

JMSW Capstone Assignment: Student Portfolio

PURPOSE

The purpose of this capstone assignment is to provide students an opportunity to:

1. demonstrate integration of theory and practice using the advanced generalist social work model, within a selected area of practice, and in accordance with the program's stated mission and objectives;
2. reflect on their overall learning while in the JMSW program;
3. assess areas of professional growth and development; and
4. provide a document available for review by appropriate and interested professionals (i.e., CSWE site visitors, interested JMSW applicants, and students in the program) that validates the student's learning experience in the program.

Each student will prepare a portfolio of his or her work since beginning the JMSW program. The portfolio, consisting of a **reflective paper** with supporting **attachments**, should be a compilation of practicum and related classroom work that gives some indication of the extent to which the student understands and can apply the knowledge, skills, and values of advanced generalist social work practice.

Each student will be under faculty direction and supervision of their field liaison to refine and focus their portfolio. Students will be able to make revisions to the portfolio until it conforms to an acceptable level of work. **The assignment is due no later than the last class meeting of the spring semester.**

CONTENT OF PORTFOLIO

Reflective Paper (15-28 pages)

The reflective paper, which should be in narrative form and identify the chosen area of practice, will summarize significant learning experiences that have occurred and describe the new knowledge, values, and/or skills acquired during the foundation and concentration years of the program. The paper should also assess students' use of self in the helping process.

The reflective paper must present the relatedness of social work methods (including individuals, families, groups, and communities), social policy, human behavior and social environment, research, and field practicum. Further, it should demonstrate application and inclusion of professional ethics and values, human and cultural diversity, social and economic justice, and populations at-risk, in beginning advanced generalist practice.

In the reflective paper, students will demonstrate integration of:

- knowledge of theories, concepts, and models for practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- advanced practice skills to address complex direct practice situations, including individual, family, and group techniques;
- advanced skills to address indirect practice situations, including tasks related to supervision, administration, and program evaluation;
- knowledge and skills related to social policy;
- ability to engage in strength-based, eclectic practice using a range of theories and models as appropriate for client needs and problems;
- ability to engage in applied practice research and evaluation;
- multicultural competence at all system levels of social work practice; and
- understanding and application of professional values and ethics to social work practice.

The following 5 sections are required. Additional suggestions on how to structure and treat each topic are included in this packet.

1. Multicultural competence (3-5 pages)*

Reflect on personal and professional growth in regard to multicultural and cross-cultural competence (i.e., importance of cultural awareness in working with clients, awareness and changes in previous prejudices, appreciation of diversity, cultural sensitivity in practice situations, etc.).

2. Advanced knowledge and skills for complex direct practice incorporating a strength-based eclectic approach to practice (3-5 pages)*

Reflect on significant learning and application, or anticipated application, of knowledge and skills for handling complex direct practice situations within a strengths-based perspective. Identify a specific situation when you utilized multiple practice theories and models in response to a complex case, provide a rationale for your choice of theories and models, clearly describe how you implemented the practice theories and models in the case, and describe the client outcomes as well as what you learned from the case.

3. Advanced knowledge and skills for indirect practice (3-5 pages)*

Reflect on significant learning and application and/or anticipated application, of knowledge and skills for handling complex indirect practice situations. Remember to include social policy in this section.

4. *Knowledge and skills for research & evaluation** (3-5 pages)

Reflect on significant learning and application and/or anticipated application related to the use of research to guide practice and program development.

5. *Self-reflection/summary* (3-5 pages)

Summarize the major learning you have had during the JMSW program. Identify specific strengths you bring into your first paid practice experience. Identify area(s) where ongoing growth and development are needed. Indicate what 5 attachments you have included in your materials and your rationale for those choices.

Note: Students should address their learning and growth in regard to **values and ethics in the sections on multicultural competence, direct practice, indirect practice, and research.*

Attachments

Students are to select 5 assignments or other related documents that were among their most meaningful learning assignments while in the program. These assignments do not have to correspond to any one section of the project. Students are cautioned that these attachments become part of the public record of the capstone projects. Therefore students need to make sure they are comfortable with the availability of the material and ensure that client confidentiality is protected. It is not necessary for students to edit assignments based on feedback they had received from their instructors.

FORMAT

As of the 2004-05 academic year all Capstone Projects must be prepared and submitted to their field liaisons on a CD in a standard square plastic (jewel) case or sleeve and meet the following requirements.

The CD must be labeled with:

- Student Name
- Capstone Project for _____ (academic year)
- Field Liaison Name

All parts of the Capstone Project must be contained in *one* continuous file.

The Capstone Project must contain the following sections in this order:

- A Title Page that indicates the name of the student, Capstone Project for ____ (academic year submitted), and Name of Field Liaison

- Table of Contents, which lists each of the five sections of the Capstone with corresponding pages that begin each section and a listing of the five attachments by assignment title with the beginning page number of each assignment. All pages of the Capstone Project should follow in chronological order.
- Each of the five major sections should be introduced with the title of the section on the top of the first page. Separate title pages for each section are not to be used. The titles used for each section must be as follows:

1. Multicultural Competence
2. Advanced Knowledge and Skills for Complex Direct Practice
3. Advanced Knowledge and Skills for Indirect Practice
4. Knowledge and Skills for Research and Evaluation
5. Self-Reflection/Summary

The five attachments should each contain the title of each assignment on the first page.

Students must submit clean copies of their five attachments since assignments containing feedback from their instructors will not be on computer files, unless the student has the assignment scanned. If students choose to use an assignment as an attachment that they did not save on a file then the student will be responsible for having the assignment scanned so that it can then be copied to the file of their Capstone Project.

Students need to remember that all Capstone Projects are considered public record and can be used by the JMSW Program as they deem appropriate. All JMSW students will be asked to sign a statement indicating this understanding and must submit this form to their field liaison when they turn in their Capstone Project disk.

Multicultural Competence
Prepared by Dr. Jacalyn Claes

Knowledge & skills in multicultural competence (3-5 pages)

Reflect on significant personal and professional growth in multicultural competence during your two years in the program.

Suggested Approaches (Choose one)

I. Personal transformation-

Describe and discuss specific transformational experiences for you as a JMSW student in the area of multicultural competence

1. Introduction: A brief discussion of the importance of multicultural competence in social work practice followed by a description of the content of this section.
2. Think back to a time shortly before you entered the JMSW Program. Reflect on your level of awareness of the prejudice(s) that you held, the stereotypes that you held, and your own cultural identity.
3. Describe specific growth while in the JMSW program. This may include consciousness-raising moments which encouraged you to change your thinking and behavior.
4. Discuss how the above transformational events influenced you personally and in relationships with colleagues and clients.
5. Relate this learning to social work values and ethics
6. Conclusion. How do you see yourself using this knowledge and skill in social work practice?

II. Application of a model

Describe one model or theory of racial identity or cultural competence practice and apply this model to a case in your field placement.

1. Introduction. A brief discussion of the importance of multicultural competence in social work practice followed by a description of the content of this section.

2. Introduce and discuss the model or theory that you will use and indicate the contribution of this model to social work practice
3. Apply this model to a person or family with whom you worked in field placement. Provide clear descriptions.
4. Conclusion. Discuss how the use of this model improved your social work practice with this individual or family. Speculate on how the use of this model might assist you after you graduate from the JMSW Program.

Direct Practice With Complex Cases, Incorporating A Strengths-Based Eclectic Approach To Practice

Prepared by

Prof. Susan Dennison, Dr. John Steele, & Dr. Betsy Lindsey

I. Introduction

1. Educate your reader as to what is meant by direct social work practice within the JMSW curriculum model: working with complex problems and populations that experience severe, chronic, and persistent problems.
2. Explain the strengths-based and eclectic approach to social work practice and why these perspectives are important.
3. Clarify for the reader the knowledge and skills required to engage in eclectic practice, addressing specifically assessment, theory, and intervention.
4. Explain how you will demonstrate that you have gained the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to be a competent direct service practitioner.

II. Demonstration of Knowledge and Skills

Faculty suggest you select one of two approaches to for demonstration of knowledge and skills:

1. Select a single complex case in which you have used a strengths-based eclectic approach to your practice and provide the following information:
 - a. Brief background on client and presenting problem
 - b. Assessment of client's strengths and needs
 - c. Rationale for why you consider this to be an example of complex direct practice
 - d. The intervention approach(es) you chose to treat the problem and your theoretical rationale for that choice; for **each** approach you used:
 - i. Briefly describe the intervention approach
 - ii. Explain your theoretical rationale for selecting that approach to deal with the specific client goal(s) which are the target(s) of the intervention
 - iii. Clearly describe how you applied the intervention to the case.
 - e. Client outcomes in regard to presenting problem(s)
 - f. Ethical issues involved in this case
 - g. What you learned from this case and how you see yourself using what you have learned about eclectic practice when you enter the field as a professional social worker.

OR

2. Select multiple cases in which you used a variety of theoretical and intervention approaches. Briefly cover the above topics in relation to each client, with a clear rationale for your choice of the approach in relation to your assessment of the client's strengths and needs.

III. Conclusion

1. How have you changed over the past two years as you have worked with clients in direct practice?
2. How are you now professionally, socially, and emotionally different in relation to assessment and treatment of clients than you were at the beginning of the JMSW program?

**Some Theoretical Treatment Models That May Be Incorporated into
An Eclectic Approach to Direct Social Work Practice***

Theoretical Approach	Rationale	Techniques
Solution-Focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief Treatment • Self Esteem Difficulties • Lack of response to more traditional approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining • Exploring exceptions to the problem • Normalizing • Compliments • Formula interventions ◆ Miracle Question ◆ Formula 1st session task ◆ “Do something different” ◆ “Pay attention to how you overcome the urge to...”
Task-Centered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term brief treatment • Multiple presenting problems • Client not motivated to address any one problem in-depth • Often client needs resources from several agencies • Can be used as the basic framework for other approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps to problem solving • Resource referral • Goal formulation & prioritizing • Formulation of Specific Tasks for Problem Resolution • Develop steps for the accomplishment of each task established • Analyze and resolve obstacles • Have client practice new behaviors
Cognitive-Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly effective for depression, anxiety disorders, impulse control problems, social skill difficulties, & self esteem issues. • Ideal for clients who are motivated to focus on their cognitive functioning & see the connection to their behavioral responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoughts Stopping • Journal of self talk pattern • Development of new self talk • Help client identify the dysfunctional beliefs & patterns in their thoughts and self talk • Assist clients in rewarding themselves as they develop & use new self talk • Have clients practice new thinking and self talk along with logging behavioral responses as a result

Crisis Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Use in urgent crisis situations precipitated by stressful events, maturational crises, and acute transitional situations” (Hepworth & Larsen, 1993, p. 418) • Time-limited • Focuses on problems of living rather than psychology • Oriented to here and now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial phase • Relieve emotional distress • Assessment, including relevant cultural factors and support systems • Contracting and planning • Task implementation • Guidelines associated with the task-centered approach apply, except practitioners are usually more active and directive, while still respecting client autonomy • Anticipatory guidance • Anticipate future crises that might develop and plan effective coping strategies
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These four models are the basic models taught in the JMSW program to all students; students may learn other models in their field practicum and area of practice classes and are free to describe utilization of any models they have used.

Modalities of Treatment

Individual Counseling
Group
Marital Counseling
Family Therapy

Case Management
Support/Monitoring
Pair Counseling
Sibling Counseling

Worksheet
Eclectic, Strength-based Approach to Direct Practice

Instructions: Fill in the table on two complex cases you have worked with in either internship. Try using cases where you had longer contact with the clients or had some extensive history.

Brief Description of Case	Theoretical Approach Used and Rationale	Techniques that were part of the approach and how you used them

Indirect Practice

Prepared by Dr. Wayne Moore

I. Introduction

1. In first paragraph tell reader what encompasses or what is the thrust of indirect practice and its importance to social work practice.
2. Clarify what courses (required and elective) which support knowledge and skills you have gained, refined, or expanded in evaluating, studying, or engaging in indirect practice. Remember your *required courses* have been policy I & II, communities and organization course, administration and field internship.
3. How has indirect practice influenced you, both as a professional social work practitioner and as an informed citizen of your community? (Remember, *community* is now defined as local, organizational, state, nation, world)

II. Demonstration of knowledge, skills, values of indirect practice. You may wish to choose from the following suggestions:

1. You may have already selected a particular case or situation to discuss and elaborate in your complex direct and eclectic practice sections. Consider this spin. Now take that same case and examine it carefully from an indirect practice perspective. How has indirect practice influenced, dictated, guided, affected, determined, restricted or challenged you directly and indirectly in the actions you undertook in that case? Don't forget social work values and ethics.
2. Select a single incident—positive or negative—which occurred during your field internship experience and do an analysis using an indirect practice perspective. If it turned out positive, what did you contribute and how can you explain what occurred? If the outcome was negative, what went wrong? Where, when, how and what should one be cautious about should it arise again? As a part of your critical analysis, reflect on what have you learned about indirect practice through this situation and how it fits into the overarching framework of indirect practice. Oh yes, don't forget social work values and ethics.
3. Describe and discuss specific knowledge and skills you learned in the policy, administration and community organization courses giving specific examples and how you applied them. Application can be from your field experiences or as an involved community citizen. Yes, be consistent: what about social work values and ethics?

III. Conclusion

Discuss how you see yourself using what you have acquired about indirect practice in your future roles as a direct practitioner, prospective supervisor, future administrator and community participant on decision making and governing boards, committees, or institutions.

Examples of Indirect Practice

Policy is the domain through which all programs and services are created, implemented, funded and sustained. Remember your courses in policy, community organization, administration and field instruction. Please be sure to examine your learning contract—did any of your learning activities address indirect practice?

Policy manual and agency directives

- Orientation—this is where it begins for new employees, staff & even students
- Table of organization— who's who; the chain of command
- Agency structure
- Overview of agency procedures
- Accountability
- Funding
- Documentation—the how, when, where
- Supervision—chain of command and responsibility
- Performance appraisals and reviews
- Grievances and appeals
- Code of ethics and conduct
- Liability
- Benefits

Administration

- Board of directors, executive officer, supervisors
- Role and philosophy
- How are employees utilized in management and maintenance of the agency?
- Employee input into decision-making or governance
- Client input into decision-making or governance
- Committee structure—type, purpose, influence
- Grants—enhance or restrict service

Board, Administrator, Supervisors

- Leadership style, attitudes
- Communication
- Decision-making
- Crisis management
- Fiduciary responsibility

Staff development

- Continuing educational opportunities—what, where, who, how
- Staff training and development
- Meetings—when; informational vs. decision
- Retreats—agency, administrative, professional, annual
- Newsletters, memos, e-mails

Volunteers—utilization, training, evaluation, maintenance

Program evaluation

- Agency services match agency mission
- Agency services match client needs
- Services changes to match trends and needs?
- Program audits
- Quality assurance activities
- Research and evaluation efforts
- Services grounded in theoretical framework
- Services deliver most effective, efficient and cost-effective means

Agency focus of service

- Reactive or proactive — Preventive or reactive
- Traditional vs. innovative (services, hours, professionals)
- Therapeutic vs. non-traditional
- Rural vs. urban vs. suburbia

Program planning and action (community or organization)

- Locality development initiative
- Social planning initiative
- Social action initiative
- Needs assessment—data gathering and analysis
- Surveys, existing data, interviews, focus groups, combo, etc.
- Agency or interagency collaborative initiatives or joint service efforts
- Community collaborative meetings
- Community education or training
- Community support program, groups, services
- Community mobilization—strikes, protests, walkouts, civil disobedience
- Convergence of the following factors on the structure and delivery of services:*
- Social changes Economic growth & stability
- Institutional shifts International affairs
- Political attitudes
- Monitoring, evaluating, designing or restructuring services utilizing a modern social problem-solving model*

Advocacy

- Agency affiliations
- Professional and personal affiliations
- Lobbying—interest groups
- Direct, indirect, personal vs. professional
- Local, state, national levels

Values and ethics

Correlated to agency philosophy and mission

Personal and professional

Client and professional

NASW—local, state, national, international

Research & Evaluation

Prepared by Dr. Betsy Lindsey

Knowledge and skills for research and evaluation (3 - 5 pages)

Reflect on significant learning and application or anticipated application related to the use of research to guide practice and program development.

Suggested Approaches

1. Describe and discuss specific knowledge and skills you have learned in the two research courses, giving specific examples from each course and each research project you undertook.
2. Describe and discuss one research project from which you learned significant knowledge and skills, describing your role in the project (if it was a group project), and specifically what you learned.

Suggested Structure

- I. Introduction (a brief discussion of what you have learned about the importance of R&E in social work practice, followed by a description of what this section will include and how it is organized).
- II. The body of the section (using one of the two approaches listed above or another approach you have discussed with your advisor).
- III. What have you learned about the application of **social work values and ethics** related to R&E? Be specific about what you learned and how. For example, if you learned about the need to secure informed consent, describe how you learned this (lecture, readings, work on project), and how you applied this to your project(s).
- II. Conclusion (a brief summary of your learning and discussion of how you see yourself using this knowledge and skill in your future work as a social worker).

Tips

1. Provide specific examples of what and how you learned knowledge or skill you describe. For example, if you say you learned research methodology, explain specifically what you learned about research methodology and how you learned it (lectures, reading, exercises, research project).
2. If you participated in a group project you plan to write about, describe clearly and specifically the role(s) you played in the project.

3. You may want to include your research project as one of the 5 attachments. If so, be sure to reference it in this section as well as in the Self-Reflection/Summary section.

Self-Reflection/Summary Section of Capstone Project

By Professor Susan Dennison

Outline of this Section (3-5 pages long)

- I. Summary of your overall learning in the JMSW Program
 - A. Knowledge gained from course material
 - B. Skills developed from field experiences and courses
 - C. Personal growth from combination of experiences

- II. Strengths you bring to your first MSW job
 - A. Delineate your strengths as you enter the job market
 - B. *Optional:* Describe the type of setting and position you feel most qualified for when you accept your first job as a professional social worker

- III. Areas to be worked on and further developed
 - A. Indicate the knowledge and/skill areas you still want to further develop in your first job settings.
 - B. Explain how you plan to continue your growth in the above indicated areas and for ongoing continuing education in general.

- IV. Five of the Most Meaningful Assignments in JMSW Program*
 - A. Indicate each assignment that you have chosen to include in the back of this section.
 - B. Explain to the reader why you have chosen each of the five assignments (i.e., what was so meaningful about those assignments for you)

***Note:** You have a choice to have your assignments included with feedback from the instructor or you are welcome to make any editing corrections. *Please remember to make sure there is no identifying information in any of your assignments that could possibly violate a client's confidentiality.*

Try to provide the reader of this section with a more in-depth of level feelings about your professional and personal growth in the Program, rather than just a summary of what you have already indicated in earlier sections of your Capstone Project.

**Feedback on Draft # ___ of _____ Section
of
Capstone Project**

Student: _____ Date: _____

Note: Any box checked below, except the last one, indicates that student needs to work on that aspect of their draft. If first box is checked then student is required to edit this section before instructor is willing to read and give feedback.

- Paper indicates that editing by student has not been done and must be completed before instructor will read this section and give feedback.
- Section requires an introductory paragraph
- Section requires a closing and summary paragraph
- Student needs to add a piece noting how their professional ethics are demonstrated in this part of their social work practice.
- This section is not long enough and does not provide the necessary specifics required for this part of the Capstone Project.
- This section is missing content on _____.
- See paper for editing comments in regard to writing suggestions.

 This section of the Capstone Project is well done and now just needs to be prepared in final copy form following the requirements outlined.