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# DEVELOPING A LEARNING CONTRACT

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## What is a Learning Contract?



- Tool for identifying activities that student will complete to demonstrate **skill development**
- Used for evaluation (and on-going supervision and check-ins)
- Competency based education emphasizes the measurement of skill attainment as the primary focus of training, and student readiness for practice is measured against a set of core competencies.
  - 9 CSWE competencies
  - -2 activities for each competency

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## What is a Learning Contract?

- The document that guides a student placement
- Gives student and agency the **full picture** of what the placement will look like




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**What is a Learning Contract?**

- Identifies what the student will be doing and how they will demonstrate what they are learning
- Identifies how the student's activities fit with the overall organization


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
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**How is the Learning Contract developed?**

Agency (expectation, opportunities) +  
student (strengths, interests) +  
requirements of practicum

- Co-created during the first few weeks of placement
- Identify student interests and abilities, and areas for professional growth, and align these with agency opportunities.
- Keep agency mission, vision, areas of service provision in mind, and consider practicum requirements.




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
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**How is the Learning Contract developed?**

**Some Helpful Questions:**

As you are creating the activities for the learning contract, it may be helpful to ask the following:

- How can we individualize and tailor activities to the needs of our clients/ the community being served?
- What will I observe the student doing (behaviorally: what will you see, hear) once they are competent in an area?
- Does the student have specific interests that can be incorporated into the LC?




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**Where can I find the Learning Contract worksheet?**  
<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/field-educators-liaisons/field-educator-resources/orientation-and-training/learning-contracts-and-performance-evaluations.html>

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**Learning Contract - Example**  
*9 core competencies + outcomes and component behaviors*

**Competency 8**

Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Expected Outcomes / CSWE Component Behaviors

- Critically evaluate the evidence base and choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, taking into account the trauma-informed care and human rights perspective.
- Employ empowerment strategies to bring about problem resolution.
- Identify the strengths of interprofessional collaboration.
- Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse client systems and constituencies.
- Describe normative and non-normative processes associated with endings and transitions.
- Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals, using a trauma-informed and human rights perspective.

Competency 8	
Activity 1 and Target Date	Activity 2 and Target Date

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**Learning Contract - Example**

*Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities*

- Activity 1: Provide individual counseling, using motivational interviewing techniques, on a short-term basis (6-8 weeks) for 2 clients
  - Date: End of second semester (May 4)
- Activity 2: Cover the agency crisis line two times each month and utilize trauma-informed, solution focused interventions
  - BY: Each month of second semester (ending 5/4)

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### Learning Contract – Key Considerations

- LC will be used to measure and evaluate the student's progress
  - How will you know when the activity/goal is met?
  - What do you see, or hear?
  - What evidence is there that lets you know the student has been successful?



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### Learning Contract – Key Considerations

- Activities should be behaviorally specific
  - Helpful verbs:** interview, write, observe, role play, participate, accompany, attend, summarize, co-lead, develop, understand, utilize, be able, distinguish between, formulate, demonstrate, examine, take initiative



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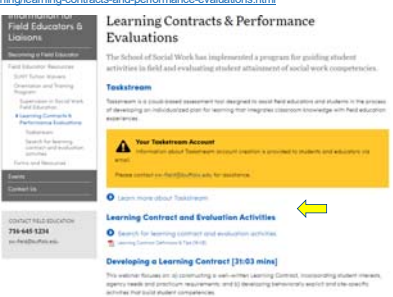
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### Learning Contract Development: Resources

<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/field-educators-liaisons/field-educator-resources/orientation-and-training/learning-contracts-and-performance-evaluations.html>



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**Learning Contract: What to do once it's complete**

- Student will put into Taskstream and you will approve it
- Use throughout placement
  - Supervision can bring the contract to life
    - Continuous discussion of activities
      - Progress? Growth? Challenges?
  - Explore how particular skills/ practice behaviors transfer to other settings

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“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.

 *Involve me and I learn.”* 

- Benjamin Franklin

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