**University of Nebraska at Kearney Department of Social Work**

**Rationalization for Using Senior Portfolios**

Evaluation of students for graduation should involve tangible outcomes. Using a senior portfolio will provide the tangible evidence for faculty to evaluate the student’s knowledge, skills, and values for appropriate social work practice. The tangible evidence that portfolios provide will include learning products (assignments from classes), evaluation of the learning products (faculty), and reflective assessment of the learning process (student).

The completion of the Social Work Portfolio is a requirement of all students with a declared major in social work. The portfolio is initiated in the Introduction to Social Welfare course (SOWK 170) and completed in the Senior Social Work Seminar course (SOWK 482) during the finally semester of the program. Transfer students who completed the Introduction to Social Welfare course and possibly the Human Service Ethics and Experience course (SOWK 172) elsewhere should work closely with their social work advisor to identify an assignment that fulfills the competency currently aligned with the course they transferred into their Social Work major at UNK.

**Senior Portfolio Requirements**

The portfolio will consist of graded student assignments and reflection on each of the ten social work competencies. Assignments are to be selected from over the course of the program and it is noted that one assignment can count towards meeting multiple practice behaviors/competencies and the social work program goals. However, a minimum of five assignments still needs to be included in the Portfolio. In total, the portfolio must include a **reflection on each of the ten competencies** in relation to a **minimum of five assignments**. Students may wish to include more than five assignments in order to demonstrate their competency of social work skills, knowledge, and values.

A template will be provided for students to ease completion of the portfolio. Faculty may suggest specific assignments for inclusion; however, a list of recommended courses and assignments are available in the Senior Portfolio Assignment & Competencies table below. It should be noted that these assignments are suggestions as assignments in various classes may change semester-to-semester based on faculty. Additional documents to help with organization are listed as well. The UNK Social Work program goals and CSWE Competencies are listed on the next page.

All **graded assignments** should be placed in a three-ring binder. Each document must be typed and demonstrate academic professionalism and attainment of the competencies. Please de-identify any assignments in the portfolio and retain the cover sheet with your identifying information only. The final Senior Portfolio document will be turned in to the Social Work Department secretary in the students’ final semester (typically when a student is completing their Field Practicum) on the **Monday before Finals week of that semester**.

Students should discuss the portfolio with their advisors throughout their BSW experience. The advisor and the student will discuss the student’s progression in the program and address any academic concerns that may impact the professional development of their advisee.

If the student wishes to retain the Portfolio for future use, it is suggested that they make an additional copy and provide the copy to the Social Work Department. **Senior Portfolios will not be returned to students**. Portfolios will be kept for a period of one semester and then destroyed.

**Reflective Assessments of Your Assignments Contained in the Portfolio**

As previously stated, the portfolio must include a **reflection on each of the ten competencies** (see Table 1) in relation to a **minimum of five assignments.** Use the provided Portfolio Template to ensure that you have reflected on each competency. Students will reflect on how the competency was achieved through the chosen assignment. Students may choose one assignment to meet more than one competency, but are still required to include separate reflection on how the assignment relates to each of the associated competencies. Table 1 lists potential assignments that may be pertinent for each competency. Each of the ten reflections (one per competency) should be at least one double spaced page. Each student should thoroughly demonstrate their critical thinking by linking the selected assignment to the competency and ensure that each assignment corresponds to at least one of the competencies.

Questions to guide your reflection may include:

* What aspect of this assignment corresponds to the identified competency, and associated practice behaviors?
* What did you learn from this assignment?
* How does the assignment relate to social work practice?
* What impact if any did the assignment have on your career goals?
* What discoveries if any, did you make because of this assignment?

**Evaluation for Senior Portfolios**

Each faculty advisor will review senior portfolios using. Please pay particular attention to professionalism, writing ability, and the ability to follow the directions for assembly of the portfolio. Areas of evaluation include overall organization and presentation of the portfolio, focus and relevance, accomplishment, depth and elaboration, critical thought or analysis in relation to the social work program’s goals and the competencies/practice behaviors.

**Table 1. Competencies and Potential Assignment to be included in the Portfolio**

*Student are expected to submit the graded documents along with pertinent faculty comments or grading rubrics. Faculty may suggest assignments for inclusion that are not otherwise stated.*

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| **Competencies** | **Assignments to consider** |
| EP 2.1.1 Identify as professional social worker & behave accordingly | * Field learning contract developed by the student, final field evaluation (FPAI) and case presentation paper (Field Placement and Seminar) SOWK 480, 481, 482 |
| EP 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. | * Initial Volunteer Contract and Journal, Midterm and Final Evaluations and Journals and Final Evaluation Paper SOWK 172 |
| EP 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform & communicate professional judgment. | * Policy Analysis Project SOWK 410 * Case presentation paper |
| EP 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice. | * Group Observation Project SOWK 442 |
| EP 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice. | * Policy Analysis Project SOWK 410 |
| EP 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice & practice informed research. | * Research Paper SOWK 440 * Policy Analysis Project SOWK 410 |
| EP 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. | * Development Project SOWK 400 |
| EP 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. | * Policy Analysis Project SOWK 410 |
| EP 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice. | * Multi-cultural Experience Paper SOWK 420 |
| EP 2.1.10 (a)-(d) Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. | * Bio-psychosocial assessment including genogram and ecomap, comprehensive treatment plan that include goals, objectives, tasks, and measurements, and five completed professional progress notes signed by the professor. SOWK 441 * Macro Project Paper SOWK 443 |

***Example reflection on a competency***

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| **Competency: *Engage diversity and difference in practice (EP 2.1.4)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures & values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power 2. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups 3. Recognize and communicate my understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences 4. View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants |
| **Assignment:**  SOWK 420- Multicultural Experience Paper |
| **Reflection:** This assignment fulfills the competency of EP 2.1.4. This competency addresses cultural competency and understanding of diversity. The aim of this assignment was to place myself in the shoes of someone with a background different from my own. There was a research component followed by an interview component and a self-reflection.  I feel that this assignment was most helpful for me in that it forced me to address issues of discrimination within my own life. Rural Nebraska is not the most diverse of locales, and so seeing the world through the eyes of a member of a minority population requires conscious effort. The general lack of insight by the majority population becomes a problem in that it hides the struggles many minority populations face. The knowledge and self-awareness gained through this assignment caused a range of emotions to emerge. I experienced both anger and sadness: anger for the people who have experienced discrimination based on their race or other demographic factor, and sadness that I have inadvertently partaken in this discrimination.  This assignment has been instrumental in helping me to shed my biases. The more deeply I become involved with social work, the more I can recognize that we are all different, even people of the same race. While it is possible to be more different than similar to a person of a different race, it is also possible to be more similar with someone who looks different than someone with the same color of skin. For example, music is a phenomenon found in all cultures. I may find more of a connection with another music lover who happens to be Latino and from Puerto Rico, than I do with a person who despises music yet is a Caucasian who grew up in my hometown. |

*The following pages should be used as a template to guide you in your*

*final Senior Portfolio Project*

*An editable Microsoft Word version of the file should be made*

*available to you by your instructor during your final semester*

**Example Title Page for Portfolio**

Student Name:

A Social Work Portfolio

Submitted to

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Department of Social Work

Kearney, Nebraska

By

Student Name

B.S.W. Student

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Bachelor of Social Work degree

Date

**Example Table of Contents Page for Portfolio**

**Table of Contents**

1. **Evidence of Learning**

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| **Pg. #** | **Competency Reflection** | **Specify Selected Assignment** |
|  | EP 2.1.1 Identify as professional social worker & behave accordingly |  |
|  | EP 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform & communicate professional judgment. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice & practice informed research. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice. |  |
|  | EP 2.1.10 (a)-(d) Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. |  |

Within the portfolio, reflections and assignments should be arranged as follows:

* Competency Reflection 2.1.1
* Associated assignment
* Competency Reflection 2.1.2
* Associated assignment
* Etc.

If multiple competencies can be found in one assignment then arrange them as follows:

* Competency Reflection 2.1.1
* Competency Reflection 2.1.2
* Associated assignment that is related to both competencies
* Etc.

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| **Competency: *Identifies as a Professional Social Work & Conducts oneself Accordingly (EP 2.1.1)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**  a) Advocate for client access to the services of social work  b) Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development  c) Attend to professional roles and boundaries  d) Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication  e) Engage in career-long learning  f) Use supervision and consultation |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice (EP 2.1.2)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. Recognize & manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice 2. Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the NASW code of Ethics 3. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts 4. Apply Strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments (EP 2.1.3)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. Distinguish, appraise, & integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom 2. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation 3. Demonstrate effective oral & written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Engage diversity and difference in practice (EP 2.1.4)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures & values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power 2. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups 3. Recognize and communicate my understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences 4. View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Advance Human Rights & Social and Economic Justice (EP 2.1.5)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination 2. Advocate for human rights and social & economic justice 3. Engage in practices that advance social & economic justice |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Engage in research-informed practice & practice-informed research (EP 2.1.6)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. use practice experience e to inform scientific inquiry 2. use research evidence to inform practice. |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment (EP 2.1.7)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation 2. critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment. |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services (EP 2.1.8)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and 2. collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action. |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency:** **Respond to contexts that shape practice *(EP 2.1.9)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**   1. continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services; and 2. provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services. |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |

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| **Competency: *Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (EP 2.1.10a-d)*** |
| **Practice Behaviors:**  *Engagement*   1. substantively and effectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and  communities; 2. use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and 3. develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes   *Assessment*   1. collect, organize, and interpret client data; 2. assess client strengths and limitations; 3. develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and 4. select appropriate intervention strategies.   *Intervention*   1. Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals; 2. Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities; 3. Help clients resolve problems; 4. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and 5. Facilitate transitions and endings.     *Evaluation*   1. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions. |
| **Assignment:** |
| Reflection: |