Saint Louis University
School of Social Work
BSSW Field Education
Policy and Procedures Manual

2024-2025

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Field Education! Many students report that field education is the best part of social work education. It is also the signature pedagogy of our degree, due to the uniqueness in which students are prepared to become professional social workers. As part of the BSSW degree, students will complete a year-long practicum. "Practicum" is a Latin word meaning "practical trainings." In the practica, students will have structured learning agreements that focus on competencies needed for generalist foundation and advanced practice. In developing competencies, students will have designated behavioral indicators that include skill and knowledge development, as well as integration of social work ethics. In the practica, the emphasis will be on skill development in micro, mezzo, and macro practice, while also having learning through behavioral indicators in social policy, human behavior, research, cultural competence, and ethics.

The practicum experience involves supervision, training, and mentoring from a qualified MSW field instructor in an approved social service agency or human service organization. In practica, students will provide social work services and function in generalist level social work positions.

Students will have a supportive and helpful relationship for their practica as they will work closely with a Faculty Liaison who has expertise in their area of practice. The Faculty Liaison will help with the planning and preparation, designing of learning agreement, visiting at mid-semester, and review work for the final evaluation and grade. In addition, the Liaison role is to facilitate quality practicum experiences and assist with any challenges. Further information on the practicum, the office of field education's policy and procedures, and other helpful information follows.

To develop competent practice skills and behaviors, the practicum experiences promote the application of learning from all areas of the educational program through practice and the integration of theory, knowledge, and values into a professional frame of reference.

The student is the main focus of the practica. As adult learners, students are expected to bring information from classroom courses to their practice sites and field instructors to facilitate integration of classroom and field learning.

II. SCHOOL MISSION, GOALS, AND BSSW PRACTICUM COMPETENCIES

The School's mission and goals, and the BSSW Program competencies frame the education experience throughout the coursework and practica based on the following:

Social work education is structured using a competency-based approach operationalized through the development of behavioral indicators. Designed to enable the student to demonstrate an integration and application of knowledge and skill, competencies are "comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes" (CSWE EPAS, 2022).

The School's mission: ***Saint Louis University School of Social Work prepares students for professional social work and applied behavior analysis practice with a commitment to social justice and the empowerment of vulnerable and oppressed populations. The School strives for a dynamic community of learning with excellence in teaching, research, and service.***

The goals of the School of Social Work are:

1. ***To use knowledge, values, and skills in generalist social work practice.***
2. ***To use knowledge, values, and skills in advanced social work and applied behavior analysis practice.***
3. ***To contribute to the advancement of knowledge of the professions.***
4. ***To use skills, talents, and time in pursuit of social justice in the community.***

The following competencies are contained in the Learning Agreement for the BSSW Practicum. Students must meet all of the competencies over two semesters.

The student shall:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
2. Advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
3. Engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) in practice
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
5. Engage in policy practice
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

(adopted from CSWE EPAS, 2022)

III. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND EXPECTATIONS IN FIELD EDUCATION

A. Role of the Student

The School of Social Work uses a structured self-selection model for practicum selection. As such, regular communication with their Faculty Liaison throughout the practicum planning and practicum search phase is critical. It is the student's responsibility to check their SLU email regularly and respond to communications from their Faculty Liaison in a timely manner. In consultation with the assigned Faculty Liaison, students are responsible for securing a practicum site. Students have a wide variety of choices in selecting their practica options from the school's approved practicum sites. Students initiate the practicum planning process by attending a practicum overview meeting. Invitations and notification for the practicum overview meeting will be sent to students who are identified as social work majors. Students will receive an invitation through their SLU email address to attend this meeting; multiple options will be provided and attendance is required. Students who attend the overview meeting will then receive an invitation for a one-on-one planning meeting with BSSW Faculty Liaison to their SLU email account. Multiple options will be provided and attendance is required. The overview meeting and one-on-one planning meeting are required before a practicum confirmation can be submitted by

the student. The Confirmation of Practicum form will be made available to students after they inform their Faculty Liaison they have secured an approved practicum placement. Students will be required to update their résumés, develop a cover letter, and review interviewing skills in pursuing a practicum. The deadline for final confirmation of practicum for BSSW students is the last Friday of May; failure to meet this deadline can result in the delay of starting practicum, including up to the fall of the following academic year. In the event that a student misses the deadline for confirming practicum, it is their responsibility to maintain weekly contact with their Faculty Liaison to apprise them of their progress in the process (contacting sites, scheduling interviews, interviewing, making a decision, etc.)

After the one-on-one meeting with the Faculty Liaison, students have the responsibility to follow up with desired agencies and organizations to pursue setting up formal interviews with the professionals who serve as contact persons for their agencies. **Starting a practicum without consulting your Faculty Liaison will lead to work hours in your practicum not being counted.**

The practicum search process is similar to a job search and employment interview. Students will need to have a professional resume and cover letter ready for the process. Contacts can be made through emailing or telephoning the listed contact for the specific practica.

Prior to contacting and interviewing, students need to be able to articulate their interests in the practicum site, their desired learning experiences, and career goals. Students should have researched the practicum site through reading their website or other on-line materials to have knowledge of what the agency's mission, programs, and services include. During the interview, the field instructors may ask about students' interests in completing a practicum at the agency, their learning style and needs for supervision, and previous volunteer or employment background that can provide some experience for the practicum. Students should also be prepared to ask questions that will provide information on learning experiences, preferred times for practica, and style of supervision. Students are then able to determine if the practicum is a "fit" for them, if they receive an offer. Students are free to have as many interviews or offers that they desire to locate a practicum. It is very important to be professional and respond to all offers. It may be that the student would like to have one practicum first and so they can negotiate with other offers to have a future practica.

The student's Faculty Liaison is available to provide additional resources or ideas in the process. Once a student has selected an offer, the student should complete the practicum confirmation request form provided to them during their one-on-one meeting with the Faculty Liaison. The form will include both the name of the site and the name & contact information of the field instructor. The request will be presented to the field education office for approval. **The student's practicum site & field instructor are not approved until the student receives a confirmation email to the SLU email address. Students may not begin practicum until their site and field instructor have been approved.**

Students are required to submit their Learning Agreements to their Faculty Liaison via Tevera within three weeks of the beginning of each semester (due date to be announced in seminar class and posted on the School of Social Work site and on the School of Social Work's Field Education

page on Canvas). In addition, the student will track their completed hours to record their practicum and supervision hours within Tevera. This log will be submitted to the Field Instructor via Tevera for approval. Students will also work with their Field Instructors to complete their final evaluation. All documents, and their stages of completion, are visible to your Faculty Liaison in Tevera.

Students are also expected to contact their Faculty Liaison as soon as any concern should arise in the practicum.

Students are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the following:

- Office of Field Education
- Practicum Agency
- NASW *Code of Ethics* (students will sign a pledge of ethical conduct in their integrative seminars).

B. Role of the Faculty Liaison

The Faculty Liaison serves as the "professor of record" for the practica courses. The Faculty Liaison is ultimately responsible for the practica grading. The Faculty Liaison provides the on-going linkage between the student, agency, and school. The Faculty Liaison has the following key roles:

Planning—In planning, Faculty Liaisons meet and assist students in preparing and planning for practica through reviewing the practicum process, reviewing resumes interviewing skills, and providing referrals on possible practica sites that meet the students' interests and learning needs. The Faculty Liaison will also work with the Director of Field Education in approving any new practicum sites, field instructors, or place-of-employment practica.

Monitoring—In monitoring, the Faculty Liaison assists, reviews, and approves the learning agreements (also provides the "helpful guides"). In addition, the Liaison is available to the student or field instructor at any time should concerns arise.

Evaluating—In evaluating, the Faculty Liaison will set up a mid-semester visit with the student, task instructor, and field instructor to review the student's practicum experience and progress in meeting the learning agreement's competencies and behavioral indicators. The Liaison visits primarily to support and advocate for a quality learning experience. In addition, the Liaison will be involved in any special concern or performance issue that arises and has the final responsibility of assigning a grade after reviewing the field instructor's ratings on the final evaluation and recommendation.

C. Role of the Practicum Agencies

Agencies and organizations that are approved as practicum sites for the School of Social Work have agreed to the following:

1) Partner with the School of Social Work to provide quality practica experiences for SLU students;

2) Adhere to recognized standards and evidenced–based social work practice and be in good standing within the professional community;
3) Provide a MSW degreed professional who is a staff member, board member, volunteer or officially affiliated with the agency who will provide supervision for the student;
4) Create a climate for student learning with a range of appropriate learning experiences for students;
5) Provide support and resources that enables the field instructor(s) to complete the St. Louis Collaborative's Field Instructor Certification Program within a two-year period; and
6) Regularly update collaborative on-line database for their agency and field instructors and provide the school with a signed affiliation agreement.

D. **Role of Field Instructors**

Field Instructors that are approved for field instruction for students have agreed to the following:

1) Partner with the School of Social Work to serve as a field instructor;
2) Verify that they have a Master of Social Work degree from a CSWE-accredited school by completion of a profile in the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative Database;
3) Verify that they have at least two years of successful practice in social work following completion of the degree through their profile;
4) Verify their employment history at the agency for at least one year through the profile;
5) Serve as a teacher, mentor, and supervisor for students;
6) Meet with the student for a minimum of one hour per week of face-to-face supervision;
7) Commit to completing the Field Instructor Certification Program as a new field instructor within a two-year period;
8) Demonstrate ethical practice and be in good standing with the professional community
9) Provide a quality learning experience appropriate to the student's level in practica;
10) Assist in development and approval of the student's learning agreement;
11) Perform timely final evaluation and grade recommendation at the end of the student's practicum;
12) Contact the Faculty Liaison at any time for concerns or resources;
13) Nominate students for "Outstanding Practicum Student" when indicated;
14) In the rare situation where the field instructor is "affiliated" with the agency, the agency is required to provide permission and support for an outside MSW to provide field instruction.

E. Field Instruction Certification Program for New Field Instructors

Saint Louis University partners with Washington University in St. Louis, University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) and Fontbonne University as members of the "St. Louis Field Education Collaborative." The Collaborative provides the on-going database of approved practicum agencies and field instructors and provides orientation and advanced education sessions for field instructors to become "Certified Field Instructors." This training is designed to provide an on-going focus on the provision of quality field instruction for students in the St. Louis metropolitan area and nearby communities. All newer field instructors (since 2007) are required to complete these sessions within a two-year period. http://www.fieldedu.com/

F. Role of Task Instructors

A Task Instructor is an agency-based professional who typically has a master's degree in another field or has a Master of Social Work, but is not yet eligible to serve as the MSW Field Instructor. In some instances, Task Instructors may meet the qualifications to be a Field Instructor, but they may assume a Task Instructor role, such as in larger organizations and hospitals. Task Instructors serve as day-to-day supervisors and, in conjunction with a MSW Field Instructor, will assist and approve the learning agreement, participate in the mid-semester visit, and perform the final evaluation. Task Instructors are also invited to the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative's orientation and education sessions but are not required to attend.

G. Role of the Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education is responsible for the development, management, and evaluation of the practicum operations of the School of Social Work. The Director fulfills these roles through the following responsibilities:

1) Structure the practicum program in concert with the School's mission and curriculum;
2) Arrange for notification to students and field instructors of the timeframes and deadlines for requesting and confirming practicum placements and for submitting a learning agreement with the field instructor;
3) Assign Faculty Liaisons to students for the planning, monitoring, and evaluation phases of practicum;
4) Support and monitor the activities of the Faculty Liaisons;
5) Participate with the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative for the orientation and educational programming, along with administration of the database;
6) Relate to community agencies affiliated with the School of Social Work as practicum sites;
7) Promote the development of and approval of new practicum sites;
8) Monitor the quality of learning experiences offered by practicum sites;
9) Oversee the development of policies and practices for practicum operation;
10) Serve as a member of relevant school committees, such as program assessment;
11) Serve as voting member of the BSSW and MSW Program Committees;
12) Approve practicum placements at the student's place of employment;
13) Review and supervise revision of practicum forms, including learning agreements and evaluation instruments;
14) Assure that the practicum program meets CSWE guidelines;
15) When appropriate, pursue financial resources to support students in practica;
16) Network with local and national field education programs within schools of social work;
17) Review and revise internal documents, SSW Field Education Canvas page, & on-line practicum management system.
18) Perform other duties as required to assure the smooth operation of Practica experiences for students.

H. Role of the Field Education Advisory Committee

The Field Education Advisory Committee reviews and advises the Office of Field Education on issues related to practicum policies, to include site and field instructor criteria, evaluation of students and field instructors and Integrative Seminar content. Membership, appointed by the Director, includes: the Director of Field Education, faculty Field Liaisons, one tenure-track faculty member, field instructor representatives from the BSSW program and each of the MSW advanced practice concentration areas and a minimum of one student representative each from the BSSW and MSW programs. The Field Education Advisory Committee meets a minimum of one time each semester and reports its ongoing work to the appropriate curriculum committees.

I. Role of the Academic Advisor and Faculty Mentor

The Academic Advisor and Faculty Mentor provide a supportive role to the field education component of the student's curriculum. The Academic Advisor assists BSSW students in registering for the appropriate practica using the section number of the assigned Faculty Liaison and the appropriate Integrative Seminar, when needed. Advisors also can help students to take courses that would best prepare them for the specific practica they are planning. As social workers themselves, Faculty Mentors, can discuss practicum and career interests and goals.

IV. GENERAL PRACTICUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Eligibility for Practicum

BSSW students must be at a senior level in course completion for the Fall/Spring practica, have a 2.0 GPA, and not be on admission, academic expectations, or professional competence probation in order to enroll in practica courses. Students who believe they will be getting off probation at the end of a semester can request and plan a practicum but will not be able to complete it unless they are officially removed from probationary status. Field Education faculty are stewards of the profession of social work with an ethical obligation to clients, to colleagues, practice settings, and the profession. As such, Faculty Liaisons and the Director of Field Education may engage in discussions to determine the readiness of a student for practicum, with consideration of students' academic preparedness and their overall standing with the University.

B. Hours Required for Practicum

BSSW practica require a time commitment of 200 clock hours each semester for a total of 400 over the two-semester/block period. The student is required to complete a minimum of 14 hours/week at their practicum site during the semester. The minimum duration of a practicum is 10 weeks. With advance permission from the professor (Faculty Liaison), time per week and number of weeks can vary.

C. Counting of Hours While "On Call"

When the practicum involves the student to be "on call" and carry a cell phone, the student may only count the time that they are actually engaged in client work and paperwork associated with the client interaction. Students should keep careful records of their time spent on-task while on beeper call. Students should always have a supervisor or staff member available for consultation while "on call."

D. Recording Practicum Hours

Students must record their hours and learning activities at practicum in Tevera.. Each semester, students will submit their practicum and supervision hours to their Field Instructor for approval via Tevera and at the end of each semester will attest to their final hours through the Tevera platform. Time spent in activities that count toward the total required hours are those that generally would count as employment activities. Examples of activities for which students would not be able to count their hours include meals taken out of agency, traveling to and from the practicum site, and after-hour social events associated with the practicum. Practicum hours may be counted for time conducting research or working on projects that is performed off-site, but must be limited to 30 hours or less of the 200 hours required for one practicum and require the approval of the student's Field Instructor. In addition, any off-site work must have products or an outcome related to a learning objective (See "Off-Site Practicum Activities" section below). **Starting a practicum without consulting your Faculty Liaison will result in practicum work hours not being counted.**

E. **Academic Credits**

Five credit hours each are granted for the successful completion of SWRK 4100 (Practicum I) and SWRK 4200 (Practicum II) for a total of ten credit hours. One credit hour each is granted for the successful completion of each semester's seminar (SWRK4150: Seminar I and SWRK4250: Seminar II) for a total of two credit hours.

F. Practicum Enrollment Options

Two options exist for fulfilling the practicum requirement:

- A **concurrent practicum** consists of one practicum during a semester completed in no less than 10 weeks and no more than 20 weeks. This flexibility in the duration of the practicum equates to approximately 12-24 hours/week in the Fall, Spring, or Summer.

  Students may begin the practicum two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester and extend the practicum two weeks following the end of the semester for a total of 20 weeks. Arrangements that deviate from this policy must be arranged prior to the start of the practicum by the Faculty Liaison.

- A **block practicum** consists of two practica completed during the same semester in no less than 10 weeks and no more than 20 weeks. This may be completed in approximately 32 hours/week in the Fall or Spring semesters or 40 hours/week in the Summer semester. Students may begin the practicum two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester and extend the practicum two weeks following the end of the semester for a total of 20 weeks. Arrangements that deviate from this policy must be arranged prior to the start of the practicum by the Faculty Liaison. Note that a block practicum is only allowed for educational purposes and must be approved at the discretion of the Faculty Liaison during the planning process.

G. Practicum Orientation

Students will be oriented to Field Education through a mandatory practicum overview meeting scheduled in the spring semester prior to the fall practicum. Additional practicum information also occurs during the Integrative Practice Seminar.

H. Practicum Planning

Students initiate the practicum planning process by attending a practicum overview meeting. Invitations and notification for the practicum overview meeting will be sent to students who are identified as social work majors. Students will receive an invitation through their SLU email address to attend a required practicum overview meeting; multiple options will be provided and attendance is required. Students who attend the overview meeting will then receive an invitation for a one-on-one planning meeting with BSSW Faculty Liaison to their SLU email account. Multiple options will be provided and attendance is required. The overview meeting and one-on-one planning meeting are required before a practicum confirmation can be submitted by the student. The "practicum confirmation request" form will be made available to students during the one-on-one meeting. Students will be required to update their resumés, develop a cover letter, and review interviewing skills in pursuing a practicum.

I. Evening and/or Weekend Practica

Students who need evening and weekend practica hours due to employment or other responsibilities benefit from starting the practicum planning process as early as possible in the semester preceding the intended practicum. Many sites offer evening and weekend hours in addition to day hours for practicum learning opportunities. However, fewer agencies offer evening-only and /or weekend hours supervised by an eligible field instructor than those that offer day hours or a combination of day and evening/weekend hours. Students are encouraged to explore the extent to which their schedule can be flexible and to share their schedule constraints with their Faculty Liaison in the planning process.

MSW supervision must be available during this time, although the MSW supervisor does not need to be at the site every hour that the student completes hours. However, some staff must be available for student consultation when the student is completing hours.

J. Integrative Practicum Seminars

Students enrolled in SWRK 4100 and SWRK4200 Practicum must enroll concurrently in the respective Integrative Practice Seminar.

The purpose of the seminar courses is to provide an opportunity for students to integrate theoretical constructs and information gained in the classroom with the application of social work practice. In addition, the seminars are designed to:

1) Provide additional integration of coursework and daily practice
2) Enhance student's knowledge and skill base through peer sharing
3) Provide a supportive opportunity for students to debrief on practice challenges.

K. Request for Extension of Due Date for Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement is due three weeks from the start of the semester according to a deadline established by the Office of Field Education, regardless of the start date for a practicum. If more time is needed, a Request for Extension of Due Date for Learning Agreement form must be completed and submitted to the Faculty Liaison. Students who fail to complete and turn in the form risk losing credit for hours completed at the practicum after the third week. **The forms are located on the SSW Field Education page under 'Forms'.**

L. Problems in Practicum/Termination of Practicum

Students and/or Field Instructors are to contact their Faculty Liaison should a problem or serious concern arise in the course of the practicum. Depending on the situation, the Faculty Liaison may arrange a special meeting and/or develop an additional plan or agreement, if necessary. Such a situation may occur as a result of agency or field instructor related challenges, such as insufficient resources and/or experiences to provide for an adequate learning experience; agency restructuring; field instructor leaving agency or not able to provide field instruction; or an unresolvable "lack of fit" between the student and field instructor.

Additionally, a termination will result from a student being asked to leave the agency or receiving an "Unsatisfactory" in the first of a two-semester practica commitment based on the final evaluation average falling below a "3" and/or performance or professional competence issues. Students are not to leave their practicum until they have discussed the situation with their Faculty Liaison. The faculty field liaison will work with and gather information from the student and field instructor in order to determine the course of action. The courses of action may include placement of the student in a new field agency or with a new field instructor. If the situation involves issues of performance, professional competence, or ethical violations, then the termination could result in an "Unsatisfactory" grade for the practicum and/or referral to the Student Affairs Committee (see BSSW Student Handbook for further details). In this case, the student would have to repeat the practicum and the 240 practicum hours required as well as the corresponding integrative seminar course.

In the event that the termination is due to factors not related to the student, then the student and Faculty Liaison will determine the number of hours that can be counted at the next practicum. This determination would also require the agreement of the new site and field instructor.

M. Extended Leave from a Practicum

Students experiencing significant health or personal challenges and feel they cannot complete their practicum as planned, should consult with their Faculty Liaison to handle the situation in a professional manner. Students may not "take a break" from their practicum without Faculty Liaison approval. Students experiencing personal issues that prevent them from completing their courses and practicum should also contact the BSSW Program Director. An official "extended leave" form must be completed. Faculty Liaisons, along with the Director of Field Education, have the discretion to determine the readiness of a student to return to practicum.

N. Grading

Grades for the practica courses include Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. Practica grades do not figure into the cumulative GPA. However, an "unsatisfactory" would count as an F per the grading policies in the BSSW Program. The Field Instructor completes the final evaluation to

include the ratings of practice behaviors and professional behaviors. The Field Instructor recommends a grade of "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." The Faculty Liaison has the final authority for the grade and is responsible to enter it in the Banner system once the final evaluation and time log are reviewed. An average score of less than 3.00 on a student's final practicum evaluation results in an "unsatisfactory."

If a student is unable to complete practicum hours during the regular semester hours due to extenuating circumstances, the Faculty Liaison has the discretion to approve an extended period of time for the student to complete practicum. This request must be approved by the site/Field Instructor and discussed with the Faculty Liaison prior to the end of the semester. If the Faculty Liaison approves extended time, a grade of "In Progress" (IP) will be submitted when grades are due. The "IP" grade will be changed to "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" upon completion of the practicum per the process stated above.

O. Practicum Start Date

Students should arrange a practicum start date with their practicum site. Students may begin the practicum as early as two weeks prior to the start of a semester; students' start dates must be confirmed with the student's Faculty Liaison, regardless of whether they're starting early or starting at the beginning of the semester. Students must also be aware that an early start means their Learning Agreement due date also moves up; their new Learning Agreement due date is the third Friday following their practicum start date.

P. **Appropriate Activities**

While in practicum, students should be engaged in activities commensurate with their social work program and level of training and should avoid activities expressly prohibited by their programs. Questions regarding appropriate practicum activities can be directed to the Faculty Liaison.

Q. Prohibited Activities

The distribution of medication of any kind is prohibited in practicum. If students are in a setting at which social workers routinely distribute medication and they are asked to distribute, the Faculty Liaison should be contacted.

R. Activities Undertaken with Caution

Physical Restraint

In the event that a student's practicum placement is within a setting and with a population where physical restraint may be needed, practicum students may assist in limited instances and only if:

- the practicum student is the only person available to assist
- the client is in immediate risk for harm
- the practicum student is **fully trained** in the formal, person-centered behavior management/ de-escalation program utilized by the organization

Training in verbal de-escalation and approved physical restraint techniques is provided at the expense of the organization/agency/practicum site and must include real-time practice;

virtual training will not fulfill this training requirement. Trainings outside of those provided by the practicum site will not count as a substitute; the student must maintain any certifications in this training for the duration of the practicum experience. In the event of a certification lapse, practicum students are prohibited from assisting with physical restraint.

Additionally, practicum students are prohibited from assisting with physical restraining clients until they have obtained certification as listed above. **Until they are trained, students should not be in 1:1 situations alone with clients but may work with clients in the physical space where other employees are present (ie: shadowing, in classrooms, office spaces, etc.).**

If students are asked to assist with the physical restraint of a client when they are not fully trained or when their certification has lapsed, they should refrain from doing so, **and the Faculty Liaison must be notified. In the event the Faculty Liaison is not available, the student should then contact the Director of Field Education.**

Transporting Clients

If transporting clients is a common practice in their duties as a practicum student, **students should make their Faculty Liaison aware.** Students **must** be provided with properly installed car seats and booster seats by the practicum site when transporting clients for whom child passenger safety laws apply. **Students should not transport clients for whom carseats and boosters are necessary by state law but are not provided by the practicum site. If students are asked to do so, they should notify their Faculty Liaison. In the event the Faculty Liaison is not available, the student should then contact the Director of Field Education.**

Students who are required to transport clients for practicum activities should clarify liability issues with their personal auto insurer and their practicum site. Students are required to have at least the current amount of automobile insurance required by state law. If an accident occurs in a student vehicle, the student's insurance would be the primary insurance, and the student would be responsible for the deductible. The University provides secondary insurance.

S. Agency Reimbursement for Student Services

Students shall follow agency policy regarding the collection of fees and accepting gifts. While in practicum, students may not personally keep any fees charged for their services. All revenue must be turned over to the practicum agency. Students cannot take Missouri Medicaid or private insurance clients.

T. Agency Policies

Students are required to comply with the rules and policies of the practicum site, insofar as they pertain to the student's activities while at the practicum site.

U. Off-Site Practicum Activities

Students may have up to 30 hours of off-site hours related to work for their practicum. Appropriate off-site activities include library or internet searches, writing or designing work, or

data collection/analyses. These hours must be recorded as off-site on the time log and approved by the Field Instructor **in advance**.

In addition, students may count activities such as attending related practicum meetings, conferences, lobby days, special lectures or trainings as practicum hours as long as the field instructor approves. Students are encouraged to attend coalition or community-based events for a stronger learning experience.

V. **Learning Agreement Deadline**

Learning Agreements are the central focus for students in developing practice behaviors and developing competence. These are important as they are the basis for the practicum final evaluation, record your experiences, and focus your activities to provide the integration with the curriculum. Students are encouraged to write in full sentences, proofread, and to be sure that the activity is appropriate for the designated practice behavior. Learning Agreements must be submitted viaTevera by the third Friday of starting practicum or the third Friday each semester, whichever comes first. **Hours may not be counted past the due date unless a Learning Agreement or an Extension form has been completed.**

W. **Criminal Records**

Students should inform the Director of Field Education of any information regarding felony convictions and/or other information that may impact the student's ability to secure and complete a practicum. The School of Social Work does not require or conduct criminal background checks on students. If the program is aware of criminal convictions or other pertinent information, the student will be asked to sign a release of information authorizing the program to verify the criminal history, discuss this information with approved practicum sites and provide verification of the record to the agency at which the student is confirmed to complete their practicum experience.

Conviction of a criminal offense does not necessitate barring an individual from becoming a social worker or from making a major contribution to society. Applicants for admission to the School of Social Work will be evaluated on the basis of their overall qualifications. Students should be advised, however, that a criminal conviction could prevent him/her from completing practicum in some agency settings.

X. Criminal Background Check

Practicum sites may require criminal background checks on students before they are allowed to begin their practicum. In these instances, students assume all responsibility for completing these requirements and providing copies of the results to the agency(ies) upon request. In particular, The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations requires any student completing a practicum or internship at a healthcare facility (to possibly include mental health agencies, long term care facilities, and other non-hospital settings) to have a criminal background check prior to acceptance and starting their hours. Depending on the type, number, and other factors, completion of a criminal background check can require as long as six weeks. For many agencies, **students will not be allowed to start until they have this on file at the agency.** If not done in advance of the intended start date, a significant delay could occur.

Drug Test

Some practicum sites require drug testing. For a fee to the student, drug testing can be obtained at the Student Health Services, Marchetti Towers (East). For more information, call (314) 977-2323.

Y. Verification of Health Records

Students are responsible for any verification of health records, proof of immunizations, or a Tuberculosis test that is required by a practicum site. Since students are required to submit this document to SLU Student Health Services, they can obtain a copy from them as well as obtain any new testing required.

Z. Lobbying Activities

Students who engage in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the Field Instructor and their Faculty Liaison the issue of registering as a lobbyist with the appropriate governmental entity. If the student and Field Instructor determine that registration is appropriate, the student must register as a lobbyist with the practicum agency (not Saint Louis University). It is the responsibility of the student and the agency to comply with all laws and regulations relevant to lobbying.

AA. Sharing Sensitive Information

The Office of Field Education and the Faculty Liaisons will not share any sensitive information without the student signing a release of information. The Faculty Liaison may share relevant or helpful information to a Field Instructor or practicum agency such as student name and that they will be contacting for an interview, level and/or concentration, and semester desired. Generally, Faculty Liaisons encourage and assist students in being able to share any sensitive information themselves directly to Field Instructors. Faculty at the school are bound by FERPA (Federal Educational confidentiality guidelines) so cannot respond to all questions posed by outside field persons (including family members). Faculty can share information with a student's adviser.

BB. Safety and Security of Student in Practicum

Safety of students in the field is a priority for the Office of Field Education. While the University does not wish students to be protected from the realities of professional practice, immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks. The University and practicum agencies must partner to reduce risks to students in practicum. Many practicum students have safety and security concerns as they enter the field practicum. If not addressed, concerns about personal safety can significantly impact learning opportunities in the practicum. Field Instructors and practicum sites, when applicable, should:

1) Discuss safety and security matters with students at the placement interview or at the outset of the practicum. Information about the prevalence of or potential for violence while conducting practicum activities should be relayed to the student.
2) Explain and enforce agency safety protocols with students, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients and home visit safety procedures (NOTE: students are expected to follow agency rules regarding the necessity of home visits and home visit protocol).

3) Provide a tour of the surrounding neighborhood or areas in which the student may work and address concerns students may have regarding work in the community.
4) Allow students to observe staff engaged in the work for which the student is preparing.
5) Allow students to be observed while engaged in learning activities.
6) Link students with agency-provided security resources (i.e., safety training, cellular telephones, beepers).

The following types of activities warrant special concern and, therefore, should be discussed with the Faculty Liaison and the student prior to the assignment:

1) Transportation of clients in the student's private vehicle
2) Transportation of a client with a recent history of violent behavior
3) Treatment of a client with a history of violence toward the staff
4) Work in the agency at times when or in areas where other staff is not present.

Any incident or injury involving the student should be reported immediately to the Faculty Liaison.

CC. Paid Practicum

While agencies are not required to financially compensate students for practicum, the Office of Field Education encourages organizations and agencies to provide funds when possible. It is important for the Faculty Liaison to know of these arrangements as the educational experience is still primary before an employment status.

Possible funding sources for practicum include:

1) Agency general revenue or grant funds—Some agencies have included stipend funds for practica in grant proposal budgets. Other agencies have allocated stipend funds for students in their annual budgets or used personnel funds if the student fills in for a staff member on leave. If an agency relies on student labor to fulfill specific duties and would like to have students each semester, offering a stipend can be a very effective incentive in recruitment efforts.
2) Government funding—Within government agencies, a variety of governmental funding options may be made available for training stipends. Some governmental agencies provide a stipend while other state and local agencies may elect to use discretionary funds.
3) University-secured funding—The University or School of Social Work at times obtains funding through grants that can provide a student stipend in practica.
4) Practicum at Place-of-Employment—If a potential practicum exists at a student's place of employment and would entail new and appropriate learning for the student, practicum credit may be earned at the agency with specific arrangements. An additional possibility for a paid practicum exists if the student works at a practicum site. Some students are able to successfully negotiate the completion of practicum activities while on work time within a social service agency. Place-of- Employment practica need to be individually negotiated with the Office of Field Education.

DD. Place-of-Employment Practica

Students employed in a social service setting may have the option to complete up to two semesters of practicum at their place of employment. In order to broaden the learning

experience, a practicum completed at a student's place of employment requires:

1) The practicum roles be:
   a. different from regular employment for **up to** 20 hours per week **with employer approval**;
   b. new learning;
   c. appropriate to the student's level of social work training.

Additionally, by allowing a Place-of-Employment practicum, the employer and Field Instructor must agree to assist with ensuring the job responsibilities are integrated into new learning opportunities. Documentation of this work must be completed weekly, along with documentation of separate paid work time activities and how new learning occurred.

2) A Field Instructor that:
   a. meets all of the usual requirements for a Field Instructor;
   b. a person other than the student's employment supervisor.

3) Students will discuss possible place-of-employment opportunities with the Faculty Liaison and initiate the completion of the "Place-of-Employment" form. The completed form is agreed upon and signed by the student, Field Instructor, employment supervision, Faculty Liaison, and Director of Field Education. Students will negotiate an outcome from the experience (e.g., project, log, etc.) with the Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison.
   a. Place of employment practicum will require multiple check-ins and/or documentation for working hours where practicum was completed.

4) By completing a Place of Employment practicum, both student and Field Instructor acknowledge and accept risks associated with doing so, particularly the implications of termination of employment or practicum due to performance. When a termination of employment occurs and it is a Place of Employment practicum experience, the student must follow the procedure outlined in this manual in Section N, entitled " Problems in Practicum/Termination of Practicum"

The practicum arrangement must be approved by both the Faculty Liaison and the Director of Field Education.

EE. Liability Coverage

The practicum agency may have established policies regarding liability coverage for student travel and practice. As these policies vary within the community, students are strongly encouraged to address and clarify these issues prior to the acceptance of a practicum. Saint Louis University provides up to $1,000,000 in professional malpractice insurance coverage for each occurrence. Students may also elect to purchase individual malpractice coverage at their own expense through the National Association of Social Workers Insurance Trust (800/638-8799 ext. 387) or another insurance carrier. Students may contact any Faculty Liaison for more information about individual coverage options. The University can provide verification to the agency of such coverage.

The University does not provide automobile liability coverage. **Students who will be using their personal vehicle for agency business should negotiate automobile coverage with the agency at the time of the interview.**

FF. Reimbursement to Agency

Students are responsible for reimbursing the practicum agency should any loss, damage or breakage of equipment be caused by the student's misuse of equipment.

GG. Ethics Statement

All students in practicum must sign a statement pledging that they understand they must comply with the NASW *Code of Ethics* during their practicum. The Ethics Statement will be discussed and signed during the student's first Integrative Seminar.

HH. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

All students are **required** to complete a HIPAA training prior to beginning their first practicum. This requirement can be fulfilled in three ways:

1) submission of written documentation, signed and on letterhead, that a HIPAA training has previously been completed. This would be submitted to the field education office;
2) completion of a University-sponsored HIPAA training; or
3) completion of a University-sponsored on-line HIPAA training via Banner.

Students are not allowed to begin practicum until this requirement is complete. For more information, students may contact the Office of Field Education for more information at (314) 977-2724.

II. Harassment Policy

Students are not to experience any harassment in the course of practicum. However, if it should occur, the student should contact the field instructor and Faculty Liaison immediately. Faculty Liaisons will follow the University's Harassment policy located at https://slu.policystat.com/policy/token_access/27bd408e-1fae-4d78-824f-87ffd2ea2019/ handling any reported harassment issues that occur in practicum. In addition, the student should contact the field instructor and Faculty Liaison immediately in the event of harassment, so agency policy can be followed as well.

JJ. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 extends and implements civil rights protections for disabled individuals on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status or disability. Students requiring an accommodation related to a disability should contact the University Office of Disability Services to document the disability. The student is encouraged to inform the agency of the accommodations needed in the interviewing phase of practicum selection. In addition, the Faculty Liaison, as professor of record, will receive a copy of the accommodations. Students cannot request accommodations in the practicum agency without having registered with the SLU office of Disability Services.

KK. Academic Credit for Life or Previous Work Experience

In accordance with Council on Social Work Education policy, academic credit for life experience, volunteer experience, and/or previous work experience cannot be granted in lieu of the field practicum courses.

LL. Mandated Reporting

As emerging social work professionals, our expectation is that students adhere to the NASW *Code of Ethics* and report incidents of suspected neglect or abuse; however, we recommend students discuss these situations with their field instructors to gain full appreciation and knowledge of the reporting process. It is also recommended that students familiarize themselves with individual State Laws (where they are completing practicum and/or where they intend to practice after graduation) that determine who is a mandated reporter: http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm and https://dss.mo.gov/cd/pdf/guidelines_can_reports.pdf.

If a student suspects any form of child or elder abuse or neglect, they should inform their field instructor immediately. The school prefers that the field instructor, in conjunction with the student, make the mandated reporter call. This will be important, as the student may have left the practicum before the investigation is completed.

MM. Conflict of Interest

Students may not complete practicum in settings in which they have a family member who is a staff member (including owner of the agency), board member, current volunteer, or any other significant dual relationship. For further discussion, see Faculty Liaison.

V. FIELD EDUCATION RESOURCE MATERIALS

A. Field Education Canvas page - The following information and materials are available on SLU's School of Social Work page and on the Field Education Canvas page:

1) Practicum Opportunities—announcements of new and current practicum opportunities
2) practicum due dates
3) general practicum announcements

B. Field Education page on the School of Social Work page – Information available:

1) Office of Field Education Contact information
2) practicum requirements, policies and related information
3) link to the Field Education Collaborative Searchable Practicum database

C. Information Through Email

Students will have a great deal of communication with their Faculty Liaison and practicum Field Instructors through their SLU email accounts. It is the responsibility of students to check their SLU email account regularly for communications and respond in a timely manner.

VI. OFFICE OF FIELD EDUCATION RESOURCES AND FUNCTIONS

A. Field Education Curriculum Committee

The Field Education Curriculum Committee is composed of full-time and adjunct Field Education Liaisons. The committee oversees and approves policy related to Field Education, consults with the appropriate curriculum committees, notifies and, if

appropriate, seeks approval from the School Assembly of policy changes relevant to the curriculum.

B. Practicum Competencies and Practice Behaviors
The responsibility for authoring and approval of modifications to field education learning objectives is shared between committees charged with overseeing curriculum and the Office of Field Education. Input for and approval of modifications must be gained from both prior to the implementation of the objectives. For the Office of Field Education, input and approval must be obtained by the Field Education Curriculum Committee.

VII. CHECKLIST FOR BEGINNING YOUR FIRST PRACTICUM

- □ Step 1: Watch for an email invitation and School of Social Work postings for the mandatory practicum overview meeting in late January.
- □ Step 2: Attend one of the mandatory practicum overview meetings.
- □ Step 3: Complete HIPAA in training in Banner or provide verification to the field education office.
- □ Step 4: Sign up for one-on-one meeting with the Faculty Liaison.
- □ Step 5: Meet with your assigned Faculty Liaison to discuss practicum options that fit your career goals and interests and accommodate, as possible, your employment/family responsibilities. With your Liaison, develop a list of potential practicum sites.
- □ Step 6: Contact agencies for interview and report progress via email to your Faculty Liaison
- □ Step 7: Complete interviews.
- □ Step 8: Submit the confirmation request form you received during your one-on-one meeting with the Faculty Liaison.
- □ Step 9: During the registration period, meet with your academic advisor to review your academic plan. Register in Banner for the appropriate Practicum and Integrative Seminar.
- □ Step 10: Begin your practicum the following semester on a date arranged with the practicum site.

NOTE: YOU MAY NOT COUNT PRACTICUM HOURS OR BEGIN PRACTICUM UNTIL HIPAA TRAINING IS COMPLETE AND PRACTICUM SITE & FIELD INSTRUCTOR HAVE BEEN APPROVED.

VIII. TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICUM (developed by Pamela J. Huggins)

"For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them." ~Aristotle

1. Approach your practicum as a job.
This means that being on time, having regular attendance, following agency policies and the dress code, and performing your best will provide you with a strong reference for your next practicum or first social work position.

2. Communication is vital.
It is important to communicate your thoughts, wishes, and concerns openly and frequently with your field instructor and other staff. Establishing a strong communication plan that also may include email or voice mail will lessen frustrations or misinterpretations. Your Faculty Liaison at the school is available to talk to you about any concerns or questions that you may have during your practicum.

3. Focus.
As a student you may be very busy, however it is important that when you arrive for your practicum that you are mentally and physically ready to do your best work. If you are routinely distracted, sleepy, or have an active cell phone, your field instructor may interpret that you are not interested in your practicum work or not developing as a professional.

4. Embrace the learning opportunities and take risks.
Be open to new learning opportunities even if they present some challenges. Throughout your practicum, seek and plan to have experiences (even if observational) in all aspects of the agency's scope of services. Consider changing your schedule to attend a learning opportunity that you might have otherwise missed.

5. Your field instructor is a volunteer!
Social workers voluntarily choose to serve as field instructors often out of a desire to "give back" to the profession. Additionally, they are hoping to increase the amount of services that agencies can provide to clients with a student's presence. They are not paid and there are few perks! Developing a strong working relationship with your field instructor will enhance your learning and supervision, and also increase the likelihood of a strong reference for future jobs.

6. The Learning Agreement is a useful tool.
The Learning Agreement is a tool to assist students in integrating what they have learned in the classroom as well as what they need to know to be an effective social worker with daily practicum experiences. It is important to customize your learning agreement with your specific interests.

7. Feedback helps you develop as a social worker.
Students are encouraged to make a list of topics to actively discuss during supervision time. In addition, practica offer the unique opportunity to gain feedback in a supportive way. View your evaluations as another form of feedback on your developmental journey of strengths and areas of focus for becoming a social worker.

IX. SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION SUGGESTIONS

The following guidelines are designed to assist students and field instructors in maximizing the practicum experience. The manner in which these functions are carried out will vary from setting to setting. As many students will not work for the agency in which they complete a practicum, students are most in need of transferable social work skills they can use in a variety of service systems.

1) **Orientation and Introductions**

A formal or informal orientation should include an introduction to:

a. setting – physical facilities, parking, schedule, personnel, dress code, etc.
b. policies and procedures – documentation, service delivery, reimbursement, communications, etc.
c. agency and community resources
d. introductions to staff, volunteers, professionals and support staff.

While orientation usually occurs most intensively during the first one or two weeks of placement, some types of orientation can be spread over the semester, such as sessions on the nature of specific presenting problems, background on pertinent client issues, and other programs with which the the student is not intimately involved.

2) Regularly scheduled, private supervisory conferences for one hour per week

Individual supervision sessions should be carried out as regularly scheduled sessions. Some flexibility to change the time is sometimes necessary; however, it is helpful to have a prearranged time to which the student and field instructor can be held accountable.

3) **Supervision available as needed**

Frequent, impromptu supervision during the initial phases of the field placement is especially critical to the success of the field placement for many students. If the field instructor is not personally available, another staff member can be designated to respond to questions that must be answered immediately.

4) **Clear supervision and work expectations**

Students, field instructors, and agencies benefit from clear supervision and work expectations. While some field instructors expect students to prepare for and bring an agenda to the supervision session, others prefer to structure the time for the student. The expectations for the quality of work variety widely among field instructors, as well. Students benefit from very clear expectations that are communicated at the beginning of their practicum and reiterated if and when expectations change.

5) **Immersion into work as early as possible in the placement**

The student should move from reading about the agency and observing others to actually practicing social work as quickly as possible. For example, starting with assigning a

piece of a larger assignment to the student that can be completed along with another staff member is a helpful beginning experience.

6) **Exposure to relevant and varied learning experiences**
The competencies behavioral indicators for a student's practicum, explicated in the Learning Agreement, depend upon the degree sought, concentration, and level of practicum. However, all students benefit from both breadth and depth of learning experiences. The Faculty Liaison may also be a helpful resource as to possible practicum learning activities. Students should be engaged in work activities consonant with professional social work and should not be involved in work unrelated to practicum competencies and practice behaviors. For example, students should not be primarily observing, filing, or engaged in other clerical duties that do not require a professional degree and are unrelated to their learning objectives.

7) **Documentation**
The student should be responsible for some recording in official agency records and should utilize computers, when possible. The content, style, and frequency will vary with each setting. Students benefit from this exposure, as documentation is required in virtually all areas of social work practice.

8) **Feedback**
Evaluative feedback to the student should be balanced and address positive points and areas in which further growth is needed. Students benefit from immediate, balanced feedback as well as ongoing verbal and written feedback throughout the practicum. Field instructors are encouraged to use a variety of evaluative strategies, which may include (but are not limited to): direct observation, audio/video recording, process recording, third party reports, and written materials.

9) **Coordination and evaluation**
The student, field instructor, and task instructor (if applicable) should be involved in the learning agreement, site visit, and evaluation processes. The student, field instructor, and task instructor (if applicable) should maintain a copy of the Learning Agreement and Evaluation for their records. The student should also receive a copy of any other written performance evaluations that may be completed by the agency. Evaluative feedback should be discussed with the student to enable clarification and mutual agreement.

10) **Relevant reading**
Time can be allotted during field placement for reading materials that relate to work in the agency (i.e., activity on an individual case, group/community issues, legislative issues affecting clients, etc.). The field instructor may need to direct the student to very specific sources of material, such as journal articles or literature belonging to other staff.

11) **Community events**
Students are encouraged by faculty to explore the possibility of attending workshops and special events in the community that are related to field placement as part of their

practicum. This must be negotiated between the student and the agency and can be included as practicum hours.

12) **Addressing with problematic behavior or performance issues of the student**
Behavior and/or performance problems that interfere with practicum activities do occasionally occur with students. If problems do occur, Field Instructors are strongly encouraged to take the following steps:
    a. Gather and document pertinent information to present to the student concerning the problematic behavior or performance issue that interferes with achieving the learning objectives.
    b. Present the information to the student as soon as possible.
    c. If possible, provide the student with specific suggested actions or steps that can lead to increased professional performance.
    d. Allow the student adequate time to attempt to rectify the situation. Provide honest, balanced feedback to the student on the progress of changes.
    e. If the problem persists, document the continuation of the problem. Indicate, in writing, to the student that the continuation of the behavior or performance issue is problematic and the consequences that will result if changes do not occur. Contact the Faculty Liaison and send a copy of the documentation.

Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to talk with the Faculty Liaison throughout the practicum. As a general rule, the Faculty Liaison will not initiate a discussion with the field instructor about a problem a student is facing until the student has first discussed the issue with the field instructor and feels the problem is still unresolved.

X. UNIVERSITY ACADMEIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Version: 3.0

Responsible University Official: Provost

Version Effective Date: 8/21/2024

1.0 Introduction

Saint Louis University is a community of learning in which integrity and mutual trust are vital. Since the mission of the University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity," acts of integrity are essential to its very reason for existence. They also dignify and strengthen the activities of teaching, research, health care, and community service that are its primary mission.

Since the University seeks to prepare students and instructors for lives of integrity and occupations of trust, it regards academic integrity as a matter of serious import. Academic integrity is the foundation of the academic assessment process, which in turn sustains the ability of the University to certify to the outside world the skills and attainments of its graduates. Academic integrity allows those who practice it to contribute to a just and equitable learning environment that cultivates moral character and self-respect.

This policy is grounded in a respect for each faculty member's initial evaluation of an alleged academic integrity incident, for a student's right to confidential, equitable, and timely adjudication of alleged incidents, and for the shared conviction of our college/school deans and associate deans that a university-wide academic integrity policy and process best promotes equitable and consistent application.

Students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic integrity as defined in this policy and as guided by the faculty and staff supporting their educational endeavors, thus contributing to an environment in which academic integrity is respected.

The Academic Integrity Policy detailed below sets out principles implicit in the University's ethos but that call for explicit formulation to guide its practice.

2.0 Scope

The Policy on Academic Integrity set forth here is designed to promote ethical conduct within the University community by:

- Defining the responsibilities of various members of the University community.
- Defining violations of academic integrity.
- Setting minimum standards for reporting and adjudicating (making a formal judgement/decision) violations of academic integrity.
- Establishing procedures for appeals to the Office of the Provost.
- Establishing standards and procedures for maintaining records.

Saint Louis University undergraduate and graduate students' educational experience in all modalities is governed by this Academic Affairs policy except for courses delivered by the School of Law, the School of Medicine, the Center for Advanced Dentistry Education, and the Madrid campus.

Note: Alleged violations of academic integrity in scientific research will be addressed in accordance with the Research Integrity and Compliance Program in the Office of the Vice President for Research.

3.0 Definitions

This section defines academic integrity and articulates the conduct and standards considered as having violated this policy. More than one violation may apply.

Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in an academic setting. The University and wider academic community are built on shared values and norms of behavior, including honesty, fairness, and responsibility. Applying academic integrity to one's work entails practicing honesty and fairness towards others, taking responsibility for learning, and following the conventions of scholarship. The University is responsible for awarding credit for honestly conducted work, and students are responsible for demonstrating academic integrity by practicing the following:

- Using information, text, images, and all other materials incorporated into academic work appropriately, according to copyright and privacy laws.
- Acknowledging the source of information whether taken from another person, artificial intelligence, or other technology.
- Conducting research ethically, in line with the University's regulations on human research ethics.
- Reporting research truthfully.
- Acting ethically and honestly in all academic endeavors.

- **Acknowledging faculty members' intellectual properties and confirming faculty support when students conduct research, apply for assistantships and/or fellowships.**

Academic Integrity Incident refers to reported student conduct that violates the academic integrity standards set forth in this policy.

Falsification **is the misrepresentation of fact for academic gain.**

Falsification may include, but is not limited to:

- Lying to or deceiving an instructor regarding academic work.
- Fabricating or misrepresenting documentation or the data used in completing assignments.
- Misrepresenting or altering information in the academic records of an instructor, academic or administrative department, or unit of the University unless authorized to do so.

Plagiarism is the presentation or representation of content as if the content were the student's own without proper citation. Examples include thoughts, words, or data created by another source other than the student not explicitly permitted by the instructor. This definition includes self- plagiarism as the use of material prepared for one class and submitted in another without proper citation and without permission of the current instructor.

Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to:

- Directly presenting the written, artistic, or spoken work generated or created by someone other than the student, by artificial intelligence, or by other technology without quotation marks or indented quotations and without proper citation to the source.
- Paraphrasing or incorporating the ideas, concepts, arguments, observations, images, objects, music, or statements generated or created by someone other than the student, by artificial intelligence, or by other technology without proper citation of the source.
- Presenting information from the internet, produced by artificial intelligence, or by other technology so that it appears to be the student's own work.
- Submitting as the student's own, any work that has been prepared, either entirely or in part, by another person, group, commercial firm, artificial intelligence, or by other technology without proper citation.
- Claiming research advisors' research idea as the student's own and using these ideas to apply for scholarships/assistantship/fellowships without research advisors' approval/support.

Cheating is the use of unauthorized assistance to gain an advantage over others, and/or a failure to comply with any reasonable direction or instruction of an officer, employee or agent of the University relating to the conduct of a formal examination or assessment.

Cheating may include, but is not limited to:

- Copying from another student's examination or work.
- Using assistance, notes, aids, artificial intelligence or other technology, cell phones, calculators, translation software, or internet-based applications not authorized by the instructor in taking quizzes or examinations or to complete assignments.
- Acquiring, disseminating, or using any academic form of assessment belonging to an instructor or staff member without prior approval.
- Hiring or otherwise engaging in the impersonation of another person to take a quiz or examination or in fulfilling other academic requirements.
- Asking students for solutions to assignments, exams, quizzes and then submitting these solutions as their own.

Sabotage is the disruption of or attempt to prevent the academic pursuits of others.

Sabotage may include, but is not limited to:

- Intentionally interfering with work or undermining the academic success of others in the University community to negatively impact another's academic performance.
- Modifying, stealing, or destroying academic materials including, but not limited to, computer files, library materials, artwork, personal books, and papers.
- Taking any action that negatively impacts research outcomes including, but not limited to, lab tampering, falsification of data, withholding data/findings, or destruction of research resources.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration in a deceitful manner with another person or persons for the purpose of giving or gaining an academic advantage in the completion of an assignment, quiz, or examination that has been restricted to individual effort. Collusion does not include receiving help from authorized University assistance.

Collusion may include, but is not limited to:

- Paraphrasing another student's assignment and submitting it as their own.
- Having another individual or group do the/an assessment task.
- Giving solutions to assignments, exams, quizzes to other students.

Concealment is the failure to report to the instructor or to call to the attention of an instructor or administrator any matter where a student knows of facts indicating a significant likelihood that a violation of this Academic Integrity Policy has been or will be committed or that an academic unit requires be reported, including the behaviors described in the definitions in this section.

Preponderance of Evidence is a widely accepted standard of evidence/proof applied to academic integrity incident evaluations, proceedings, and determinations. This standard requires that a finding be proven to be 'more likely than not' to be true, based on the totality of the information or materials available to the decision maker(s) and free of bias.

Egregious is a willful act or conduct by a student who intentionally violates the university-wide Academic Integrity Policy in an impactful and a serious manner beyond a common transgression.

Restorative Educational Opportunity is a teaching and learning practice that empowers students to learn from mistakes, to recognize the impact of their actions, and to develop and enhance skills, problem-solving, and a deeper understanding of academic integrity issues.

Conflict of Interest is any interaction with a student(s), faculty, or staff involved in the Academic Integrity adjudication process that could directly and significantly affect one's responsibilities on the Academic Hearing Panel.

4.0 Responsibilities of Members of the Community

Creating a learning environment in which high standards of academic integrity are valued requires the efforts of everyone in the University community.

Retaliation or bias by or against any community member for exercising their rights or responsibilities under this Academic Integrity Policy is prohibited and may result in sanctions as deemed appropriate by the University.

Faculty (and instructors of record) are responsible for adhering to high standards of academic integrity in their own teaching and professional conduct; sharing relevant parts of the policy on their syllabi and assignments (e.g., an explicit statement on use of artificial intelligence and/or other technology); explaining key terms and discipline/course specific academic honesty norms to students; and following procedures for reporting and adjudicating possible violations both in and out of their academic unit. Furthermore, faculty are encouraged to create assignments that minimize academic dishonesty through clear expectations and to help create an environment where academic integrity is uppermost. Participation in formal academic hearings is expected as appropriate.

Students are responsible for adhering to university standards of academic integrity and seeking clarification from their instructors when they are uncertain if a behavior is in violation of this policy, helping to create an environment in which academic integrity is respected, and reporting violations of the policy to instructors, department chairs, or administrators.
Participation in formal academic hearings is expected as appropriate.

Staff are responsible for calling the attention of their supervisors to possible violations of academic integrity, for modeling high standards of academic integrity in their own teaching and professional conduct and for otherwise supporting a community of academic honesty and trust. Participation in formal academic hearings is expected as appropriate.

Academic administrators such as Deans, Chairs, and Directors are responsible for adhering to university standards of academic integrity in their teaching and professional conduct, reporting incidents as needed, and for otherwise supporting a community of academic honesty and trust. Participation in formal academic hearings is expected as appropriate.

The Office of the Provost in collaboration with Deans and Directors of academic units are responsible for integrating concepts of academic integrity into academic programs and curricula to comply with the University policy. Participation in formal academic hearings is expected as appropriate.

Director of Academic Integrity (DAI) is responsible for overseeing aspects of academic integrity as assigned by the provost and helping shape, coordinate, and maintain the academic integrity system at the University.

5.0 Reporting and Adjudication Procedures for Allegations of Violations of Academic Integrity

Confidentiality applies to all aspects of the proceedings and all University students, faculty, and staff who are subject to this policy. Each case of academic dishonesty, names of student(s), facts, comments, and material information should remain confidential. Disclosure of this information is limited to the Academic Hearing Panel and those University officials for each case who have a need to know the information in connection with discharging their official duties and responsibilities. Violation of this confidentiality clause may result in sanctions as deemed appropriate by the University.

Every effort will be made to complete the Academic Integrity process within **60 University business days** of initial reports.

- Incidents that impact graduation may require an expedited time frame.
- Incidents that impact course registration that dictates curricular progression scaffolding may require an expedited time frame.

Prior to the Formal University Academic Integrity Process

- If an instructor is unsure if what they see constitutes an Academic Integrity Incident, they should discuss how to proceed with their chair, other administrator, or the DAI.
- The course instructor communicates (in-person or in writing) with the student(s) regarding alleged Academic Integrity Incident(s).
    - Such communication should occur within a timely manner (not more than **10 University business days** from identification of alleged Incident).
- If after communicating with the student the instructor determines there was no Academic Integrity Incident, based on a preponderance of evidence, or the occurrence is appropriate for a restorative educational opportunity, the process is complete.
- If after communicating with the student the instructor determines there is or likely has been an Academic Integrity Incident, based on a preponderance of evidence:
    - The instructor shares with the student a summary of violation findings, supporting evidence, imposed and/or proposed sanction(s), and the University Academic Integrity Policy. Specific evidence may be shared with student unless:
        - The evidence is in danger of being compromised or deleted.
        - The evidence would violate the privacy of another student(s).
        - The evidence would compromise the future academic integrity of the course materials.
    - The instructor begins the formal University Academic Integrity Process.

Formal University Academic Integrity Process

- If the instructor determines there is a preponderance of evidence that an Academic Integrity Incident occurred, they shall submit an academic integrity incident report with an imposed and/or proposed sanction(s) to the DAI via the University database of confidential and permanent records account no later than **5 University business days** following initial communication with the student. The complete submission to the DAI by the instructor shall include the following:
    - Report of findings
    - Syllabus
    - Particulars of assignment
    - Evidence (copies)
    - Relevant email correspondence (if any)
    - Imposed and/or proposed sanction(s)
- Upon receipt of the submission, the DAI reviews University-wide records to determine whether the incident is a first or recurring Academic Integrity Incident and may offer suggestions to the instructor's imposed and/or proposed sanctions accordingly.
- The DAI notifies the student via their SLU email account of the finding(s), imposed and/or proposed sanctions, implications, and whether it is a first or recurring Academic Integrity Incident.
- The student must acknowledge or refute responsibility in writing via their SLU email account within **7 University business days.**
- Student failure to respond to the notification of the of account of the finding(s), imposed and/or proposed sanctions, and implications, after **7 University business days** will be treated as acceptance of responsibility. Students who do not respond to the notification may follow the new evidence appeal process. Students are eligible to initiate a new evidence appeal within **30 University business days** of notification.

If Acknowledged First Academic Integrity Incident:

- The DAI collaborates with instructor(s) to facilitate sanction equity and confirm the imposed and/or proposed instructor sanction.
- The DAI informs the student of sanction(s) implications.

- The DAI works with the student to ensure compliance to sanction(s) (if applicable).
- The DAI enters sanction(s) into the University database of confidential and permanent records.
- The DAI reports closure of case to the following (as applicable):
    - Student
    - Instructor of course
    - Associate Dean of the student's academic home
    - Department Chair/Director of course and of student's major
- Findings and sanction(s) are entered into the University database of confidential and permanent records. Saint Louis University is bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)s. The files and information contained in the University database of confidential and permanent records are subject to these guidelines as student records.

If Academic Integrity Incident and/or Associated Sanction is Refuted or a Recurring Academic Integrity Incident:

- The DAI assembles a 3-person Academic Hearing Panel from members of the Academic Integrity Board, as defined by the Academic Integrity Bylaws, to adjudicate and make determination of responsibility based on a preponderance of evidence.
- The DAI appoints a Chair of Academic Hearing Panel responsible for scheduling and communicating with accused student, instructor, and Academic Integrity Office.
    - The DAI may attend Academic Hearing Panel Hearing to observe and advise on process as a non-voting, ex officio member.
    - When scheduling the hearing, every effort will be made to not interfere with a student's or instructor's academic schedule.
- Academic Hearing Panel conducts Hearing in adherence to the Academic Integrity Board Bylaws.
    - The Academic Hearing Panel may solicit input from academic and administrative units and individuals whose professional/disciplinary expertise is needed to fulfill the Academic Hearing Panel's review (i.e., the alleging faculty, other faculty from associated college/school, the associated academic department chair, the associated college/school dean's office, ITS, the Dean of Students Office, etc.).
    - The Academic Integrity Office provides the Academic Hearing Panel with all relevant reports, evidence, and pertinent information.
    - The Academic Hearing Panel confers separately with the student and the instructor.
    - The Office of Academic Integrity informs via SLU email the student/instructor of the date, time, and location of the Hearing at least **5 University business days** before the hearing.

- Hearing parameters:
    - The Academic Hearing Panel Hearing may be conducted in-person or virtually.
    - The hearing may <u>not</u> be recorded.
    - The accused student's participation in the hearing is compulsory. If participation results in absence from a course, the University Authorized Absence Policy applies. If the student fails to attend the scheduled hearing, they are subject to a referral to the Office of Student Responsibility. A student's lack of participation in the hearing does not prevent the Academic Hearing Panel from determining responsibility. A student's lack of participation does not constitute a presumption of responsibility.
    - The student may bring one personal advisor, e.g., parent, guardian, faith-based leader, or an attorney of the student's choosing at the student's own expense. The advisor is only present to support the student through the process but may not speak for the student, ask questions of others present, or interfere with the hearing.

If the student wishes to speak privately with their advisor during the hearing, they may request a brief recess from the hearing.
[Appropriate FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Waiver required.]

- The student, instructor, and/or Academic Hearing Panel have the right to request witnesses in advance of the hearing. The Chair of the Academic Hearing Panel (in consultation with DAI) determines whether a witness is relevant to the hearing proceedings and may allow the witness at the hearing or not. [Appropriate FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Waiver required.]

- The Academic Hearing Panel's determination is premised on all the materials provided, including those submitted by the instructor as part of the original Academic Integrity Incident Report and any subsequent evidence or applicable context provided by the instructor, student and/or the respective academic department and/or dean's office. A **majority vote** of voting members is required to determine the student's responsibility for the alleged violations.
  - If the student is found responsible for the violation, based on a preponderance of evidence, the Academic Hearing Panel determines whether to uphold or adjust the originally imposed and/or proposed sanctions.
  - If the student is found not responsible for the violation, based on a preponderance of evidence, no sanction(s) will be imposed on the student.
- The Academic Hearing Panel Chair prepares an Academic Hearing Panel Hearing Summary including a brief synopsis of the Hearing and the final decision regarding student responsibility and sanction(s). The Summary shall be submitted to the DAI within **5 University business days** of the Hearing.

- The DAI communicates the Academic Hearing Panel decision and sanction(s) (if any) to the student and instructor within **10 University business days** of the Hearing.

[Notification via SLU email]

  - If the student is found responsible:
    - The DAI will inform the student of the sanction(s) and implications.
    - The DAI will work with the student to ensure compliance with the sanction(s) (if applicable).
    - The DAI will inform the instructor of the decision.
    - The DAI will inform the Associate Dean of the student's academic home.
    - The DAI will inform the Department Chair/Director of course and of student's major.
    - The DAI will enter records of the sanctions into the University database of confidential and permanent records.

  - If the student is found not responsible:
    - The DAI will inform the student of the process findings.
    - The DAI will inform the instructor of the findings.
    - The DAI will collaborate with the instructor to reverse any sanctions that may have been applied.
    - The DAI will inform the Associate Dean of the student's academic home if applicable.
    - The DAI will inform the Department Chair/Director of course and of student's major if applicable.
    - The DAI will destroy all case materials for students found not responsible.

- The Academic Integrity Incident Report, supplemental materials, findings, and sanction(s) are entered into the University database of confidential and permanent records. Saint Louis University is bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)s. The files and information contained in the University database of confidential and permanent records are subject to these guidelines as student records.

Right of Appeal – New Evidence Appeal or Process Appeal to the Office of the Provost

- Parties involved in the academic integrity incident may appeal the decision of the Academic Hearing Panel to the DAI based only on either of the following grounds:
    - New Evidence Appeal: New evidence not available at the time of the Academic Hearing Panel Hearing, which would have a material impact on the case's determination.
    - Process Appeal: There was a material deviation from the procedures set forth in this Academic Integrity Policy that would significantly impact the outcome of the matter or may have resulted in a different finding.
- The appeal must be submitted in writing via SLU email to the DAI within **7 University business days** of notification of Academic Hearing Panel Hearing decision.
- In the case of an appeal based on new evidence, the DAI refers the case and all relevant materials (initial report, evidence, Academic Hearing Panel Hearing summary, approved sanction(s), etc.) to the original or new Academic Hearing Panel within **5 University business days** for a new hearing and follows the procedures and timelines outlined above.
- In the case of a process appeal, the DAI refers the case and all relevant materials (initial report, evidence, Academic Hearing Panel Hearing summary, approved sanction(s), etc.) to the Office of the Provost within **5 University business days**.
    - The DAI informs the student and instructor that the appeal has been referred to the Office of the Provost or the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel.
    - The Office of the Provost will make every effort to provide a decision regarding the appeal within **10 University business days**.
- DAI shall communicate via the student's SLU email the Academic Hearing Panel/Provost Office decision and sanction(s) (if any) to the student and instructor within **10 University business days of the appeal decision.**
    - If the student is found responsible:
        - The DAI will inform the student of the sanction(s) and implications.
        - The DAI will work with the student to ensure compliance with the sanction(s) (if applicable).
        - The DAI will inform the instructor of the decision.
        - The DAI will inform the Associate Dean of the student's academic home.
        - The DAI will inform the Department Chair/Director of course and of student's major.
        - The DAI will enter records of the sanctions into the University database of confidential and permanent records.
    - If the student is found not responsible:
        - The DAI will inform the student of the appeal findings.
        - The DAI will inform the instructor of the appeal findings.
        - The DAI will collaborate with the instructor to reverse any sanctions that may have been implemented.
        - The DAI will inform the Associate Dean of the student's academic home if applicable.
        - The DAI will inform the Department Chair/Director of course and of student's major if applicable.
        - The DAI will destroy all case materials for students found not responsible.

The Office of the Provost decision is final and not eligible for further appeal.

6.0 Sanctions

Academic Integrity sanction(s) will be determined based on whether the incident is a first or recurring Academic Integrity Incident and/or egregiousness of the incident. Sanction(s) may include but are not limited to:

- The faculty may determine the incident is appropriate for a restorative educational opportunity and no formal sanction is applied.
- The student may be required to repeat/revise the assignment or complete an alternative assignment.
- The student may receive a lowered, failing, or zero grade on the examination or assignment in question.

- The student may receive a lowered or failing course grade in the course in question. The student shall have the right to continue in the course without retaliation or penalty pending final resolution.
- The student may be dismissed from their academic program/department after multiple incidents per the academic program/department dismissal policy if applicable.
- Visiting students (including 1818) may be prohibited from participating in the program/opportunity.
- The student may be suspended or expelled from the University.

The aforementioned sanctions may be accompanied by a requirement to participate in additional academic education support designed to prevent future Academic Integrity Incidents.

7.0 Historical Context

On 6/26/2015 the University adopted a university-wide Academic Integrity Policy after development with and vetting through individual academic unit's governance bodies by a committee of faculty, deans, staff, and students. To comply with the University policy, academic units were expected to amend their own academic integrity policies to align with university definitions and minimum standards. Individual academic units were to consider standards of academic and professional conduct for their own disciplines. Therefore, the University Academic Integrity Policy did not offer a single set of procedures for adjudicating violations of academic integrity at the academic unit level and only applied standards for process, record keeping, and appeals to the Office of the Provost with the exception of violations of academic integrity in scientific research (which was guided by the University's Research Integrity Policy).

The University Academic Integrity Policy creates a unified adjudication process across school/colleges and centralizes record keeping and academic integrity metrics.

Maintenance or records (see the University Policy of Maintenance of records at records (https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy-records-management-and- retention.pdf)

The current policy supersedes all previous versions. Academic units (as specified in the Scope section above) are expected to follow the Reporting and Adjudication Procedures for Allegations of Violations of Academic Integrity described above.

This policy was:

Endorsed by CADD: 5/22/2024
Approved by the Provost: 5/22/2024