

**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 Two - P R A C S I S Mobilizing for Better Public Transit

<p>Practitioner Scenario <i>Mobilizing for Better Public Transit</i></p>	<p>IMPACT Positive or Negative, as Perceived by Student or Others</p>	<p>Implications for Strategy and Practice</p>
<p>SITUATION (briefly describe): This PRACISIS analyzes an interaction between bus rider Sheila Wright. Ms. Wright was referred to be by another rider for a short interview. My organization, is looking for rider stories to integrate into our transit advocacy campaigns. I've been told Ms. Wright is an avid rider, works in data-collection, and is already engaged in transit advocacy. My intent here is not to conduct a formal interview, but to simply establish a working relationship. More detailed, narrative questions can be asked later, after rapport has been established.</p>	<p>Overall, the conversation with Ms. Wright went as intended, but was not without obstacle. From our original email correspondence, I framed our conversation as "hearing her story", which in turn led Ms. Wright to believe I was conducting a formal interview. So once I began with a more conversational approach, she was caught off guard. She anticipated telling me her "whole transit story". While understanding the details of Ms. Wright's experience is valuable, I then clarified that I was more intending this to be an introductory conversation than a full interview. After clarifying, Ms. Wright was much more at ease, and spoke with more candor.</p>	<p>This dynamic between Ms. Wright and myself highlights the practice need of clearly communicated intent. Even though both Ms. Wright and myself are invested in transit and both do advocacy work, there was still confusion about the intent and "desired outcome" of our conversation. My prior email language did not properly communicate to Ms. Wright that this was a "getting to know you" conversation, not a full extractive interview for publication. This confusion reveals that I should have been more focused and specific in my initial outreach to Ms. Wright. Social workers should always think about how they frame their "ask" of a person, and at what point in the working relationship they make their "ask".</p>
<p>ACTIONS (of Practitioner): My actions during this interaction were those of a community outreach coordinator, although I was interpreted as an interviewer. I was asking Ms. Wright open-ended and clarifying questions, while also listening and taking light notes. My</p>	<p>During previous outreach conversations for my field agency, I had previously conducted them as interviews. I was entirely focused on the individual and collecting the nuance of their story. However, throughout the semester, I discovered that riders were less</p>	<p>The disjuncture between my actions and intended perception with Ms. Wright underscores how important it is for social workers to consider how their behaviors are interpreted, even on a very detailed level. Interpreting the conversation with Ms. Wright as an</p>



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<p>intention was to get a broad sense of her ridership and gauge her sense of interest in working together on bus advocacy. I was not trying to formally interview Ms. Wright, and therefore the types of questions/language I used should have made that distinction more obvious to her.</p>	<p>responsive to being just asked questions, and were more responsive when there was more back and forth conversation. By introducing my own perspective into the conversation, riders felt more personally addressed, and ultimately provided stronger answers.</p> <p>While internally this change in my behavior was clear, my goals were not clear to Ms. Wright. My actions at the start read like a formal interview (“so, tell me about yourself”), which adds pressure. Ultimately taking the time to establish rapport first and then schedule a more in-depth interview is a good strategy, but said strategy needed to be reflected more in my actual actions here.</p>	<p>“interview” has major implications for how I should frame the dialogue and how I ask questions. It would have been a stronger practice decision to instead explicitly clarify to Ms. Wright at the beginning that this was <i>not</i> a formal interview, rather than later clarifying.</p> <p>In this interaction, one can observe how important initial outreach, conversation framing, and clear communication can be, especially when speaking with community stakeholders and residents.</p>
<p>COMPETENCIES Practitioner Used (<i>Delete Those Not Used</i>):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior 3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice 4. Engage in practice-informed research and research informed practice 5. Engage in policy practice 6. Engage, 7. assess, 8. intervene, and 9. evaluate 	<p>The most relevant Practitioner Competencies used here are 1). “ethical and professional behavior”, 6-9). “engage, assess, and intervene with individuals”, and 10). “the impact of the urban context on a range of client systems.”</p> <p>My behavior, while ethical and professional, needed more internal consideration</p>	<p>The Practitioner Competencies I used here, (1, 6-9, and 10) all speak to how a practitioner’s actions and language must be sensitive to the situational and individual context. When talking with a community stakeholder for the first time, a social worker has to let go of all pre-conceived thoughts or biases. Even thoughts of strategy or the related project can detract from the conversation at</p>



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<p>practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities 10. Analyze the impact of the urban context on a range of client systems, including practice implication.</p>	<p>to be aligned with my professional intent. As a bus rider and as someone who works in the city, Ms. Wright has a range of urban contexts she interacts with. Being able to capture all of her story in one conversation is not feasible, so I instead tried to form a sense of familiarity. From there, my hope is that Ms. Wright would speak with me again, and then we could elaborate on her urban bus experience and explicitly discuss how riding the bus impacts her day-to-day life.</p>	<p>hand. Instead, social workers must be rooted in the individual, and respond to what input they are providing. I could tell Ms. Wright has a dense, multi-angled perspective. Rather than make her feel pressured to “cover all the bases” right then and there, I instead wanted her to feel comfortable with me first. From there, we could transition into the more dense discussion of transit inequities and her experiences. In initial conversations, making the client feel at ease and maximizing their responsivity is the ultimate goal. In the future, I will reference this competencies before meeting with someone for the first time, as to keep ethical and strategic priorities at the front of my thinking.</p>
<p>CHARACTERISTICS of Practitioner: (e.g., race, gender identity, sexual expression, age, socio-economic class/status, physical abilities, mental abilities, religion, ethnicity) 2. Engage diversity and difference in practice</p>	<p>I am a 26 year-old, middle-class, college-educated, cis-gendered white male. I identify with “he/him/his” pronouns. I am of full physical and mental capacity. I have no religious affiliation. Ms. Wright is also a college-educated white person. She identifies with “she/her/hers”. More detailed aspects of Ms. Wright’s identity were not made apparent.</p>	<p>From my perspective, there was no immediate conflict caused by identity when talking with Ms. Wright. She was generally upbeat, responsive, and interested in hearing about my work. However, even though I sensed no conflict, that does not mean Ms. Wright perceived the same. I cannot be sure what past biases or negative experiences she may</p>



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		have had with cis-gendered white men. Therefore, as an ethical social worker, it is my responsibility to minimize my self-disclosure. Instead, best practice would be to inquire about and validate Ms. Wright's identity. Asking about pronouns or basic background information not only builds rapport, but also provides first insight into how an individual provides first insight into how an individual may perceive the topic at hand (public transit).