

**P R A C S I S: Practitioner Reflection on Actions,  
Competencies/Characteristics and Situation, by Impact and Strategies**

PRACSIS is a framework, in grid form, which can help social work students understand and use the concept in a thoughtful and explicit way (Alvarez, 2001). PRACSIS is a macro alternative to a process recording that follows the process through to its logical conclusion, including the delineation of strategies to improve and maximize the effectiveness of another such interaction in the future (Alvarez, 2001). PRACSIS looks at a situation or interaction and attempts to decipher perceptions and assign logical implications for such responses. PRACSIS strives to reveal personal and situational limitations that can or do hinder the growth/ progression of the relationship.

Students pursuing the innovation in community, policy and leadership concentration in the advanced year of the MSW degree program are required to submit 5 completed PRACSIS frameworks per semester to the assigned faculty field liaison.

**1. EXPLANATION**

When creating a PRACSIS, use this format:

Practitioner Scenario: The description of the situation (overview) comes first. This should include the expected goal or outcome of the situation. The second row should describe the actions of the practitioner (general but in sequential order). In the third row, list the social work competencies practiced in the practitioner scenario. Finally, share the characteristics of the practitioner relevant to the scenario. All practitioner scenario sections are outlined in separate areas and are completed through the student's view of the situation, personal actions, and personal characteristics.

Impact - Positive or Negative as Perceived by Student or Others: the manner in which the student perceived or viewed the situation, with reference to the four sections of the practitioner scenario column. This section could include such indicators as student feelings and preconceptions. The manner in which the student felt the other party or the environment/ situation responded, with reference to the four sections of the practitioner scenario column. Indicate the relevant similarities and differences in social characteristics between you and others in the interaction, remembering that what might not seem relevant to you might be relevant to someone else, and vice versa. Try to think about relevance from dominant and non-dominant perspectives. This section should include evidence such as body language, tone, and mannerisms (including how things are said as well as what is said). Include effects resulting from specific moments during the interaction, with reference to the four sections of the practitioner scenario column. Describe how these factors, and your similarities and differences, may have influenced the interaction.

Implications for Strategy and Practice: the outcome and/or learning that resulted from specific moments during the interaction with reference to the four sections of the practitioner scenario column.

There are no requirements as to the length, type of interaction, etc. of a PRACSIS, as long as it is complete and thorough. The process is solely choosing a point in time to be analyzed to strengthen student growth and development. An entire meeting or interaction does not need to be recorded; however, the portion that is used should include a "beginning, middle, and end phase" that completely addresses a significant moment in time.



**Example One - P R A C S I S Advocacy for K-12 Students**

<p><b>Practitioner Scenario:</b> <i>Advocacy for K-12 Students</i></p>	<p><b>IMPACT</b> Positive or Negative, as Perceived by Student or Others</p>	<p><b>Implications for Strategy and Practice</b></p>
<p>SITUATION (briefly describe): My supervisor and I met with the assistant superintendent of the local school district and one of his staff members, a person who is responsible for community initiatives. We were meeting in order to propose a collaborative project with them, gauge their interest, and see if we could find overlapping outcomes that would make the project beneficial for both of us. I had a lot of detail planned out, since I had been researching and developing the plan, but we didn't want to overwhelm them with detail or come as if the project was a done deal and they would just rubberstamp it. We had to figure out how to present the idea without looking like we weren't serious but also without foreclosing other possibilities that we hadn't thought of, and that would be attractive from their point of view. We hoped to come away with a commitment from them as our partners in this project or to understand that it was not something that would work with them. I think that we did come away with that – they wanted to partner with us, and proposed some</p>	<p>We were very welcomed by the assistant superintendent, who gave us a lot of time, to the delay of his later meetings and other phone calls. The community liaison staff member was more impatient and direct, raising some goals to focus on from his perspective. My supervisor was slightly impatient with the side-tracks that the AS took us down, but she did not let it show too much. I was interested to hear everything that the AS was telling us, for other reasons: I was trying to think through the complication of running a school district like this one, which is predominantly Black, with low test scores and a lot of truancy. In addition, this district is position next to a white, wealthy, high-performing district.</p>	<p>It is always a challenge for me to figure out how much details or data another person wants to needs. I believe I was able to work on this through the meeting, though what worked for this meeting may not work for another. But the process that my supervisor and I worked out, that we would research the area, decide the focus based on need and based on what makes sense for the mission of the organization, address it with the board, and then reach out to possible partners, made sense, even if it created the possibility of needing to start from scratch if the response of the partner organization had been different.</p>



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<p>ideas for an other age group that we had not considered.</p>		
<p><b>ACTIONS</b> (of Practitioner): I mostly listened at the beginning, letting my supervisor present the ideas to the district folks and taking notes. Because I was able to listen to both parties, as the meeting went on I was able to jump in to clarify where I thought my supervisor and the assistant superintendent were not quite understanding each other, or areas where I thought maybe the district and our organization would have different goals, so that we could clarify those in the meeting.</p>	<p>I think that my help to clarify points between my supervisor and the AS were useful. I at times felt that both my supervisor and I were perhaps considered not to really know what the students in the district needed, and that we needed to show that we had researched and thought carefully about community dynamics, but also that we did not have the answers and were there willing to follow the district's lead in terms of highest need.</p>	<p>I think it might have been useful if I had been able to contribute more to the meeting, perhaps present a portion of our proposal, and that is something that I can raise with my supervisor.</p>
<p><b>COMPETENCIES</b> Practitioner Used (<i>Delete Those Not Used</i>):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior</li> <li>3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice</li> <li>4. Engage in practice-informed research and research informed practice</li> <li>6. Engage practice with organizations</li> <li>10. Analyze the impact of the urban context on a range of client systems, including practice implication.</li> </ol>	<p>Ethics, human rights, and social, economic and environmental justice competencies were really important in this encounter because we needed to be humble about our position – as white women from a well-funded national organization – vis-à-vis the district, which is impoverished and largely non-white. It was important to show that we had a consciousness about race specific to the region. Using research in developing the program was important to us, but it seemed to be less</p>	<p>I very much saw the value in intentionally presenting an anti-racist, race-conscious presence at this meeting. It helped our partners to trust and want to work with us that we clearly had considered the implications of bringing largely white, largely middle-class volunteers to a largely Black, largely poor school district. When the district proposed adding something that would create the opportunity for students in the district to give back and we readily accepted it and worked it into the program, I</p>



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	<p>important to the district. They seemed to be happy to go with what they feel to be true, working in their district every day, without checking those assumptions against whatever data could be amassed.</p>	<p>think we gained a lot of their trust.</p>
<p><b>CHARACTERISTICS of Practitioner:</b>          I am white, middle-aged, female-presenting, married heterosexual middle class woman. I am considered non-disabled.</p> <p>(e.g., race, gender identity, sexual expression, age, socio-economic class/status, physical abilities, mental abilities, religion, ethnicity)</p> <p>2. Engage diversity and difference in practice</p>	<p>Because I am older than most MSW students and have worked in professional settings, my role was not immediately apparent to the district folks. My supervisor had to clarify that I was an intern. This was slightly awkward for me, since I am already a bit self-conscious about returning to school at my age. Additionally, I knew the district staff member from another context, but it took us both awhile to place each other, leading to a little awkwardness that was clarified once I could place him and explain why he recognized me.</p>	<p>I made a connection with the AS because he graduated from Wayne State, and is a big WSU supporter. I also made a connection with the staff member since we know each other from the gym. Several mutual friends of ours including the gym owner are Black, and I believe that this placed me as a white ally in the eyes of the staff member (who is Black himself). These factors served to break the ice and make us into more trustworthy partners.</p>