



Field Education Resource Manual



School of Social Work
Revised July 2026

Purpose

This resource package provides a brief overview of the primary principles, values, theories, perspectives, knowledge, approaches and practice skills that social work students are taught in social work and non-social work courses during the Bachelor of Social Work program at Memorial University.

The resource is intended to support students, field instructors, and agency coordinators in integrating classroom learning with practicum experiences. It is designed to complement field instruction discussions and the Critical Reflection Journal by assisting students in connecting theory, practice, professional values, ethical decision-making, and reflective practice.

The lists provided are intended as examples rather than an exhaustive inventory of social work knowledge or practice approaches.

The material is divided into five sections:

	Purpose.....	3
I.	Theories, Skills, Knowledge, Models and Approaches Normally Developed prior to the First Practicum	4
II.	Theories, Skills, Knowledge, Models and Approaches Normally Developed During the First Practicum.....	7
III.	Theories, Skills, Knowledge, Models and Approaches Normally Developed Between the First and Second Practicum	7
IV.	Examples of Agency Documentation and Professional Writing.....	8
V.	Selected Links for Quick Reference	10
	References.....	12

I. Theories, Skills, Knowledge, Models and Approaches Normally Developed prior to the First Practicum

Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) Code of Ethics

1. Respecting the Dignity and Worth of All People
2. Promoting Social Justice
3. Pursuing Truth and Reconciliation
4. Valuing Human Relationships
5. Preserving Integrity in Professional Practice
6. Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality
7. Providing Competent Professional Services (CASW, 2024)

Complementary Studies

[Complementary Studies](#) is a collection of non-social work courses that provides students with opportunities to gain general knowledge of people and nature, develop analytical and critical thinking and communication skills, and explore the intersections of social, political, and economic elements in society. The six learning objectives are:

1. Students will develop university knowledge and skills in critical reading, writing, and analysis;
2. Students will develop foundational knowledge and appreciation for the various expressions and experiences of human and cultural diversity;
3. Students will develop foundational knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary experiences of Indigenous peoples of Canada;
4. Students will develop foundational knowledge and awareness of the historical and contemporary realities of social inequities, imperialism, racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, and classism;
5. Students will develop foundational knowledge in governance, policymaking, systems that intersect with justice – social justice, ecojustice and criminal justice.
6. Students will develop a critically reflective understanding of contemporary society (locally, nationally, and globally) and their place in it (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2025)

Theories/Perspectives/Models for Understanding Issues, Individuals, Families, Groups, Communities and Organizations

- Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development
- Cultural humility
- Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development
- Maslow's Hierarchy of needs
- Humanism
- Labeling theory
- Ecological systems
- Conflict theory
- Social order theory
- Systems theory
- Feminist theories
- Marxism
- Postcolonial/Anticolonial/De-colonial theories
- Critical Disability Studies
- Post-modern/Post-structural theories
- Attachment theory
- Psychoanalytic theory
- Rogerian person centered theory
- Social learning theory
- Cognitive theory
- Genetics
- Behavioural theory
- Medical model
- Empowerment model
- Social action approach
- Structuralism
- Critical race theories
- Queer theories
- Mad Studies
- Strengths based approach

Theories/Approaches/Models that can influence change

- Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing
- Crisis theory
- Cognitive theory
- Solution focused therapy
- Motivational interviewing
- Anti-oppressive theory
- Peer support models
- Narrative theory

Interventions

- Assessment
- Resource counselling
- Referrals
- Case conferencing
- Case planning
- Report writing
- Making collateral contacts
- Community engagement
- Home visits
- Engagement with Elders
- Advocating
- Supportive counselling
- Group work
- Case management
- Information sharing
- Crisis intervention
- Event organizing
- Land-based activities
- Outreach

Generic Skills

- Relationship building
- Active Listening
- Empathic responding
- Contracting
- Clarifying
- Mediating
- Critical self-reflection
- Reflecting feeling
- Identifying tasks
- Reflecting content
- Perception checking
- Exploring alternatives
- Sharing information
- Facilitating
- Summarizing
- Supporting
- Identifying/naming oppression
- Collaborating/working together
- Two-Eared Listening
- Building hope
- Goal setting
- Probing
- Confrontation
- Attending to emotion/content
- Identifying problems/barriers
- Identifying strengths
- Focusing
- Paraphrasing
- Partializing
- Reframing
- Analysis/Interpretation
- Planning
- Modelling
- Questioning
- Reviewing growth
- Sharing power
- Adaptability/flexibility
- Two-Eyed Seeing

Other Knowledge/Social Work Knowledge

- Political culture
- Community dynamics
- Major social programs
- Self-awareness
- Stages of change
- Evaluating change process
- Social indicators of health
- Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing
- Social work values and ethics
- Social problems
- Social policy
- Social justice
- Stages of an interview
- Interviewing process
- Primary Health Care
- Principles of interdisciplinary teamwork
- Indigenous cultural, knowledge and values

II. Theories, Skills, Knowledge, Models and Approaches Normally Developed During the First Practicum

- Strategies for addressing oppression
- Documentation
- Agency dynamics
- Case management process and skills
- Vicarious trauma symptoms/strategies
- Structural social work in practice
- Use of self in social work
- Community interventions
- Teamwork dynamics and skills
- Human development

III. Theories, Skills, Knowledge, Models and Approaches Normally Developed Between the First and Second Practicum

Theories, Knowledge, Approaches for Understanding Issues, Individuals, Families, Groups, Communities and Organizations

- Human development and developmental tasks of life stages
- Ethics in social work research
- Leadership/management/supervision theories
- Family dynamics
- Human service organizations
- Human resources practices
- Social work ethics and professionalism
- Mental health challenges and mental illness
- Social impacts on human development
- Ethics and the law
- Stages of family development
- Diversity in families
- Stages of community work
- Social work research skills
- Organizational planning

Theories, Knowledge, Models that Influence Change

- Administrative and organizational management
- Teamwork
- Structural family therapy
- Inter professional collaboration
- Resiliency based approach with families

Skills

- Conflict mediation
- Community capacity building
- Joining with families
- Mental health assessment
- Community empowerment
- Family assessment
- Data analysis
- Critical analysis of ethics and values in practice

Interventions

- Assessment with families
- Organizational development
- Mental Health interventions
- Program development
- Research
- Addressing diverse family problems such as: violence, blended family issues
- Solution focused work with families

IV. Examples of Agency Documentation and Professional Writing

Students are expected to develop documentation and professional skills throughout practicum. Documentation requirements vary across practice settings; however, students should become familiar with common forms of agency documentation and professional writing.

Examples may include:

Service User Documentation

- Case notes
- Contact notes
- Assessments
- Safety plans
- Case plans
- Discharge summaries
- Closing summaries
- Progress notes
- Intake summaries
- Risk assessments
- Service plans
- Goal plans
- Closing summaries
- Referral documentation

Professional Communication

- Professional emails
- Meeting minutes
- Interdisciplinary communication
- Letters of support
- Meeting agendas
- Internal memos
- Consultation notes
- Resource information sheets

Reports

- Biopsychosocial assessments
- Program summaries
- Incident reports
- Grant summaries
- Community assessments
- Needs assessments
- Funding applications
- Research summaries

Administrative Documentation

- Timesheets
- Agency forms
- Confidentiality agreements
- Data collection forms
- Supervision records
- Consent documentation
- Outcome measures
- Evaluation forms

V. Selected Links for Quick Reference

The following optional resources may support the development of knowledge related to social work practice, theory, critical reflection and professional documentation. Full APA references for these resources are provided in the [References](#) section of this guide.

Siobahn Maclean

Siobhan Maclean, a British social work educator has a collection of videos and resources through [YouTube](#) (Maclean, n.d.).

Some recommended videos include:

- [The journey from reflection towards reflexivity](#) (Maclean, 2020a; 18 minutes)
- [What is the difference between a theory, model, method and approach in social work?](#) (Maclean, 2020b; 16 minutes)

Additional Resources:

- The **Social Theory** app (free version available), which includes resources to support learning about social work theories and approaches.
- A [webinar](#) developed specifically for field instructors that draws on Maclean's work (NLCSW, 2024).

Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW)

The NLCSW provides practice support resources related to a range of professional practice topics, including boundaries and dual relationships, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, competent practice, cultural competence, documentation and recording, electronic practice, informed consent, medical assistance in dying, and social policy/advocacy. Resources are available through the [NLCSW website](#) (NLCSW, n.d.-a)

The [NLCSW YouTube channel](#) (NLCSW, n.d.-b) also includes practice-focused educational resources, including:

- [Social work documentation standards](#) (NLCSW, 2019)

Recommended Reading

- Campbell and Baikie's (2012) [classic article](#), Beginning at the Beginning, An Exploration of Critical Social Work, provides an introduction to critical social work perspectives and practice.

References

- Campbell, C., & Baikie, G. (2012). *Beginning at the beginning: An exploration of critical social work*. *Critical Social Work*, 13(1), 67–81.
<https://ojs.uwindsor.ca/index.php/csw/article/view/5849>
- Canadian Association of Social Workers. (2024). *CASW code of ethics, values and guiding principles*. <https://www.casw-acts.ca/en/casw-code-ethics-2024>
- Maclean, S. (2020a, March 20). *The journey from reflection towards reflexivity* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UxggX6M1eg>
- Maclean, S. (2020b, March 19). *What is the difference between a theory, model, method and approach in social work?* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE1rKczA2kk>
- Maclean, S. (n.d.). *Siobhan Maclean* [YouTube channel]. YouTube. Retrieved July 28, 2026, from <https://www.youtube.com/@siobhanmaclean9614>
- Memorial University of Newfoundland. (2025). *2025–2026 University Calendar: School of Social Work—4.5 Complementary studies*.
<https://www.mun.ca/university-calendar/st-johns-campus/school-of-social-work/4/5/>
- Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers. (2019, July 16). *Social work documentation standards* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vt3aDqZ7HjQ>
- Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers. (2024, April 25). *Identifying theories and models in practice* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxu7h1kOthk>
- Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers. (n.d.-a). *Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers*. <https://nlcsw.ca/>
- Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers. (n.d.-b). *NLCSW* [YouTube channel]. YouTube. Retrieved July 28, 2026, from <https://www.youtube.com/@NLCSW>