

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

2025-2026 Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) (274)

Division: Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development

Department: Social Work

Prepared by: Andrew J. Fultz, PhD, MSW, LCSW

Date: 6/8/26

Approved by: Neeru Deep

Date: 6/15/26

Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development. The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development is committed to working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge to Northwestern students through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. Through the School of Education and Departments of Health and Human Performance, Military Science, Psychology, and Social Work, the College produces knowledgeable, inspired, and innovative graduates ready for lifelong learning who contribute to the communities in which they reside and professions they serve. Additionally, the GCEHD is dedicated to the communities served by the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, and the NSU Child and Family Network to assist children and their families related to learning and development.

Northwestern State University Bachelor of Social Work Program. The mission of the Northwestern State University BSW Program is, within the scope of the University's mission and liberal arts foundation, to graduate competent and ethical generalist social work professionals prepared to meet the needs of diverse populations at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels, locally to globally. Our teaching, advising, and student engagement focuses on a responsive student-centered approach, both on campus and online, that encourages and develops life-long learners and critical thinkers. Students and faculty engage in service and leadership that enhances human well-being, embraces human diversity, promotes human rights, and advances social and economic justice. The program's foundational perspectives include person-in-environment, strengths, research-informed practice, scientific inquiry and the values and ethics of the social work profession.

Explanation of Evaluation as it Relates to CSWE Accreditation. The NSU BSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and has been since 1977. Assessment of program effectiveness has been a part of accreditation expectations. In 2008 CSWE began to require programs to assess their effectiveness

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

according to the concept of competencies. They implemented 13 competencies and required that each competency have two measures – one of which could be a student self-assessment. Our most recent reaccreditation (in 2015) was based on the 2008 Educational Policy and Educational Standards (EPAS). We utilized a student self-evaluation and our Field Evaluation (Field Instructor's evaluation of the student).

In 2015 CSWE revised the EPAS and the Competencies, resulting in 9 competencies requiring 2 measures each. Our program elected to change to the 2015 competencies for the 2017-18 assessment cycle, to begin collecting data for our next accreditation cycle. There were no changes in the assessment plan and measures beginning during the 2017-18 assessment cycle through the 2020-21 cycle. The current assessment period is guided by the 2015 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) which focus on student learning outcomes (competencies). This is referred to as a competency-based approach to student learning outcomes. This competency-based approach requires identifying and assessing what students demonstrate in practice (referred to as practice behaviors). This approach involves assessing ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. Programs are required to assess students on four dimensions throughout the curriculum: knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. Programs must assess a student's demonstration of competency in nine (9) specific areas of competency. Each competency must be measured by incorporating at minimum two of the four dimensions. As stated in the 2015 EPAS Handbook, EPAS recognizes a holistic view of competence; that is, the demonstration of competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker's critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment in regard to unique practice situations. Overall professional competence is multi-dimensional and composed of interrelated competencies. An individual social worker's competence is seen as developmental and dynamic, changing over time in relation to continuous learning (CSWE, 2015). CSWE requires all programs to transition to the 2022 EPAS. The NSU BSW program operated under the 2015 EPAS for AC 2025-26 while actively preparing for full 2022 EPAS implementation beginning in AY 2026-27. The transition process, including revisions to the exit exam, the field evaluation instrument, and course-level competency alignment, is described in the Programmatic Changes section below.

Methodology

Explanation of Assessment Tools. During the summer of 2019, the faculty elected to create their own knowledge exam titled the Exit Exam to replace one used previously. After consultation with the CSWE accreditation specialist, faculty were told that the accreditation body would prefer a knowledge exam created by the department faculty. The exam is structured to ensure the competencies are evenly evaluated on the knowledge dimension. After deliberation, the faculty voted to set the minimum score for students to meet competency on the exam as a 60 out of 100. The rationale for the selection of 60 as a passing score is that the Social Work Department uses a grading scale for all tests and assignments that sets "failing" as less than 60. The Exit Exam was created and implemented in the fall semester of 2019. Faculty submitted potential questions from each course content area. The questions were

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

then edited by a committee of faculty and staff who have been trained in question writing and in assessment. The exam is composed of 100 multiple choice questions. 12 questions are devoted to Competency 1. The remaining Competencies are assessed by 11 questions each to ensure as equal weight as possible for each Competency. Though the exam is used to provide a composite score for each student, the results of each Competency area is analyzed to determine which specific areas students are either meeting or not meeting competency. Analysis is completed through both tools provided by the online student learning management system and through statistical software.

Following each semester of implementation from the fall semester of 2019, results have been assessed by the Exit Exam committee. Results were analyzed using metrics provided by the learning management system. Questions were reviewed and edited using these metrics and best assessment practices. The results from each semester have been used to continue the process of rigorous reliability and validity testing to ensure the exam is effective and appropriate in measuring student competency regarding the expected knowledge of social work professionals entering into practice and to guide programmatic changes for the department to ensure learning is enhanced in coursework throughout the program. It must be noted that only the exam committee know the content of the exam to ensure that faculty are not teaching to the exam but rather are focusing on strengthening connections between course content and professional competency.

During AC 2025-26, the program undertook a comprehensive review of the Exit Exam in preparation for the transition to the 2022 EPAS. Faculty determined that a number of exam questions have become dated and no longer fully reflect current competency constructs required under the revised standards. As part of this review process, all program faculty completed the existing exam. This step serves a dual purpose: it supports content and construct validity analysis by establishing faculty performance as a reference point, and it allows the exam committee to identify questions that require revision or replacement prior to the development of the new 2022 EPAS-aligned instrument. Additionally, the existing exam is being administered as a pre-test in SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals — the first practice course in the curriculum — beginning in AY 2026-27. This pre-test will establish a baseline measure of student knowledge at entry into the practice sequence, enabling the program to track knowledge development longitudinally and to more precisely evaluate the impact of curricular interventions.

Assessment Process:

The assessment process for the BSW program is as follows:

(1) Students are given the *Exit Exam* as a direct measure of knowledge across seven (7) curricular areas and all nine (9) EPAS 2015 Core Competencies at the end of SOWK 4040: Research Methods for Social Workers, the corequisite for SOWK 4190, Field Work. The *Exit Exam* is a knowledge-based test which allows for analysis of student knowledge gained through the program and is used to pinpoint areas for curricular enhancement.

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

This assessment is completed through Moodle by students. This measure evaluates the knowledge dimension for all competencies. Beginning in AY 2026-27, the existing exam will also be administered as a pre-test in SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals to establish a baseline measure of student knowledge at the start of the practice sequence, allowing for longitudinal tracking of knowledge development across the curriculum. This measure evaluates the knowledge dimension for all competencies.

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, are assessed using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument allows agency field instructors to measure student achievement across various dimensions related to each EPAS competency, scored on a 5-point Likert scale, and allowing for qualitative feedback. Possible rating options are: 1- Lacking, 2- Inadequate, 3- Competent, 4 – Superior, 5 – Mastered. This measure evaluates the skills, values, and cognitive and affective processing dimensions for specific competencies and related practice behaviors.

(2) The Assessment Coordinator retrieves the exam results from Moodle and retrieves the data from the completed Field Instruments. The coordinator then evaluates the data to determine whether students have met competency benchmarks set by the program utilizing Excel and SPSS software. Results for both the Exit Exam and data is loaded and analyzed to determine how many students scored a minimum passing score for each competency.

(3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty, staff, the BSW Advisory Council, and other constituencies.

(4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching specific courses, as necessary.

(5) The Assessment Coordinator, consulting with Faculty and the Advisory Council, and in collaboration with the Department Head will propose curriculum and program changes.

(6) The Exit Exam committee reviews exam metrics provided by Moodle to determine if questions are performing well and to determine if wording changes are needed to ensure questions are both clear and that they measure the intended competencies and practice behaviors. Modifications to questions are made prior to the next offering of the Exit Exam.

Programmatic Changes

Prior to COVID-19, the BSW field education committee made the decision to pilot a new structure to the field placements due to the needs expressed by students. Traditionally, field instruction was offered in two options. A student could complete the internship (432 hours) as a block placement in the fall or spring semester. Or a student could complete the 432 hours across the academic year (fall followed by the spring). Field Placement was not offered during the summer. Due to this, many students ready to begin field in a spring semester were forced to wait to take field in the succeeding fall, when they could graduate earlier if it were offered in the summer. The field faculty piloted summer

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

sessions in 2020 and 2021 where students completed their field placement in two semesters: the spring followed by the summer session. 11 students have taken part in the pilot during this time period. These students completed the Exit Exam during the spring semester with the graduating seniors. The result of the pilot was very successful in that students were able to graduate a semester earlier and both students and field instructors noted that the summer session allowed for enhanced learning, both in terms of opportunities for learning and students being able to complete their field internship in a way that fit their schedule.

In 2021-22, the field education committee elected to continue the summer internship option in 2024-25 and 2025-26. One student will complete their field internship in the summer session of 2026. This student completed the Exit Exam during the spring semester with the graduating seniors per the policy of students taking the Exit Exam at the end of SOWK 4040.

At the end of the spring 2023 semester, two key faculty members retired from the Department of Social Work; (1) Dr. Ruth Weinzettle, the department chair, and (2) Mrs. Patricia Clark, the field coordinator. Dr. Susan Campbell was named acting department chair beginning in July of 2023. Randolph Hoffpauir assumed duties as the interim field coordinator in August of 2023 and was named as the permanent field coordinator in May of 2024. Beginning In the fall of 2023 and continuing through AY 2025-26, all interim and final field evaluations were collected via Qualtrics.

The program continues its transition to the 2022 EPAS. During AC 2025-26, the program operated under the 2015 EPAS while completing the preparatory work necessary to implement the revised standards beginning in AY 2026-27. Faculty determined that the current Exit Exam, in use since 2019, requires substantial revision to align with the constructs required under the 2022 EPAS. Rather than deploy a partially revised instrument, the program elected to use AC 2025-26 as a development and validation year. All program faculty completed the existing exam during this cycle to support content and construct validity analysis and to identify questions requiring revision or replacement. A new knowledge assessment aligned to the 2022 EPAS will be implemented in AY 2026-27. In preparation for that transition, the existing exam will additionally be administered as a pre-test in SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals beginning in AY 2026-27, establishing a longitudinal baseline of student knowledge development. The field evaluation instrument is similarly being revised to reflect 2022 EPAS competency language and will be in place for the AY 2026-27 cycle.

Limitation of Data Analysis:

Due to the continued structure of field education that includes a summer internship option, there are fewer completed field evaluations at the time of this report than the total number of exit exams administered. The number of completed exit exams for AC 2025-2026 is 39. The number of completed field evaluation forms at the writing of this report is 38, with one additional evaluation to be completed in August of 2026. The student completing the summer internship was rated competent on all competencies at the midterm evaluation; the final evaluation will be added to this report and the aggregate data amended at that time. For the purposes of the current analysis, that student's

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

midterm evaluation data is included and noted with an asterisk where applicable. An updated report will be provided to NSULA in August of 2026.

Student Learning Outcomes (Expressed as EPAS Competencies):

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Course Map: All required social work courses address some component of competency 1.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation, students complete the *Exit Exam* (discussed in detail on pages 2 and 3) to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will score 60% or higher on the Exit Exam. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 84% of 45 students meeting competency. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated posted signage related to the competencies and ethical

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

principles in the curriculum of each course to aid in classroom instruction of these principles. Faculty updated the online modules in all online courses to infuse digital copies of the signs into the online learning environment for all students. The faculty continued to hold a social work program convocation to increase the opportunities to communicate expectations of the profession. Specifically, principles pertaining to ethical decision making, professional demeanor in behavior, appropriate use of technology, and the use of supervision and consultation were targeted. These changes improved students' ability to understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 90% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE. Posted signage related to the competencies and ethical principles in the curriculum of each course will continue to be updated to aid in classroom instruction of these principles. Faculty will continue to update the online modules in all online courses to infuse digital copies of the signs into the online learning environment for all students. Faculty will continue to hold a social work program convocation to increase the opportunities to communicate expectations of the profession. Specifically, principles pertaining to ethical decision making, professional demeanor in behavior, appropriate use of technology, and the use of supervision and consultation will be targeted. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar courses and in the ethics course to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Additional standardized content was incorporated into online courses to capture this effort with online students. The department continued to hold the field orientation in both in-person and online synchronous formats to focus on enhanced evaluation methods to ensure students are evaluated appropriately on the field

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

instrument. Field faculty recruited graduated students to hold a peer-to-peer question and answer portion to engage students differently. The department continued to focus on the use of digital evaluations and surveys to support feedback for students, instructors, and faculty. These changes had a direct impact on the students' ability to complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allowed them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 100% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar courses and in the ethics course to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Additional standardized content will continue to be incorporated into online courses to capture this effort with online students. The department will continue to hold the field orientation in both in-person and online synchronous formats to focus on enhanced evaluation methods to ensure students are evaluated by field instructors appropriately on the updated field instrument. Field faculty will continue to recruit graduate students to hold a peer-to-peer question and answer portion to engage students differently. The department will continue to focus on the use of digital evaluations and surveys to support feedback for students, instructors, and faculty. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.

Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Course Map: All required social work courses address some component of competency

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

2, however the course whose content is solely about this competency is SOWK 4450, Cultural Diversity (renumbered to SOWK 3090 and renamed “Human Diversity” beginning 2021-22 academic year).

Measure: 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 93% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the Human Diversity course to ensure that students meet all competency requirements for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty further modified the expanded Human Diversity course to focus on incorporating discussions on racial identity and intersectionality. Faculty met in the fall of 2025 to complete an exam analysis to determine content and construct validity, to determine which areas of the specific competency the students were struggling in, and to make appropriate changes to the exam. These changes improved students' ability to understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 82% of 39 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE. Faculty will continue to modify the Human Diversity course to focus on incorporating discussions on racial identity and intersectionality. Faculty will incorporate additional proctored assessments in courses addressing diversity content to strengthen students' familiarity with competency-based testing in preparation for licensure. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand how diversity and differences characterize and shape human experience and are critical to the formation of identity, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure: 2.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar courses to ensure that students meet expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty continued to include models of assessment in the field seminar which seeks to understand facets of human diversity and work with clients on micro, macro, and mezzo levels. These changes improved students' ability to understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 97% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar courses to ensure that students meet expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue to include models of assessment in the field seminar which seek to understand facets of human diversity and work with clients on micro, macro, and mezzo levels. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand how diversity and differences characterize and shape human experience and are critical to the formation of identity, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Course Map: The social work courses that primarily address this competency are: PSCI 2010 & 2020, and SOWK 3350: Economics and Social Work.

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 98% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the corresponding courses to ensure that students meet expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty further incorporated evidence-based practices in diversity education, human behavior, and economics courses into course content and focused on methods of combating inequity and intolerance. Faculty met in the fall of 2025 to complete an exam analysis to determine content and construct validity, determine which areas of the specific competency the students were struggling with, and make modifications to the exam as needed. These changes were intended to improve the students' ability to understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was not met with 77% of 39 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE, with particular attention to ensuring that human rights and justice content is comprehensively represented. SOWK 3350: Economics and Social Work will be fully revamped to strengthen the connection between economic frameworks and social justice, with updated course content, assignments, and materials. Faculty will add quizzes and update the textbook in SOWK 3030: Human Behavior I to a more applied focus, reinforcing connections between human behavior theory and human rights content. Faculty will incorporate additional proctored assessments across relevant courses to strengthen students' familiarity with competency-based testing in preparation for licensure. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure: 3.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty continued to focus on the use of digital evaluations and surveys of students and faculty to ensure consistent feedback in the field setting. Further, students were offered additional opportunities to recommend or propose policy changes which would enhance client well-being as it relates to advancing human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice. These changes improved the students' ability to understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 100% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2026-27, faculty will continue to focus on the use of digital evaluations and surveys of students and faculty to ensure consistent feedback in the field setting. Further, students will continue to be offered opportunities to recommend or propose policy changes which would enhance client well-being as it relates to advancing human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing.

They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Course Map: The social work courses which primarily address this area are SOWK 2010: Critical Thinking and Writing in Social Work, SOWK 4030: Statistics, and SOWK 4040: Research Methods. All courses have content emphasizing the importance of empirical research and several courses outside of the research sequence require students to utilize empirical research.

Measure 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 80% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the research series courses to ensure that students meet expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty continued to modify SOWK 2090: Intro to Policy and Research which introduces students to principles of research in social work earlier in the curriculum. Faculty continued to incorporate assignments in the statistics course which utilize contextual data sets to perform statistical analysis and make practice related decisions. Faculty met in the fall of 2025 to complete an exam analysis to determine content and construct validity, to determine which areas of the specific competency the students were struggling with, and to make appropriate modifications to the exam. These changes were intended to improve the students' ability to understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work, and in evaluating practice. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was not met with 64% of 39 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE, with research-informed practice questions reviewed for construct validity as a priority. An exam will be added to SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations and to SOWK 4040: Research Methods to increase the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessment and to better prepare students for licensure. In SOWK 3130: Generalist Practice with Groups, students will begin evaluating published research studies to strengthen the connection between research literacy and direct practice. Single system designs introduced in SOWK 3120 will be carried forward

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

into SOWK 4040, with final projects shifting from research proposals to applied evaluations tied to field placements. Faculty will incorporate the use of Artificial Intelligence as an ethical tool for practice evaluation in SOWK 4040. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 4.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar courses and in the research series courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty incorporated the use of Artificial Intelligence to aid students in understanding research and how to implement true practice evaluation. Students were trained in how to use AI ethically and responsibly in completing research from start to finish. Final projects in research were changed from research proposals to mock studies and single system evaluations in order to complete simulated evaluations. These changes improved the students' ability to understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing the science of social work and in evaluating their practice. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 92% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar courses and in the research series courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue to incorporate the use of Artificial Intelligence as an ethical tool to aid student understanding of research and how to implement true practice evaluation. Single system designs from SOWK 3120 will carry forward into SOWK 4040, with final projects continuing to emphasize applied evaluations tied to field placements. These changes will continue to improve the students' ability to understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Course Map: The social work courses which primarily address this competency are SOWK 2090: Social Welfare as a Social Institution and SOWK 4350: Contemporary Social Policy.

Measure 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 84% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the policy courses to ensure that students meet competency related to professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty further refined SOWK 2090: Intro to Policy and Research to facilitate the introduction of policy content earlier in the social work curriculum, allowing students to have a firm knowledge of the history of certain policies and fundamentals of policy development to enhance the learning in SOWK 4350. Faculty implemented a pre-test/post-test evaluation design to better connect the two courses so that policy analysis could be better supported in SOWK 4350. These changes were intended to improve the students' ability to understand that

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was not met with 77% of 39 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE. SOWK 4350: Contemporary Social Policy will be significantly strengthened through a redesigned three-week intensive hands-on policy practice experience, the addition of a midterm exam, an updated and more rigorous final exam, and a new in-course exam to increase the frequency of competency-based assessment. Faculty will continue to use the pre-test/post-test evaluation design connecting SOWK 2090 and SOWK 4350 to track policy knowledge growth across the curriculum. Faculty will recruit policy students to attend a two-day legislative trip which will be enhanced by the requirement of policy evaluations of specific Louisiana House and Senate Bills. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 5.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency as measured by the Field Instrument. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the policy courses to ensure that students meet the expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty recruited policy students to attend a two-day legislative trip enhanced by the requirement of policy evaluations of specific Louisiana House and Senate Bills. Students completed a refined policy analysis assignment using standardized policies to allow faculty to provide more targeted feedback on student learning and competency. These changes improved students' ability to understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 97% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2026-27, faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the policy courses to ensure that students meet the expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue to recruit policy students to attend the two-day legislative trip with required bill analysis assignments. Students will continue to complete the standardized policy analysis assignment to allow faculty to provide targeted feedback on student learning and competency. These changes will continue to improve the students' ability to understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Course Map: The social work courses which primarily focus on this competency are all of the “practice courses” – SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals, SOWK 3130: Generalist Practice with Groups, SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations, SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families, SOWK 3180: Interviewing Skills, and SOWK 4190: Field Placement.

Measure 6.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the corresponding courses to ensure that students meet engagement expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty updated signage and continued to incorporate the use of signage in the classrooms pertaining to engagement models and CSWE competencies in all courses and developed a standard module using digital versions of the signage in all online courses. Faculty further incorporated additional assignments regarding engagement of individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Roleplay assignments in SOWK 3180: Techniques of Interviewing were further refined to help students focus on the skills of engagement, and the use of simulation was strengthened in SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families. These changes improved students' ability to understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 100% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE. SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families will be fully redeveloped to strengthen engagement content and simulation-based learning. An exam will be added to SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations to increase the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessment and to better prepare students for licensure. Faculty will continue to incorporate the use of signage in the classrooms pertaining to engagement models and CSWE competencies in all courses and maintain the standard module using digital versions of the signage in all online courses. Faculty will continue to incorporate additional assignments regarding engagement of individuals, families, groups, and organizations. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 6.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency as measured by the Field Instrument. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar to ensure that students meet the expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty continued using digital evaluations and surveys to assess students' engagement skills in the field setting. Students were provided with additional resources to enhance their engagement skills including the use of simulation to allow students to practice engagement with mock clients. These changes improved students' ability to understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 100% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2026-27, faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar to ensure that students meet the expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue using digital evaluations and surveys to assess students' engagement skills in the field setting. Students will continue to be provided additional resources to enhance their engagement skills including the expanded use of simulation to allow students to practice engagement with mock clients. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;

- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Course Map: The social work courses which primarily focus on this competency are all of the “practice courses” – SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals, SOWK 3130: Generalist Practice with Groups, SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations, SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families, and SOWK 3180: Interviewing Skills. In addition, SOWK 4900: Differential Diagnosis focuses on mental health assessment.

Measure 7.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 96% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the corresponding practice courses to ensure that students meet the expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty further incorporated signage placed in every classroom regarding the Generalist Intervention Model (GIM) to facilitate discussions in all courses to enhance student competency in the phases and aspects of assessment. Faculty created standardized modules to infuse into all online courses for the benefit of online students. Faculty incorporated additional assignments regarding assessment of individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Roleplay assignments in SOWK 3180: Techniques of Interviewing were further modified to help students focus on the steps and skills related to assessment, and students utilized simulation in multiple courses to practice the skills of assessment in a supportive learning environment. These changes improved the students' ability to understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 90% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE. SOWK

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

3150: Generalist Practice with Families will be fully redeveloped to strengthen assessment content and simulation-based learning. An exam will be added to SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations to increase the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessment and to better prepare students for licensure. Faculty will continue to incorporate signage pertaining to the GIM and CSWE competencies in all courses and maintain the standard module using digital versions of the signage in all online courses. Faculty will continue to incorporate additional assignments regarding assessment of individuals, families, groups, and organizations. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 7.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency as measured by the Field Instrument. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty continued to focus on discussing the continual process of assessment in the field seminar, with special attention paid to diversity-related assessments. These changes improved students' ability to understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 100% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2026-27, faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue to focus on discussing the continual process of assessment in the field seminar, with continued special attention paid to diversity-related assessments. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Course Map: The social work courses which primarily focus on this competency are all of the “practice courses” – SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals, SOWK 3130: Generalist Practice with Groups, SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations, SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families, and SOWK 3180: Interviewing Skills.

Measure 8.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 91% of 45 students meeting

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

competency on the Exit Exam during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in practice courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty continued to incorporate models of intervention as they relate to anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice with oppressed clients and client groups on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Faculty met in the fall of 2025 to complete an exam analysis to determine content and construct validity, to determine which areas of the specific competency the students were struggling with, and to make appropriate changes to the exam. These changes improved students' ability to understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 92% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS required by CSWE. SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families will be fully redeveloped to strengthen intervention content and simulation-based learning. An exam will be added to SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations to increase the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessment and to better prepare students for licensure. Faculty will continue to incorporate models of intervention as they relate to anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice with oppressed clients and client groups on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 8.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension) Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met with 100% of 34 students meeting competency as measured by the Field Instrument. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar to ensure that students meet ethical and professional

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty continued to prioritize intervention in the field orientation and field seminar sessions. These changes improved students' ability to understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 100% of 39 students meeting competency.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2026-27, faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue to prioritize intervention in the field orientation and field seminar sessions. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Course Map: The social work courses which primarily focus on this competency are all of the “practice courses” – SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals, SOWK 3130: Generalist Practice with Groups, SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations, SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families, and SOWK 3180: Interviewing Skills. In addition, the Research sequence courses, SOWK 4030: Statistics and 4040: Research Methods are important courses to this competency.

Measure 9.1. (Direct – Knowledge Dimension)

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

During their last semester and prior to graduation students complete the *Exit Exam* to serve as a test of student knowledge of social work as it relates to the nine (9) EPAS Competencies. This measure directly addresses the knowledge dimension.

The NSU BSW benchmark is that 80% of the students will be rated as “competent” or above on each of the competencies assessed. This will be used to make program changes where required.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met, with 60% of 45 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam during the assessment cycle. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty updated all classroom content in the field seminar courses and in the research series courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty incorporated the use of Artificial Intelligence to aid students in understanding of research and how to implement true practice evaluation. Students were trained in how to use AI ethically and responsibly to complete research from start to finish. Final projects in research were changed from research proposals to mock studies and single system evaluations in order to complete simulated evaluations. These changes were intended to improve the students' ability to understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was not met with 51% of 39 students meeting competency on the Exit Exam, representing the fourth consecutive year in which this competency has not met benchmark on the knowledge dimension.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. All Competency 9 exit exam questions will be fully rewritten to align with the 2022 EPAS and with revised curriculum expectations in the research sequence and practice courses. An exam will be added to SOWK 4040: Research Methods to increase the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessment and to better prepare students for licensure. Faculty co-teaching sessions on evaluation will be introduced across practice courses to ensure consistent knowledge-building related to evaluation competency. Single system designs introduced in SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals will carry forward into SOWK 4040, with final projects shifting from proposals to applied evaluations tied to field placements. In SOWK 3130: Generalist Practice with Groups, students will begin evaluating published research studies to strengthen the connection between research literacy and practice evaluation. Faculty will continue to incorporate the use of Artificial Intelligence as an ethical tool for practice evaluation in SOWK 4040. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 9.2. (Direct – Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processing Dimension)

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Students in SOWK 4190, Field Work, complete a field internship at an outside agency, which allows them to practice social work under the supervision of a field instructor. Students are evaluated by field instructors using the *Field Instrument*. This instrument measures student achievement across various dimensions related to each Competency. The *Field Instrument* assesses students on the Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processing dimensions. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of students will be rated as “competent” or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the five-point scale).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the field evaluation benchmark was met with 97% of 34 students meeting competency as measured by the Field Instrument. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty continued to focus on discussing the continual process of evaluation in the field seminar. Faculty incorporated the use of single system designs and mock evaluations into the field seminar to bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and field practice. These changes improved students' ability to understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met with 97% of 39 students meeting competency as measured by the Field Instrument.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2026-27, faculty will continue to update all classroom content in the field seminar courses to ensure that students meet ethical and professional expectations for the 2022 EPAS. Faculty will continue to focus on discussing the continual process of evaluation in the field seminar and will incorporate single system designs carried forward from SOWK 3120 to directly connect classroom learning to field practice evaluation. These changes will improve the students' ability to understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results:

Program faculty examined the results of data analysis from AC 2024–25 and implemented a range of targeted pedagogical and programmatic changes in AC 2025–26. The following summarizes the key evidence of improvement and the program's response to assessment findings.

During the 2025–2026 academic year, the BSW program demonstrated continued progress in multiple competency areas while also identifying areas requiring sustained and intensified attention. Field evaluations remained strong across all nine competencies, with 9 of 9 competencies meeting the 80% benchmark on the field instrument. This consistency reflects the program's sustained investment in field education, including updated field seminar content, continued use of digital evaluations,

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

peer-to-peer field orientation with alumni, and ongoing collaboration between classroom faculty and field instructors.

The exit exam continues to be the primary source of variance in student outcomes. Of the nine competencies assessed, five met the 80% benchmark on the exit exam. Competencies 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 all met benchmark, with C6 and C8 representing particular program strengths. C6 has now met benchmark at 100% on both measures for the third consecutive year, reflecting the sustained impact of GIM signage, simulation integration in the families course, and roleplay refinements in SOWK 3180. C8 demonstrated the strongest year-over-year improvement in the program, a result attributed to consistent focus on anti-racist and anti-oppressive intervention models across the practice sequence.

Competencies 3 and 5 met the field evaluation benchmark but did not meet the exit exam benchmark, each coming in at 77%. Strong field scores indicate that students are demonstrating these competencies in practice settings; however, the knowledge dimension requires targeted attention. These competencies are designated as watch status and will receive focused curricular intervention in AY 2026–27, including the full revamp of SOWK 3350: Economics and Social Work, significant redesign of SOWK 4350: Contemporary Social Policy including a three-week intensive hands-on policy practice experience, and continued use of the pre-test/post-test design connecting SOWK 2090 and SOWK 4350.

Competency 4 did not meet the exit exam benchmark for the first time, with 64% of students meeting competency on the knowledge dimension. Students demonstrated the competency in field settings at 92%, indicating the gap is specific to the knowledge dimension. The research sequence — including SOWK 2090, SOWK 4030, and SOWK 4040 — will be realigned in AY 2026–27, with new exams added in SOWK 3140 and SOWK 4040, research study evaluation introduced in SOWK 3130, and single system designs from SOWK 3120 carried forward into SOWK 4040.

Competency 9 did not meet the exit exam benchmark, with 51% of students meeting competency on the knowledge dimension. This represents the fourth consecutive year in which C9 has not met benchmark on the knowledge measure and remains the defining assessment challenge for the program. Field evaluations remain strong at 97%, confirming that students demonstrate evaluation competency in practice. All C9 exit exam questions will be fully rewritten for AY 2026–27 to align with the 2022 EPAS and revised curriculum expectations. Faculty co-teaching sessions on evaluation will be introduced across practice courses, and single system designs will carry forward from SOWK 3120 into SOWK 4040 with final projects shifting to applied evaluations tied to field placements.

Across all competencies, the program is implementing a significant exam development initiative for AY 2026–27. The existing exit exam, in use since 2019, will be substantially revised with 75% of questions replaced and 25% retained. This revision is aligned to the 2022 EPAS constructs required by CSWE. As part of the development and validation process, all program faculty completed the existing exam during AC 2025–26 to support content and construct validity analysis. The existing exam will additionally be administered as a pre-test in SOWK 3120 beginning in AY 2026–27, establishing a

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

longitudinal baseline of student knowledge at entry into the practice sequence. Additionally, the program is increasing the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessment across multiple courses to sharpen students' test-taking skills in preparation for professional licensure.

Evidence of Impact

Beyond competency performance, several indicators affirm the broader impact of the BSW program during the 2025–2026 academic year:

- **Graduate School Placements:** Graduates of the Class of 2025 were successfully admitted to MSW programs, with most accepted students admitted under advanced standing status, reflecting the strength of the BSW curriculum in preparing students for graduate-level social work education.
- **Student Achievement:** Students continued to present research at NSU's annual research day. The department continued to award scholarships and student achievement recognition, and the Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Program expanded from 6 to 15 stipends, now including child and family and psychology students recruited as part of the program's interprofessional pipeline strategy.
- **Community and Academic Engagement:** Students participated in a second annual two-day legislative trip to Baton Rouge, meeting with Louisiana lawmakers and child welfare professionals and completing required policy evaluations of specific House and Senate Bills. Faculty continued to present at national and regional conferences, sharing research findings and programmatic successes.
- **Faculty Professional Development:** In AY 2025–26, the program launched a faculty professional development book club. The inaugural selection was *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn*, with a focused goal of sharpening pedagogy skills particularly as they apply to online course delivery. This initiative reflects the program's commitment to continuous faculty growth as a driver of student learning outcomes.
- **MSW Program Launch:** The NSU MSW program launched its inaugural cohort in August 2025. The BSW and MSW programs are actively collaborating on curricular alignment under the 2022 EPAS standards. No formal MSW assessment data is available for AY 2025–26 as the program is building its competency-based assessment infrastructure. A separate MSW assessment report will be prepared once assessment points are established.

Plan of Action for Moving Forward:

Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2025–26 and will take the following steps to continue to improve student learning in AC 2026–27:

Exit Exam Revision and 2022 EPAS Transition: The program will implement a substantially revised exit exam aligned to the 2022 EPAS, with 75 of 100 questions replaced. All Competency 9 questions will be fully rewritten. The field evaluation

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

instrument will similarly be revised to reflect 2022 EPAS competency language. These revisions represent the most significant assessment infrastructure change the program has undertaken since the original exam was developed in 2019.

Pre-Test Implementation: The existing exit exam will be administered as a pre-test in SOWK 3120: Generalist Practice with Individuals, establishing a baseline measure of student knowledge at entry into the practice sequence and enabling longitudinal tracking of knowledge development across the curriculum.

Research and Evaluation Sequence Alignment: Single system designs introduced in SOWK 3120 will carry forward into SOWK 4040, with final projects shifting to applied evaluations tied to field placements. An exam will be added to SOWK 4040. Students in SOWK 3130 will begin evaluating published research studies. Faculty co-teaching sessions on evaluation will be introduced across practice courses to ensure consistent knowledge-building.

Policy and Justice Sequence Strengthening: SOWK 4350 will be significantly redesigned, incorporating a three-week intensive hands-on policy practice experience, a new midterm exam, an updated final exam, and an additional in-course exam. SOWK 3350 will be fully revamped. The pre-test/post-test design connecting SOWK 2090 and SOWK 4350 will continue. Students will again participate in the two-day legislative trip to Baton Rouge with required bill analysis assignments.

Human Behavior Sequence: SOWK 3030 will add quizzes and update the textbook to a more applied focus to strengthen connections between human behavior theory and competency-based knowledge.

Practice Sequence Redevelopment: SOWK 3150: Generalist Practice with Families will be fully redeveloped to strengthen engagement, assessment, and intervention content and expand simulation-based learning. An exam will be added to SOWK 3140: Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations. Simulation will continue to be expanded across the practice sequence.

Proctored Assessment Program-Wide: The program will increase the frequency of proctored, competency-based assessments across multiple courses to sharpen students' test-taking skills and better prepare graduates for professional licensure requirements.

Faculty Professional Development: The faculty book club will continue in AY 2026–27 with a focus on continued pedagogical development, particularly in online course delivery. This initiative supports the program's commitment to faculty growth as a direct driver of student learning outcomes.

Graduate Preparation and MSW Pipeline: The BSW senior curriculum will continue to embed graduate readiness checkpoints including writing workshops, graduate school advising, and licensing information sessions. The Title IV-E scholars' program will continue to expand, with psychology students included in the recruitment pipeline.

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Field Education: The program will continue to support the summer field internship model. Field seminar content will be updated across all competencies for 2022 EPAS. Peer-to-peer field orientation with alumni will continue. The updated field evaluation instrument will be in place for the AY 2026–27 cycle.