The SCU/UST MSW curriculum prepares its graduates for advanced clinical social work practice grounded in the core competencies and practice behaviors of generalist practice. The ten core competencies outlined by the Council on Social Work Education are listed below [C2.1.1– C2.1.10 (a-d)], and are followed by a description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and a list of the practice behaviors that operationalize our MSW generalist curriculum.

**C2.1.1 – Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**
Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers
1. advocate for client access to the services of social work;
2. practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
3. attend to professional roles and boundaries;
4. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication;
5. engage in career-long learning;
6. use supervision and consultation; and
7. understand the development of the profession and what commitment to it involves.

**C2.1.2 - Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.**
Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers
1. continuously recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
2. make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (NASW, 2008) and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles (IFSW, 2004);
3. tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
4. apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

**C2.1.3 - Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**
Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking, augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers
1. distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom;
2. analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation;
3. demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues; and
4. utilize skills and processes of critical thinking to guide communication and decision-making.
C2.1.4 - Engage diversity and difference in practice.
Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate 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
1. recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
2. gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
3. recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences;
4. view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants; and
5. recognize and appreciate strengths across cultures.

CC2.1.5 - Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, and adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers
1. understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination;
2. advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
3. engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

C2.1.6 - Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
Social workers use practice experience to inform research; employ evidence-based interventions; evaluate their own practice; and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers
1. use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry; and
2. use research evidence to inform practice.

C2.1.7 – Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course, the range of social systems in which people live, and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers
1. use conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and
2. critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

C2.1.8 – Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know 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
1. analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and
2. collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.
C2.1.9 – Respond to contexts that shape practice.
Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers

1. continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services;
2. provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services; and
3. recognize the changing nature of social constructs and their impact.

C2.1.10 (a)-(d) – Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive process of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

C2.1.10 (a) – Engagement
Social workers

1. substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
2. establish rapport and build effective relationships;
3. use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and
4. develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

C2.1.10 (b) – Assessment
Social workers

1. collect, organize, and interpret client data;
2. assess client strengths and limitations;
3. develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and
4. select appropriate intervention strategies.

C2.1.10 (c) – Intervention
Social workers

1. initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
2. implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
3. help clients resolve problems;
4. negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and
5. facilitate transitions and endings.

C2.1.10 (d) – Evaluation
Social workers

1. social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.
Clinical social work practice augments the 10 core competencies and is grounded in the values of the profession.

- Service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry are among the core values of social work. These values underpin the explicit and implicit curriculum and frame the profession’s commitment to respect for all people and the quest for social and economic justice (A2.1.1; CSWE, 2008a).
- Reflecting the MSW framework for clinical social work practice and the mission and goals of the SCU/UST MSW program, the ten core competencies are listed below [A2.1.1–A2.1.10 (a-d)], followed by a description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and a list of the practice behaviors that operationalize our MSW advanced clinical social work curriculum. These practice behaviors form the basis for the assessment of students’ progress throughout the curriculum of the SCU/UST MSW program.

**A2.1.1 – Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work recognize the importance of the therapeutic relationship, the person-in-environment and the strengths perspectives, the professional use of self with clients, and adherence to ethical guidelines of professional behavior. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

1. readily identify as social work professionals;
2. demonstrate professional use of self with client;
3. understand and identify professional strengths, limitations and challenges;
4. develop, manage, and maintain therapeutic relationships with clients within the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives; and
5. understand the need for and use clinical social work supervision and consultation.

**A2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.**
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work are knowledgeable about ethical issues, legal parameters, and shifting societal mores that affect the therapeutic relationship. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

1. apply ethical decision-making skills to issues specific to clinical social work;
2. employ strategies of ethical reasoning to address the use of technology in clinical practice and its effect on client rights;
3. identify and use knowledge of relationship dynamics, including power differentials; and
4. recognize and manage personal biases as they affect the therapeutic relationship in the service of the clients’ well-being.

**A2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**
Advanced practitioners understand and differentiate the strengths and limitations of multiple practice theories and methods, clinical process, and technical tools, including differential diagnosis. They deconstruct theories and methods to evaluate how they relate to clients and client systems within their environmental context. They regularly question and reflect on their own assumptions and consider how these might affect practice. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

1. engage in reflective practice;
2. identify and articulate clients’ strengths and vulnerabilities;
3. evaluate, select, and implement appropriate multidimensional assessment, diagnostic, intervention, and practice evaluation tools;
4. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple theoretical perspectives and differentially apply them to client situations; and
5. communicate professional judgments to other social workers and to professionals from other disciplines, in both verbal and written format.
A2.1.4 – Engage diversity and difference in practice.
Advanced practitioners are knowledgeable about many forms of diversity and difference and how these influence the therapeutic relationship and clients’ presenting issues. Advanced practitioners are knowledgeable about the ways in which various dimensions of diversity affect (a) explanations of illness, (b) help-seeking behaviors, and (c) healing practices (Cal-SWEC, 2006). Advanced practitioners are cultural beings and understand how clinical practice choices can be culture-bound. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. research and apply knowledge of diverse populations to enhance client wellbeing;
2. work effectively with diverse populations; and
3. identify and use practitioner/client differences from a strengths perspective.

A2.1.5 – Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work understand the potentially challenging effects of economic, social, and cultural factors in the lives of clients in client systems. Advanced practitioners understand the stigma and shame associated with disorders, diagnoses, and help-seeking behaviors across diverse populations. They also understand strategies for advancing human rights and social and economic justice in domestic and global contexts. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. use knowledge of the effects of oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma on client and client systems to guide treatment planning and intervention; and
2. advocate at multiple levels for policy change that improves the overall mental health of clients and communities.

A2.1.6 – Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
Advanced clinical practitioners are knowledgeable about evidence-based interventions, best practices, and the evidence-based research process. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. use the evidence-based practice process in clinical assessment and intervention with clients;
2. participate in the generation of new clinical knowledge, through research and practice; and
3. use research methodology to evaluate clinical practice effectiveness and/or outcomes.

A2.1.7 – Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
Advanced practitioners understand how to synthesize and differentially apply the theories of human behavior and the social environment (biological, developmental, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual). They are familiar with diagnostic classification systems used in the formulation of a comprehensive assessment. Advanced practitioners understand how sociocultural contexts influence definitions of psychopathology. They have a working knowledge of psychotropic medications that are typically used in the treatment of mental health disorders, including expected results and side effects. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. synthesize and differentially apply theories of human behavior and the social environment to guide clinical practice;
2. use bio-psycho-social-spiritual theories and multiaxial diagnostic classification systems in formulation of comprehensive assessments; and
3. recognize the impact of health and medication on diagnosis and treatment.

A2.1.8 – Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work recognize the connection between clients, practice, and both public and organizational policy. Advanced practitioners have knowledge about factors that influence the development of legislation, policies, program services, and funding at all system levels. They have knowledge of advocacy methods that contribute to effective policies that promote social and economic well-being. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. communicate to stakeholders the implication of policies and policy change in the lives of clients;
2. use evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence to analyze, formulate and advocate for policies and programs that advance social and economic well-being; and
3. advocate with and inform administrators and legislators to influence policies that impact clients and services.
A2.1.9 – Respond to contexts that shape practice.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work are knowledgeable about how relational, organizational, and community systems may impact clients. They anticipate and react to evolving cultural, technological, geographical, political, legal, economic, and environmental contexts. They encourage clients to effect changes within these contexts. Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. assess the quality of clients’ interactions within their social contexts;
2. develop intervention plans to accomplish systemic change; and
3. work collaboratively with others to effect systemic change that is sustainable.

A2.1.10 (a)-(d) – Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
Clinical social work practice involves the dynamic, interactive, and reciprocal process of therapeutic engagement, multidimensional assessment, clinical intervention, and practice evaluation at multiple levels. Advanced practitioners have theoretically informed knowledge so as to effectively practice with individuals, families, and groups. Clinical practice knowledge includes understanding and implementing practice theories (models, metaperspectives, strategies, techniques, and approaches); evaluating treatment outcomes and practice effectiveness.

A2.1.10 (a) – Engagement.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. develop a culturally responsive therapeutic relationship;
2. attend to the interpersonal dynamics and contextual factors that both strengthen and potentially threaten the therapeutic alliance; and
3. establish a relationally based process that encourages clients to be equal participants to the extent possible in the assessment and establishment of treatment goals and expected outcomes.

A2.1.10 (b)—Assessment.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. use multidimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment tools;
2. assess clients’ readiness for change;
3. assess client coping strategies to reinforce and improve adaptation to life situations, circumstances, and events;
4. select and modify appropriate intervention strategies based on continuous clinical assessment; and
5. use differential and multiaxial diagnoses.

A2.1.10(c)—Intervention.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. critically evaluate, select, and apply best practices and evidence-based interventions;
2. demonstrate the use of appropriate clinical techniques for a range of presenting concerns identified in the assessment, including crisis intervention strategies as needed;
3. collaborate with other professionals to coordinate treatment interventions; and
4. consult with other professionals, as needed, to facilitate the assessment, diagnosis and treatment processes.

A2.1.10 (d)—Evaluation.
Advanced practitioners in clinical social work
1. contribute to the theoretical knowledge base of the social work profession through practice-based research; and
2. use clinical evaluation of the process and/or outcomes to develop best practice interventions for a range of bio-psycho-social-spiritual conditions.

Adapted from the Council on Social Work Education. (2008). Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.