Incorporating Voter Engagement into Field Education: Example Practice Activities for Educational Contract

The Nine Competencies:

- C1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- C2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial Economic, and Environmental Justice
- C3: Engage in Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- C4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
- C5: Engage in Policy Practice
- C6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- C7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- C8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- C9: Evaluate practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Practice Activity</th>
<th>Alignment with core competencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help clients and/or staff look up who represents them at the local, state and federal level and how to contact them.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>Use supervision to identify policies that negatively impact their clients and/or communities and which branch of government has the power to change them.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>Look up voting rules and deadlines in your state, including when general, special and primary elections take place, rules for voting with a felony conviction, and how other special populations can register and vote.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>Using the Organizational Assessment Form, identify ways your agency could integrate voter registration and engagement into services and culture. Discuss in supervision.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>Discuss ethical implications of not supporting the political power and voice of clients and communities through voting and civic participation.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research allowable nonpartisan voter activities and/or lobby rules for 501(c)(3) organizations and/or requirements for nonprofits in the 1993 National Voter Registration Act.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share information on voting and elections with clients, staff and/or communities.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Integrate voter registration and engagement into agency services (e.g., add questions to intake form)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Run voter registration drive at agency or event</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Help people with a prior felony conviction to register and vote (if eligible in your state) through public awareness and individual outreach in service delivery.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Invite elected officials to agency for meetings or forum focused on advancing human rights issues faced by your clients</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Assist client or staff member to contact elected official about a specific case or issue faced by client(s)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Assess the differential impact of voting policies on diverse populations</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Assess political power in your city or community by comparing voter turnout by district in local elections</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Train clients/staff on advocacy, government systems, and the importance of voting</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Measure and discuss effectiveness of agency voter registration drives</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss ways to measure impact of voter engagement activities with clients</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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More Skill-building Strategies for Classroom and Field Education

1. Engaging individuals and communities in political processes
   a. Look up the rules and procedures for voting in your state and community, including when general, special and primary elections take place each year and voting with a felony record.
      i. What policies support and suppress voter participation and turnout?
      ii. Partner with a nonpartisan group (e.g., LWV) to educate clients and staff on how to vote.
   b. Request voter turnout statistics by district from election officials or websites. Is there a connection between resource allocation, power, and turnout?
   c. Know the rules around voting with a felony record in your state and educate clients and staff on the issues and barriers to voting.
   d. Help clients look up who represents them at the local, state and federal level and how to contact them.
   e. Build opportunities for clients and staff to register to vote in existing services and agency culture.
   f. Register voters.
   g. Share nonpartisan links about elections and candidates with clients and staff as well as sample ballots.
   h. Promote voting in all elections and help clients make a plan to vote.
   i. Help clients contact their elected official(s) when they face policy or service barriers at the state, local or federal level.
   j. Invite elected officials to meet with clients and staff.
   k. Engage clients about their top priorities for local government.
   l. Share clients’ experiences and barriers with elected officials and/or support them to do so.

2. Influencing policy agendas and decision-making
   a. Identify a policy and/or process that negatively impacts the clients you serve or your community:
      i. Meet with your elected officials about a policy issue (and write a process recording about the experience.)
      ii. Testify at a local city council or board of education meeting or hearing.
      iii. Join an advocacy organization that works to advance policies for your client population or issue area.
      iv. Educate elected officials, clients, and/or staff on an issue with a 1-2 page fact sheet.
   b. Learn about the legislative process by joining NASW legislative committee in your state.
   c. Use Bolder Advocacy’s resources to understand how 501(c)(3) organizations can engage in lobbying and advocacy.

3. Holding professional and political positions
   a. Request a field placement with an elected official (primary or secondary), state or local legislature.
   b. Compare your values inventory and core values with someone who does not agree with you politically.
      i. Is there overlap?
      ii. Does the order of your values matter?
      iii. Can you find areas of common ground?
c. Invite municipal or state agency staff to speak about their role and how to work with them to improve systems.

4. Engaging with electoral campaigns
   a. Attend a local political party committee to understand the endorsement process for candidates.
   b. Work (paid or unpaid) for a local or state campaign for elected office
   c. Volunteer for your state’s NASW political action committee.
   d. Identify social workers in elected office in your state.

5. Seeking and holding elected office
   a. Attend the Campaign School for Social Workers at UConn (February 23-24, 2024) or other campaign training
   b. Write your 2-5 year political action plan
   c. Volunteer for other campaigns