Competencies 1, 2);
3. Critically analyze and assess the impact of policies, case laws, and/or practices on consumer well-being and access to services utilizing multiple sources of information related to the field of practice (Competencies 1, 2, 5, 8, 9)
4. demonstrate knowledge and skills in identifying and utilizing strategies and techniques related to various models of intervention (Competencies 1, 4, 7, 8);
5. demonstrate ability to implement and evaluate the appropriateness of traditional models of intervention for oppressed people, people of color, women, and at-risk populations (Competencies 1 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9); and
6. demonstrate skills in resolving ethical dilemmas as they relate to social justice and economic issues (Competencies 1, 3);
7. demonstrate competence in core competencies and component behaviors.

Community, Administration, & Policy Practice Student

1. Demonstrate an ability to implement strategies and operations used for managing human service organizations (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 5, 8);
2. Demonstrate advanced skills in recognizing and applying social work values and ethics in response to ethical dilemmas and recognizing personal values and bias and how they impact practice behaviors (Competencies 1, 2, 6, 7)

3. Demonstrate the ability to critically assess the relatedness and interdependence of major components of macro practice and stakeholders and integrate relevant information to formulate arguments that utilize diverse forms of practice and research based knowledge (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 9);
4. Demonstrate competence in the managerial leadership skills needed in settings serving oppressed people, people of color, women, and at-risk populations (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 7, 9);
5. Demonstrate an ability to implement budgetary principles and auditing standards utilized in human service organizations (Competencies 3, 5, 9);
6. Identify, understand, and implement research based models to assess practice and program evaluations for agency and client outcomes (Competencies 2, 4, 5, 7, 9); and
7. gain an understanding of the interplay between the community and the agency (Competencies 2, 6, 7, 8, 9);
8. demonstrate competence in core competencies and component behaviors.

The overall objectives of Advanced Agency Based Education IV are as follows:

Direct Practice Student

1. apply advanced assessment, engagement and intervention skills within the framework of the problem solving process and strength-based perspectives as they relate to issues of loss and other clinical syndromes;
2. explore the relationship between pharmacology and biopsychosocial assessments and interventions;
3. explore the affects of racism, sexism, and other discriminatory practices on service delivery and their impact on client functioning in diverse populations; and
4. examine professional development as it influences values and ethics used in intervening on behalf of clients from diverse populations.

Community, Administration, & Policy Practice Student

1. explore strategies involved in securing and managing human services agency resources;
2. analyze the information processing capacity of human service agencies for utilizing current computer technology and information systems;
3. develop managerial leadership strategies to improve services for oppressed people, people of color, women, and at-risk populations; and
4. explore strategies for establishing and maintaining a culturally diverse and representative workplace;
5. analyze the impact of social welfare and economic policies on access and delivery of social services.

The expected educational outcomes of Advanced Agency Based Education IV are as follows:

Direct Practice Student

1. demonstrate competency when applying advanced intervention strategies as they relate to issues of loss and other clinical syndromes (Competencies 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9);
2. demonstrate knowledge of pharmacological practices and their utilization in biopsychosocial treatment (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9);
3. demonstrate competence when utilizing critical thinking to assess theories, models, and modalities selected for interventions and integrate diverse forms of practice informed research in the application of practice

interventions (Competencies 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8);

4. demonstrate advanced abilities to analyze multiple sources of information related to the field of practice and critique the impact of policy and resource allocation (Competencies 3, 4, 5);
5. demonstrate ability to identify and practice intervention strategies that enhance diverse client populations' functioning (Competencies 3, 4, 8) ; and
6. demonstrate ability to resolve ethical dilemmas and refrain from one's own issues in determining client intervention and practice decisions (Competencies 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8).

Community, Administration, & Policy Practice Student

1. demonstrate knowledge and skills of financial management and leadership strategies (Competencies 1, 4, 5, 9);
2. advanced ability to recognize and apply social work values and ethics when working with communities, organizations or policy (Competencies 1, 6, 7, 8, 9)
3. demonstrate knowledge of various computer technologies and management information systems used in human service agencies (Competencies 4, 9);
4. demonstrate an ability to critically analyze social policy and to implement managerial leadership strategies as a means of improving services to oppressed people, people of color, women, and at-risk populations (Competencies 2, 3, 4, 5, 7); and
5. demonstrate the ability to integrate theories related to diverse populations into service delivery systems and management, to maximize the resources of the agency (Competencies 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).

CHAPTER III: ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF AGENCY BASED EDUCATION

Roles of the Faculty Consultant

The school utilizes Faculty Consultants to serve as liaisons between the school and affiliated agencies, and to provide academic instruction geared toward promoting maximum integration of classroom learning and Agency Based Education.

Responsibilities of Faculty Consultants

Orientation Seminars

New students are expected to attend Agency Based Education Orientation seminar prior to reporting to their placement sites. Agency Based Education students confirm their placements after interviewing at assigned agencies and receiving a Faculty Consultant assignment. The Faculty Consultant is responsible for meeting with students Agency Based Education seminars. The seminars include four sessions per semester for first year students and three sessions for second-year students. These sessions are required and account for a total of 20 percent of the final Agency Based Education grade. Faculty Consultants are responsible for conducting the seminars using the course syllabus.

Student Evaluations and Agency Responsibility

Faculty Consultants are expected to contact the Agency Supervisor at least twice per year by telephone, and to visit the agency at least *once per semester during the academic year*. Requests for additional visits or telephone conferences may be initiated by the Agency Supervisor, the student, or the consultant. The purposes of the visits are to assess the progress of the student, to assess the suitability of the agency aid Agency Supervision as needed, and to identify and address educational problems as early as possible. The Faculty Consultant is responsible for maintaining contact sheets on each student in his or her group, and for submitting these contact sheets to the Office of Agency Based Education at the end of each academic year or semester, as appropriate. These forms are used to evaluate student experiences at the agencies and for assisting in determining a final grade for students. Although grades are recommended by Agency Supervisors, the final responsibility for grades rest with Faculty Consultants.

Faculty Consultants are also responsible for ensuring that Supervisor's submit all written evaluations, including the student learning contract, the mid-term and final evaluations, and other evaluations or reports required by the School of Social Work. These forms are available online and in the Office of Agency Based Education.

In situations where disputes or problems arise in the agency between students and Supervisor, the Faculty Consultant has the responsibility of assessing the situation and for bringing the matter to the attention of the Director of Clinical Education and to other relevant parties. The request for a change of placement, or withdrawal of the student, may be initiated by the student, the Supervisor, or the School. The School reserves the right to make the final decision regarding the action to be taken and is responsible for interpreting the decision for the student and Supervisor.

Additionally, the Faculty Consultant is responsible for evaluating the continuing suitability of agencies as placement sites and for submitting evaluations on the agency contact sheet to the Office of Agency Based Education. The Faculty Consultant's evaluation includes an appraisal of the quality of the education received in the placement and a rating of the performance of students in seminars. This appraisal also shares observations regarding placement experiences and special competencies with the Director of Clinical Education and the Agency Based Education Advisory Committee.

Change of Placement

In situations where issues arise between students and supervisors require a change of placement, either the student or the Supervisor may request a change. The request must be made to the Faculty Consultant who is responsible, in coordination with the Director of Clinical Education, for validating the necessity of the request. If a change of placement is granted, documentation is provided as to the reason for the change of placement.

Student cannot independently change/leave a placement without the expressed permission of the faculty consultant and/or the Office of Agency Based Education.

Changing a placement is a very serious matter. This action should not be taken lightly because it impacts the quality of the learning experience received by the student and may impede the student from completing course requirements on time. It can also impact completion of the program. Sometimes issues arising at the agency cannot be resolved between the parties involved. When this situation occurs students are referred to the Student Review Committee which is responsible for resolving academic performance issues. The Student Review Committee's role is articulated below. All efforts should be made to address the learning issues raised by the student, the agency, or the Faculty Consultant prior to considering moving the student to a new site.

Student Review Committee Process

The primary function of the Student Review Committee is to help make appropriate educational plans for the student experiencing difficulty in practicum and/or class. The Committee will also address, where appropriate, behavior in other settings that constitute unprofessional conduct as prescribed by the NASW professional code of ethics. The process will be a review of students who are experiencing problems that are based on scholastic performance which includes academic performance and professional conduct. Reviews will be conducted for students who have been referred to the Student Review Committee by the student's advisor.

1. Membership

The Student Review Committee shall consist of five faculty members and up to two student members. The student body will select student members and the Dean will appoint faculty members and the Committee Chairperson. Committee members will disqualify themselves if they are involved in any way in the procedures.

Student members will not review any cases and only participate in policy discussions in line with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended.

2. Meetings

The committee shall meet every two months at a minimum. Additional meetings will be called upon the request of the Dean, faculty, or students. A quorum shall consist of (3) members of the Committee.

3. Confidentiality

The nature of the problems to be handled by the Committee requires strict confidentiality of information emanating from the review.

4. Procedure

A student would be referred to the Student Review Committee after the following steps have been taken by the Advisor:

- a. meet with the student on an individual basis,
- b. consult with the particular instructor(s) or other parties involved,
- c. obtain, where necessary, a written assessment from identified instructors and/or other parties.

The advisor will summarize these oral, written and electronic assessments and submit a written report to the Committee.

A decision on the best educational plan for the student will be made by the Committee. This plan shall be implemented by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs with the assistance of the advisor.

CHAPTER IV: SELECTION, ROLES, AND EXPECTATIONS OF PLACEMENT AGENCIES, AGENCY SUPERVISORS, AND STUDENTS

The Director of Clinical Education is responsible for establishing, maintaining, implementing, and evaluating policies related to the Office of Agency Based Education under the auspices of the Curriculum and Agency Based Education Advisory Committees. The primary responsibilities of the Director and/or her designee are as follows:

1. reviewing recommendations for new placements received from Faculty Consultants, Agency Supervisors, students, agencies or other interested parties;
2. approving, overseeing, and training social workers who wish to serve as Agency Supervisors in employee based placement sites or in non-employee based settings;
3. conducting ongoing evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of Agency Supervisor and developing, directing and monitoring Agency Based Education related seminars;
4. chairing the Agency Based Education Advisory Committee and serving on the Curriculum Committee to provide information regarding pertinent issues that impact Agency Based Education;
5. advising faculty on policies related to Agency Based Education;
6. interfacing with other agencies, schools and institutions related to curriculum issues and innovations in Agency Based Education; and
7. ensuring that policies related to Agency Based Education and the School of Social Work are adhered to in making decisions related to Agency Based Education.

Criteria for Selecting Agency Based Education Settings

The following criteria must be met for an agency to qualify as an Agency Based placement setting:

1. the objectives of the agency must be in accord with the educational program and objectives of the School;
2. its philosophy and practice should support the values and ethics of the social work profession;
3. the organization should provide a program that is stable, has clarity of purpose and function, and has structures and procedures appropriate for carrying out its program;
4. the organization should provide adequate educational placement and there should be a staff of sufficient size to carry programs (students should not be utilized as substitutes for regularly needed staff);
5. the organization should provide meaningful experiences which enable students to learn and test social work skills, attitudes, and values;
6. the organization should be supportive of research activities (i.e. research informed practice and practice informed research), and be committed to assisting students in developing research skills;
7. the organization should allow time for Agency Supervisors to attend seminars (training), plan curriculum for their students, and supervise their learning experiences;
8. the organization should have an ongoing commitment to improving the effectiveness of its staff and its services through means such as staff development, self-studies, professional personnel practices, etc.;
9. the organization should agree to treat all Agency Based Education information, especially evaluations of students, confidentially, and to refer all student related inquiries to the School;
10. the organization should provide resources necessary for students to carry out assignments (i.e., telephone, desk, supplies, transportation costs, and clerical services);
11. the organization should qualify for membership in relevant standard-setting bodies; and, when relevant, meet the criteria of appropriate governmental agencies (for example, meeting state licensing requirements for

social work practitioners);

12. the organization should be committed to the ethics and values of the social work profession, as indicated by clear statements of non-discrimination in the organization's statements, policies, and procedures. If the agency belongs to any professional organizations, or adheres to a specific code of ethics, these should be specified on the agency profile;
13. the agency's administrative policies regarding services to clients, to other agencies, and to the community should be consistent with the standards of practice appropriate to it.

Agencies are selected according to the quality of practice experiences provided, and according to the needs of the Master's program for preparing students for ethical practice. The School uses CSWE guidelines for selecting placement sites.

Administrative planning and programming between the School and the agency related to the education of students should be sanctioned, accepted, and supported by all persons responsible for the operations of the agency. Adequate supervisory and consultative time for Agency Supervisors should be provided by the agency. Ongoing communication is essential in order to provide an integrated experience for students.

The following administrative expectations are basic to every Agency Based Education placement.

1. The agency should provide adequate physical space and the equipment necessary for professional performance.
2. Student transportation costs incurred while conducting agency business should be paid by the agency.
3. The agency should adjust the regular duties and responsibilities of staff members who have been assigned as Agency Supervisors to allow time for conferences with students and the School.
4. The agency should meet the requirements for Agency Supervisor as set by the School (Please refer to the statement of criteria for selection of Agency Based Education settings **p. 11**).
5. The administrative or governing body of the agency should approve Agency Based Education, inform its staff of its decision, and authorize the staff to participate when appropriate.
6. First year students should participate in Agency Based Education on two consecutive days a week (16 hours). Second year students should report to Agency Based Education placements two and one-half consecutive days a week (20 hours). Agency Based Education is usually concurrent with classroom study. Changes related to times and dates are permitted if the following criteria are met:
 - The times and dates do not conflict with scheduled classes and Agency Based Education seminars.
 - All parties (agency and students) agree to the proposed time and date changes.

If both parties cannot agree, the parties must adhere to the regular School schedule, i.e., Tuesday and Wednesday for first year students and Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for second year students.

7. The Agency Supervisor promptly notifies the Faculty Consultant of excessive student absences or other concerns regarding students. If the Faculty Consultant is not available, reports should be made to the Director of Clinical Education.
8. If students are frequently tardy or do not report for Agency Based Education, the Faculty Consultant should be notified, **immediately**. If Agency Supervisors have other concerns or questions about the performances of students, they should notify the Faculty Consultant immediately. In addition, Agency Supervisors should be notified by the School if, for any reason, students will not be reporting for Agency Based Education.

9. Approved holidays for students are listed in the School of Social Work calendar. Students are expected to make up days taken off or days lost because of agency holidays that are not observed by the School.
10. In the event of the termination of a placement, or of questionable student status in the School or the agency, the School should address the needs of the student on a carefully planned basis. Termination requests may be initiated by the student, the agency or the School. In any event, thorough planning and careful communication are essential. The educational status of the student should be clarified in instances where the student decides to apply for admission to the School at a later date. **Permission to leave placement should not be given without the expressed approval of the Director of Clinical Education. If a student leaves placement without permission from the Agency Supervisor, Faculty Consultant, Director of Clinical Education, Dean or designee, a failing grade will be assigned.**
11. The agency may request that a student be removed. Before such action is taken, there should be a conference between the School and the Agency. The Faculty Consultant will make a thorough assessment of the situation. A written report of this assessment must be submitted to the Director of Clinical Education. All placement decisions are made by the Director of Clinical Education in consultation with the Faculty Consultant.
12. The final responsibility for Agency Based Education grades rests with the Faculty Consultant who uses the evaluation and recommendations of the Agency Supervisor as a guide for the final decision. An "F" grade in Agency Based Education during any semester requires a review and disposition by the Student Review Committee. Students may also be dismissed from Agency Based Education because of professional misconduct, falsification of information, and other unethical or illegal activities. These behaviors are of a serious nature and serve as a basis for referral for final disposition to the Student Review Committee or to a committee designated by the Dean or his designee.

Basic Expectations of the School

The following are basic expectations of the School

1. The School requires students to produce process recordings and keep logs of their daily activities. These are educational tools prepared by students to be reviewed by Faculty Consultants on their visits to the agency.
2. The School informs the agency of changes and additions in the School's calendar which may affect student attendance and performance in the agency.
3. The School provides regular seminars for Agency Supervisors, and supplies performance evaluation outlines and other resource materials necessary for Agency Based Education. Materials are typically distributed at the orientation session for Agency Based Education. This session is held at the beginning of the academic year. Materials may also be obtained from students or from the Office of Agency Based Education, upon request.
4. The School will maintain contact with the agency through the Faculty Consultant and will be prepared to discuss concerns an agency may have about student placements.
5. The School and agency site will discuss safety awareness and provide protocols for handling risky situations involving students in placements.

Assignment of Students to Agency Based Education Placements

The Office of Agency Based Education arranges placements for all students. The Director of Clinical Education and/or designee is responsible for appropriate student and agency matches within the guidelines determined by the School of Social Work.

Once first time entrants have been admitted officially to the School, they receive a letter from the Office of Agency Based Education. They also receive a profile sheet which they complete and return by a specified date. Based upon student profile sheets and résumé, placement matches are made by the Director of Clinical Education or her designee(s). **Students are not permitted to select their own agency site or make arrangements for placement at any agency site.**

During the spring semester, agencies are surveyed to determine their availability for receiving placement students. Requests for continuing agency affiliations are considered along with the Faculty Consultants' annual assessments of the performance of their assigned agencies.

The Office of Agency Based Education maintains a list of affiliated agencies that have been approved by the School of Social Work as placement sites. **If a student is interested in an agency that has not been included on the list, they must meet with the Director of Clinical Education. Under no circumstances should students negotiate placements with agencies without the approval of the Director of Clinical Education. The Director of Clinical Education approves all agencies used as sites.** While students identifying agency sites should be commended for their efforts, finding a site does not mean the site will be approved, or that the site will be deemed appropriate for student placements. Site selections are based solely on the educational objectives of the School, not personal preferences or availability or time constraints.

The selection process identifies agencies which have the means and professional commitment necessary for providing social work education as well as the characteristics essential for assuring optimal learning opportunities. The criteria for the selection of agencies are:

1. compatibility of the philosophy of the agency with the School's philosophy;
2. opportunity for the development of student assignments consistent with the methods, organization and expectations of the program;
3. interest of the faculty in developing affiliations in the area of an agency's practice, with particular attention to emerging areas of service;
4. preference for public services and agencies serving culturally diverse populations i.e., racially, ethnically, or economically at-risk populations, and special populations (i.e., women, LGBTQIA+, etc.); and
5. geographic distributions that normally permit each student to reach the placement within one hour of travel time from the place of residence.

The Role and Selection of Agency Supervisor

The role of the Agency Supervisor is a highly significant one in the development of professionally competent graduates; therefore, careful consideration is given to the selection of Agency Supervisors. Supervisors are selected on the basis of their interest in, and competence for providing practice education.

Agencies recommend staff members to the School for consideration as Agency Supervisors. In addition, agency staff members may contact the School to indicate their interest in being Agency Supervisors. The final decision regarding the suitability of a staff member for the role of Agency Supervisor is made by the Office of Agency Based Education.

The School takes responsibility for contributing to the development of its Agency Supervisors through seminars, institutes, individual consultations, and conferences. These activities enable the School to enhance the potential of its affiliates by providing staff development and other learning opportunities for its Agency Supervisors.

In addition, care is taken to select Agency Supervisors who are interested in keeping abreast of new trends in social work practice through continuing education and other professional development activities.

Criteria for Selecting Agency Supervisors

1. All Agency Supervisors must have an MSW and two years of practice experience beyond the master's degree and hold a license in their work jurisdiction. In unusual circumstances where a graduate level Agency Supervisor is not available, the School may insure that the School's learning objectives are met by requesting a member of the School's faculty provide supervision before the placement can be approved. These situations are rare but may occur if the School deems a particular experience to be an innovative or special opportunity for the School or the student. The faculty member assumes responsibility for providing the student with the necessary theoretical background, and for planning and evaluating placement assignments to assure that the educational experiences of student are consistent with the School's requirements.
2. All new Agency Supervisors must meet the licensing requirements established by their state licensing boards. Howard University School of Social Work uses three jurisdictions and all Agency Supervisor must be aware of their state requirements.
3. It is preferable that the Agency Supervisor be employed by the agency for a period of at least six months prior to becoming an Agency Supervisor or has held the position previously.
4. It is desirable that potential Agency Supervisors hold supervisory positions or have some experience as supervisors. Staff members without such supervisory experience must meet the standards articulated above (See #1).
5. Agency Supervisors must agree to participate in the School's seminar for new Agency Supervisors and to attend other seminars that will be scheduled, from time to time, to improve the skills of the supervisor, and to inform them of the School's policies and procedures.
6. Agency Supervisors are expected to accept their assignment as a supervisor for a minimum period of one academic year.

Responsibilities of Agency Supervisors

Agency Supervisors should be familiar with the educational philosophy and the mission of the School and should:

1. make all necessary preparations for supervising students in the agency prior to the student's reporting date;
2. conduct an orientation session for students which explains the policies and services of the agency, its relationship to the community, students' responsibility to the agency as well as to the client, the community resources most often used, office procedures, safety awareness, and other items helpful in starting students in placement;
3. keep students continuously informed of agency policies and changes in practices and procedures;
4. develop, in conjunction with students, an individual learning contract, which must be given to Consultants at the first seminar in each semester.
5. develop learning opportunities in the agency, and make specific assignments in consultation with students in accordance with written educational plans for students;
6. use the curriculum of the School of Social Work and the core competencies to develop for students a clear understanding about performance expectations;
7. assist students in a wide range of learning experiences in line with the expectations of the School, the individual needs of students, and the objectives and expectations of the setting;
8. provide clear feedback to students about placement performance on an ongoing basis;
9. encourage maximum student activity and creativity within educationally sound limits;

10. meet with students for regularly planned weekly one hour conferences as a basis for continuing mutual educational assessments;
11. keep records of student attendance and absences, develop plans outlining how students will make up time, and submit these plans to Faculty Consultants; in the event that students do not comply, the matter should be reported to the Faculty Consultants, who upon further review, will attempt to rectify the problem or refer it to the Director of Clinical Education and to the academic advisor.
12. provide midterms at the appropriate time and final evaluations at the end of the semester involving student input;
13. communicate on a continuing basis with Faculty Consultants or the Director of Clinical Education regarding the performance of students;
14. recommend an appropriate **well-documented grade based on the student's mastery of 9 core competencies and practice behavior** to Faculty Consultants prior to the assigned due date for submitting grades to the Office of the Registrar.

Expectations of Students

Students are expected to:

1. participate fully and responsibly in the learning experiences provided;
2. acknowledge seminar is mandatory and the student is expected to be physically and visually present;
3. assume responsibility for making appointments with the Director of Clinical Education to discuss placement plans or participate in the process as delineated by the Director of Clinical Education during seminars.
4. assume responsibility for contacting, in a timely fashion, the designated agency for a pre-placement interview;
5. confirm placements after pre-placement interviews, with the Director of Clinical Education;
6. work with Agency Supervisors in developing a written learning contract, which identifies other performance expectations;
7. prepare process recordings and journals for weekly supervision conferences with the Agency Supervisor. All written assignments should be submitted on time. Process recordings are required for all students. The format used should be consistent with the requirements of their respective concentrations (Direct Practice and Community, Administration, & Policy Practice). Copies of the forms may be obtained from the Office of Agency Based Education. A minimum of three process recordings are required per semester; however, this number may be increased, if necessary.
8. assume responsibility for following agency procedures, including time/attendance and holiday schedules;
9. respect client and agency confidentiality in order to insure the protection of the privacy of clients;
10. conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession;
11. assume responsibility for informing the Agency Supervisor of absences in the event of emergencies, i.e. sickness, death or inclement weather; in all other situations, absences should be approved by the Agency Supervisor;
12. develop professional discipline and identification with the role of the social worker, and develop competence in performing this role;
13. assume responsibility for the integration of theoretical knowledge with practice, for evaluating the placement experience, and for being active seekers in the development of professional skills, expertise, and competencies;
14. discuss matters with the Agency Supervisor concerning the agency's responsibility for the learning experiences of students, i.e. placement, agency policies, conferences, and evaluations;

15. assume responsibility for personal situations outside of Agency Based Education (i.e. babysitting, time management, etc.) that affect attendance and performance at the agency;
16. assume responsibility for arranging their work schedules to attend placements and seminars;
17. critically assess the quality of the placement and share findings with Faculty Consultants and the Director of Clinical Education;
18. meet agency expectations as outlined in the manual;
19. expect their Faculty Consultants to assist in developing a clear learning contract with the agency and Agency Supervisor containing learning objectives, agency policies, conferences, evaluations and educational strategies;
20. expect adequate and appropriate opportunities to test and develop their skills, within appropriate limits in their placements;
21. make Faculty Consultants or the Director of Clinical Education aware of actual or potential difficulties; and
22. participate in agency orientation and become familiar with the agency's policies and procedures, including information and procedures related to safety awareness.

Students' Expectations of Agency Based Education

Students, as participants in the educational process, have the right to expect optimal learning experiences in placement sites. Four areas of expectations should be:

1. opportunities to participate in graduate level activities and to receive the educational support outlined in the manual;
2. adequate opportunities to test themselves and their skills, within limits, in the placement;
3. opportunities to express concerns about their assignments, and to receive careful consideration of these concerns from **Faculty Consultants and Agency Supervisors** who are ultimately responsible for such matters; and
4. opportunities to engage in experiences consistent with the objectives required by the School, and to develop additional objectives with their Agency Supervisor concerning performance expectations, service responsibilities, agency routines, conferences, process recordings, attendance, etc.

Placement Process

Request for becoming an affiliate of the School may be initiated by agencies, faculty members, alumni, Agency Based Education personnel, or students. Once the request has been received, the potential affiliate is sent an introductory letter containing all forms required to be considered for approval. The letter includes an agency application form, an agency profile form, and a supervisor's profile form. Upon receipt of the completed forms, the School carefully reviews the information provided on each document. Opportunities for agency and office visits are available to discuss the requirements of the school and the agencies, and to become familiar with the Agency Based Education process. Final approval, if granted, is given by the school in consultation with the Director of Clinical Education, or a designee, the Agency Based Education Advisory Committee and other faculty, as needed.

Special consideration is given to agencies whose programs enable students to develop analytical, integrative and interactional skills in designing, administering, planning, evaluating, monitoring, maintaining and changing social systems. Special consideration is also given to governmental and non-traditional agencies whose services emphasize and support specialized aspects of the School's curriculum.

Students are matched to agencies through a formally structured process which includes the following: (1) an interview or group process/orientation with the prospective student to clarify his or her interests and goals, (2) a review of the students resume and profile sheet which must be completed by the student, and (3) an assessment of

relevant materials about the student and factors related to agency-student compatibility.

For new entrants, assignments are based primarily on information gathered from student records, from an interview, or via the group data gathering process, which takes place in a classroom setting. These types of information allow the Agency Based Education staff to assess the learning needs of students based on their career interests, backgrounds, previous experiences (salaried or volunteer), and education. Once the assessments have been completed, students are matched with prospective agencies, and meetings between students and their proposed Agency Based Supervisors are scheduled. If all parties agree with the arrangements, the placements are then confirmed. If a student interviews with agencies and fails to confirm a placement at any agency after three attempts, the Director of Clinical Education or a designee will meet with the student to determine if the student's interviews and expectations are consistent with the scope and expectations of the School. An assessment will be made at this time to determine the student's readiness for Agency Based Education by the Director of Clinical Education, in consultation with the student's advisor, the Dean of Academic and Student Advancement. A student may be counseled out of the MSW program if he or she cannot meet the demands of the educational curriculum.

In the spring semester of the first year, students submit information about their goals for advanced year educational placement. A group information gathering process with the Director of Clinical Education and/or designee is then held to discuss goals, areas of concentration, fields of practice, learning needs, and preferences for placement settings. During the session, the Director of Clinical Education and/or designee helps students to clarify goals and to structure their second year Agency Based Education experiences. Prior to the group process interview, the Director discusses the interests and needs of students with Faculty Consultants and reviews their evaluations. Once the agencies have been identified for pre-placement interviews, students follow the formal matching procedures described above.

Pre-Placement Interview

Through a meeting with the Director of Clinical Education and/or designee, or group process, each student is prepared for an interview with an Agency Supervisor. Students are given the following information: (1) interview protocol letter indicating proper demeanor for interviews, and (2) information that will be needed to contact agency based coordinators or Agency Supervisors to arrange the interview. Students are encouraged to prepare for the interview and to take an active role in this process. All placements are tentative, pending confirmation following the pre-placement interview.

Students and agencies are asked to confirm placements after initial interviews. Agency Supervisors or coordinators should confirm the acceptance of student interns using the form mailed with the student's placement interview packet. The form may be returned to the Office of Agency Based Education via email. It is the responsibility of both students and agencies to inform the Director of Clinical Education of the outcome of interviews as soon as possible. Once this action has been taken, the Director of Clinical Education begins processing necessary documents to confirm placements. When referrals do not result in confirmations, a determination is made as to why these placements did not result in confirmations (See Placement Process [pages 17-18](#)).

Additional Agency Requirements

In addition to meeting the requirements of Howard University School of Social Work, some agencies may require the following before approving students for placement:

- Liability Insurance (Forms are available in the Office of Agency Based Education as well as online at www.naswinsurancetrust.org. This insurance requires NASW student membership). If student is required to obtain liability insurance a copy of their policy is required to be placed in their records indicating they have indeed complied with agency requirements and to inform the School of liability limits etc.
- Drug Testing
- Tuberculosis Test
- Proof of CoVid 19 Vaccination and/or booster
- Police Checks/Clearance/FBI Clearance

- Applications and Writing Samples
- Credit Check
- Other requirements deemed necessary by the agency

These requirements, which were implemented to protect students and clients, vary from agency to agency. For additional information on these requirements, see the Director of Clinical Education.

Additionally, inappropriate behavior, as outlined in the Student Handbook and HUSSW Student Handbook, will result in a review of the student's deportment to determine the student's suitability for continuing to participate in professional social work education. Some examples of inappropriate behavior are drug use, sexual harassment of clients, illegal behavior, and verbal or physical assaults. Please note this is not all encompassing of the possibilities.

CHAPTER V: TIME AND ATTENDANCE AT PLACEMENT SITES

The curriculum of the MSW program in the School of Social Work was designed to prepare students for advanced professional social work practice. Part of the professional preparation of students involves students paying special attention to punctuality, regular attendance, and professional dress and behavior at placement sites as well as in classes. When students are unable to fulfill these commitments, it is expected that they will be able to address these problems with their Agency Supervisor or Faculty Consultant in a timely fashion.

Increasingly, students in the MSW program have found it necessary to work full-time or part-time while pursuing the degree. The degree requirements are rigorous and require a great deal of time in and out of the classroom. Working makes accomplishing the tasks required in placement much more difficult. The faculty and administration of the School of Social Work are aware of the economic constraints faced by many students; however, the process of, and the standards for, sound graduate study **cannot** be compromised. During the first year, 16 hours per week of placement based activities are required, and 20 hours per week are required in the second year. Additionally, all Agency Based Education students are required to attend **mandatory** monthly seminars. When students fail to attend these seminars, the number of hours required in Agency Based Education are not obtained and this places students in jeopardy of not completing educational requirements. In this situation, the assigned consultant may make a determination related to the appropriateness of a make up assignment for the student.

The requirement at the Howard University School of Social Work is that students accumulate 1,000 hours in two placement sites, 456 hours in the first Agency Based Education year, and 544 hours in the second. These hours are consistent with mandatory accreditation standards.

Sometimes situations may occur that require students to change their hours or miss placement days. The following policies were implemented to allow students to plan adequately for Agency Based Education course work.

- Days in the placement may be changed to accommodate the schedules of agencies or the students; however, all parties (agencies, students and Consultants) must agree to the new schedule.
- If an agreement cannot be reached, the parties involved should adhere to the established time schedule.
- During holidays observed by the School, students are not required to attend placement.
- If the agency has holidays which are **not** observed by the School, the student must make up hours before the end of the semester.
- In addition to placement attendance, students are **required to attend all** monthly education seminars.
- Howard University School of Social Work allows students to use as many as four days per academic year for exigencies, i.e. inclement weather, personal and/or family crises. For example, students may use this provision when they determine that the weather in their locale is too difficult to negotiate, or when personal or family emergencies cannot be addressed at another time. **This provision allows the student flexibility in planning for emergencies but does not reduce the number of hours needed to complete Agency Based Education.** Absences other than those mentioned above will not be excused so arrangements to make up time missed are required. Students must meet the requirements of the agency.

Weekend and Evening Placements

The school encourages students to enroll in traditional placements because evening and weekend placements are in short supply. Several limitations should be considered in requesting weekend or evening placements:

1. staff involvement is usually limited;
2. opportunities to participate in staff meetings are limited, but required for students;
3. clients and supervisors may not be available during evening hours or on weekends;
4. opportunities for learning may be jeopardized due to the unavailability of a full complement of professional staff in the agency;
5. opportunities to interact with other social service agencies whose primary working hours are during the daytime hours are limited; and
6. special supervision may need to be developed.

Evening and weekend placements are allowed only when optimal conditions can be arranged. These are considered to be special placements; therefore, students who are accepted for these assignments need to make arrangements to ensure that objectives consistent with those of the MSW program can be achieved. In order to benefit fully from an MSW degree, students must be willing to amend their schedules to allow time for participating in the Agency Based Education program activities.

Due to the limitations stated above, weekend placements are discouraged and cannot be guaranteed for all students applying for them. Finding an agency which may be open on weekends does not automatically lead to approval from the School of Social Work, nor does it mean the placement necessarily meets the educational standards required for Agency Based Education.

CHAPTER VI: GRADING POLICY AND STUDENT EVALUATION

Introduction

The Howard University School Work Agency Based Education grading policies are based on the Council on Social Work Education's (our accrediting body) standards which focus mastery of the Council on Social Work Education's nine core competencies and component behaviors. Each of the nine core competencies contains specific, knowledge, values, skills, cognitive & affective processes and the component practice behaviors that undergird the School's assessment methods. The 9 core competencies are:

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

Overall School Grading Policies

The table below provides an understanding of the grading rubic for the competency based curriculum. These grades have been cross tabulated.

Letter Grade	Agency Based Education Based Grade
A	Demonstrates High Level Competence
B	Demonstrates Competence
C	Demonstrates Developing Competence
D*	Demonstrates Inconsistent Competence
<i>*D grades are not given in Agency Based Education</i>	
F	Does Not Demonstrate Competence
W	No grade calculated
I	No grade calculated

For the purposes of Agency Based Education, the student's standing is expressed in a letter grade based on the competence level of the student as illustrated above and further explained below:

A student's standing is expressed in letter grades: A (Demonstrates High Level Competence); B (Demonstrates Competence); C (Demonstrates Developing Competence); D (Demonstrates Inconsistent Competence [**Note that a "D" is not a grade given in Agency Based Education**]); F (Does Not Demonstrate Competence); or W (withdrew, no grade value and not calculated); I (indicates that the student's work was incomplete at the time of making grade reports and indicates extenuating circumstance which prevent completion of placement) A statement of the steps and activities needed to complete the requirements and a timeframe should accompany any "I" grade, and should be filed with the Office of Agency Based Education and with student for inclusion in student records. **Any student Not Demonstrating Competence in Agency Based Education will receive a grade of "F"**

Academic Standards

Students must achieve a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average (B) on the 4 point system to establish and maintain good academic standing and graduate. Students may accumulate up to six (6) credit hours of "C" grades, but such grades must be compensated for in the overall average. Students who accumulate more than six (6) credit hours of grades below "B", "C" or lower grades, will be academically dismissed.

A student who receives a grade of "C" or lower in a course may repeat that course to improve the grade, and the lowest grade with its credits will be discounted in calculating the student's cumulative average. In the event of two identical low grades, only one shall be discounted.

All students are expected to maintain a 3.00 semester average. A student who fails to maintain a 3.00 grade point average for one semester is placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation are required to meet with their academic advisor or designee to develop a plan to overcome barriers to successful completion of the program. If the student achieves at least a 3.00 semester average the following semester, probation status is removed. Students who incur academic probation for two (2) consecutive semesters will be academically dismissed. Students who have a cumulative grade point average below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters will be academically dismissed.

Students who are academically dismissed must be absent for a minimum of one (1) semester following dismissal before applying for readmission to the School. Students who are dismissed a second time for academic failure will be dismissed permanently.

Upon re-entry, students must repeat enough courses in which grades of "C" or lower were earned to meet the required cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00.

Agency Based Education Grade Assignments

Student performance for all Agency Based Education evaluations are as follows:

1 = Does Not Demonstrate Competence

Student does not demonstrate performance at the foundation level of social work practice. Activities are not managed in a competent manner and the student exhibits substandard levels of knowledge, skills and/or abilities. Corrective action and additional training are required.

2 = Demonstrates Inconsistent Competence

Student demonstrates inconsistent performance at the foundation level. Activities are managed with some difficulty. The student has not demonstrated performance of relevant knowledge, skill and abilities consistent with the foundation level. Corrective actions and additional training are required.

3 = Developing Competence

Student is developing or beginning to perform at the foundation level. Some activities are managed in a competent manner. The student has not demonstrated consistent levels of performance of relevant knowledge, skills and abilities. Additional training may be necessary.

4 = Demonstrates Competence

Student demonstrates competent performance at the foundation level. Activities are managed in a competent manner and the student exhibits appropriate levels of relevant knowledge, skills and abilities.

5 = Demonstrates High Level of Competence

Student consistently demonstrates/engages in exceptional competent performance at the foundation level of social work practice. Activities are consistently managed in a competent manner, and the student exhibits high levels of relevant knowledge, skills and abilities.

Agency Based Education grades are based on the application and demonstration of competence and knowledge through performance in practice, whereas some classroom grades may be based solely on knowledge comprehension.

Discussions regarding grades begin, on the part of the student, with the faculty consultant. The first step is for the student to present concrete evidence to the consultant justifying the need for changing his or her grade. If the problem cannot be resolved, a student may file a written appeal with the Director of Clinical Education. The written appeal will be reviewed and a mediation process enacted on the part of all parties to resolve the grade dispute. If the student does not agree, the matter may be brought before the Student Review Committee.

Use of the grade of Incomplete in Agency Based Education

"I" (Incomplete): Incomplete indicates incomplete work and may be assigned only when unusual circumstances justify a student's inability to complete placement work requirements by the end of the semester.

Unusual circumstances include the following:

1. **Unavoidable absences or interruptions** If too much time has been lost, the student, after consulting with the Agency Supervisor in conjunction with the Faculty Consultant, should consider the possibility of withdrawing.
2. **Agency problems beyond the control of the student** Where there is substantial evidence that the problem is agency related, such as the transfer or death of a supervisor, restructuring of the organization, loss of student slots, etc., additional time may be allowed to attempt to resolve the problem. In these instances, it is

important to deal with problems immediately, or make other arrangements prior to the next semester.

- 3. **Insufficient time or experience in an area of assessment** Where there is honest doubt that the student has been free to apply himself or herself, and where further evidence is needed to make an educational assessment, additional time may be allowed through the use of an **incomplete**.
- 4. **Late/Delayed start in placement site due to issues outside of the control of the student.**
- 5. **Disabilities or other learning impediments** In instances where the student is below average in performance because of a disability, an “I” may be given until the resources needed by the student have been provided, and, he or she has had an opportunity to complete the required assessments. If resources have already been provided to help the student compensate for his disability and the student is still unable to perform satisfactorily, an “I” may not be appropriate.

In situations where students have not met all requirements by the end of the semester, it is best to address the problems affecting performance immediately and directly. Where it is clear that a few additional weeks will not produce enough change to improve the student’s performance, the grade of incomplete would not be appropriate.

In all instances where a grade of incomplete is received in Agency Based Education, the consultant is required to record the rationale for such a decision, and to indicate the steps to be taken to help the student remove the grade of incomplete. This statement must be filed in the student’s record, and a copy must be given to the Director of Clinical Education.

Students with a grade of “I” must complete the work outlined in the record before continuing to the next level of Agency Based Education.

Withdrawal

Students may withdraw from the Agency Based Education course during the official periods designated by the University Registrar’s office and the academic and Agency Based Education calendars.

CHAPTER VII: EMPLOYMENT BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM (EBEP)

As the cost of graduate education has increased, the Howard University School of Social Work has become more sensitive to the needs of some of its students for having placement opportunities in agencies where they are employed. The Council on Social Work Education has now sanctioned the use of employment sites as placements as long as they can successfully assess the nine core competencies. *Please note that some agencies impose restrictions or deny the opportunity, so please check with your employer.*

Prospective students must provide data from their agency sites to the Office of Agency Based Education indicating interest in EBEP placements. The Office will then contact the agency regarding the application process. The applicants complete the forms required and submit the forms to the School for approval. The agency, at this time, is advised of the guidelines and the timeframe for processing and approving the application. Failure to adhere to the guidelines may result in unnecessary delays. Students should discuss their needs openly with their agency contact prior to initiating the application process.

The application for Employee Based Education Program assumes the agency and the student will practice ethical principles such as acknowledging personal relationships and providing a MSW supervisor who is or isn't serving as the current employment supervisor. The student is allowed to use their current work assignment for placement if it can meet the nine core competencies. *It is important to note that students who engage in EBEP are required to complete 16/20 hours per week to meet the required placement hours. Students are not allowed to count the entire 40 hours of work as placement hours.* Please refer to the NASW site on the Internet for a copy of the social work code of ethics to explore potential ethical violations.,

Both student and agency representative are required to sign the Employee Based Education Program request document acknowledging their understanding of the requirement adhering to NASW Code of Ethics. A lack of signatures will result in request for Employee Based Education Program application to be denied.

To obtain approval, the student, the agency, and the potential Agency Supervisor must demonstrate, via a written request, how the agency will meet the educational requirements of the School. The request should include the following:

I. Employment Based Education Program Application Form

In the Employment Based Education Program Application form, the potential Agency Supervisor explains how the core competencies will be met. It also includes a detailed explanation of what the student's assignments will consist of i.e. learning objectives, strategies for achieving these objectives, opportunities for supervision, exposure to meetings and in-service training, and the logistics associated with the placement, such as office space, hours, etc.

II. Agency Based Education Learning Contract

The Learning Contract should include the following:

1. agreement to implement predetermined objectives which have been established by the School;
2. the curriculum objectives to be achieved during the placement;
3. the learning experiences associated with each curriculum objective identified;
4. the outcome which can be expected as a result of the student's efforts;
5. the knowledge anticipated as a result of the student's educational experiences; and
6. a logical timeframe for completing the curriculum objectives identified. Please note that predetermined objectives are now required (see learning contract).

III. The Agency Supervisors' Profile Form:

This form provides information related to the potential supervisor's experiences and qualifications. A current résumé and a copy of the current license should also be attached.

IV. Agency Approval Process

If an agency is not affiliated with the school, in addition to the EBEP application, an agency application form must also be submitted. Once the placement has been approved, the placement shall be subject to the rules, regulations, and procedures governing traditional placements.