

Curriculum Vitae

Paula M. Nieman, PhD, LCSW

University of Connecticut School of Social Work
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EDUCATION

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|---|---|
| Doctor of Philosophy
in Social Work | University of Connecticut School of Social Work , Hartford, CT
Dissertation: <i>What does it mean to be a social worker? A critical phenomenology of early-career baccalaureate social work practitioners</i> . Committee: Kathryn Libal, PhD (Chair), Nina Heller, PhD, Nancy Naples, PhD. |
| Master of Science
in Social Work | Columbia University School of Social Work , New York, NY
Method: Practice, Programming & Supervision (Advanced Generalist)
Field of Practice: Families and Children |
| Bachelor of Arts
in Psychology | Bowdoin College , Brunswick, ME
Honors degree in Psychology, Minor in Philosophy
University of St. Andrews , St. Andrews, Scotland (1983-4)
Honors in Social Psychology |

RESEARCH and TEACHING INTERESTS

Undergraduate social work education and practice; social work practicum education; social workers' professional identity development; generalist social work theory and practice; values and ethics in social work education and practice; supervision in social work practice; social work history; teaching and learning in social work education.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS & AFFILIATIONS

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| University of Connecticut School of Social Work , Hartford, CT
BSW Program Director and Assistant Professor in Residence (non-tenure-track) | 2021-present |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure compliance with Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requirements; guided the program through the re-accreditation process with CSWE (2025)• Oversee and implement BSW program curriculum; develop program schedule and assign course instructors; facilitate monthly teaching meetings of BSW faculty• Oversee and participate in outreach and recruitment activities and admissions processes; orient and onboard all incoming students;• Provide academic, professional, and pre-practicum advisement to BSW students;• Teach and/or serve as lead instructor for the following undergraduate courses:<ul style="list-style-type: none">SOWK 3301: Pre-practicum Seminar (developed course)SOWK 3800: Practicum Seminar I (taught 2021, 2022)SOWK 3801: Practicum Seminar II (taught 2022-2026)SOWK 3350: Social Work Research (lead instructor, taught 2022-2026)SOWK 4100W: Senior Seminar (lead instructor, taught 2022-2025)SOWK 3501: Social Work Practice with Individuals & Families (lead instructor)SOWK 2000: Social Justice for the Social Work Profession (lead instructor) | |

Western New England University, Springfield, MA	2005-2021
Professional Educator (full-time non-tenure-track faculty), 2007-2021	
Visiting Assistant Professor (half-time non-tenure track faculty), 2005-2007	
SW 100: Introduction to Social Work (2005-2013)	
SW 300: Pre-practicum Seminar (2013-2021)	
SW 301: Social Work Methods I: Practice with Individuals (2008-2012)	
SW 302: Social Work Methods II: Interviewing Skills (2009-2013)	
SW 305-306: The Helping Relationship Field Seminar (2006-2015, 2019)	
SW 314: Macro-Practice Field Seminar (2011-2021)	
SW 321: Empowerment Practice with Underserved Populations (2018)	
SW 404: Social Work Methods with Groups and Families (2005-2008)	
SW 414-415: Integrative Field Seminar (2012-2021)	
SW 419: Social Work and Research (2005-2013, 2017-2021)	
SW 420: Social Work Research Seminar (2009-2014, 2018-2021)	
Coordinator of Field Instruction , 2013-2021	
Coordinated three BSW practica: 90-hour junior-year micro-practice practicum, 120-hour junior year macro-practice practicum, and 450-hour senior field placement.	
Faculty Field Liaison , 2006-2021	
Monitored students' progress in practicum placements, ensuring student development of social work practice skills. Conducted agency site visits at least once/semester with all students.	
Director of Assessment , 2006-2021	
Coordinated ongoing outcomes-based assessment of BSW program. Participated in CSWE re-affirmation process (2007 and 2014), writing multiple components of the program's self-study report.	
Springfield College School of Social Work, Springfield, MA	2000-2003
Field Instructor	
University of Connecticut School of Social Work, West Hartford, CT	2002-2003
Field Instructor	

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Connecticut School of Social Work, West Hartford, CT

Co-Principal Investigator (Doctoral Dissertation), 2021

What does it mean to be a social worker? A critical phenomenology of early-career baccalaureate social work practitioners. Conducted a phenomenological study investigating and applying critical perspectives to the lived experiences of BSW practitioners in their early years of professional practice.

Research Assistant, 2014-2015

"You know, group work is so powerful! This stuff changes their lives" Qualitative analysis of focus group data, evaluating training for group facilitators. P.I.: Brenda Kurz, Ph.D., funded by Children's Trust Fund.

Co-Investigator, 2014

The Influence of Professional Identity and Level of Empowerment on Political Participation of MSW Students.

Western New England University, Springfield, MA

Principal Investigator/Faculty Sponsor of undergraduate research projects, 2018-2021

-*Student Perceptions of Sexual Assault Prevention at Western New England University* (2021)

-*Western New England University Student Veterans' Understanding of the Term "Veteran Friendly" Services* (2020)

-*Is Food Insecurity Happening at Western New England University?* (2018)

PRESENTATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Presentations

Nieman, P. (2026). *Learning in community: Opportunities and challenges of cohort models in BSW education*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Ostrander, J., Sandler, A., & **Nieman, P.** (2026). *Teaching at the speed of change: Strategies for ethical integration of AI in BSW education*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Nieman, P. (2025). *"Incomplete social workers" and "real social workers": Contested notions of BSW practice and professional identity*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. Las Vegas, NV.

Nieman, P. (2024). *"Autopilot zombies" or "heartbroken all the time": Emotional dimensions of BSW generalist practice*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Iacono, G., Elsaesser, C., Roman-Hampton, V., Werkmeister-Rozas, L., **Nieman, P.**, Pan, C., & Churchill, A. (2024). *Bridging the gap: A community-based participatory approach to developing a socially engaged mindfulness curriculum for BSW students*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Nieman, P. (2023). *Manifestations of neoliberalism in BSW practice: Fostering critical reflection and resistance in BSW education*. The Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Atlanta, GA.

Nieman, P. (2022). *Managerialism in day-to-day practice experiences of early-career BSWs: Acceptance, resistance, and notions of professional identity*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference [remote].

Nieman, P. (2021). *Becoming a supervisor: Managing a new professional role*. National Association of Social Workers, Massachusetts Chapter, Symposium 2021 [remote].

Nieman, P. (2020). *"Autopilot zombies" or "heartbroken all the time": Emotional dimensions of BSW practice*. (poster) Accepted to The Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Denver, CO. [Did not present due to virtual conference modality.]

Nieman, P. (2019). *Community scavenger hunts: Experiential assignments to develop empathy, knowledge & skills*. The Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Denver, CO.

Nieman, P. & Vaccarino, V. (2019). *Using a student-initiated campus food insecurity research project to spark institutional change*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. Jacksonville, FL.

Nieman, P. (2018). *"Being" a social worker: The contested nature of BSW professional identity*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. Atlanta, GA.

Nieman, P. & Kras, D. (2018). *The community scavenger hunt: Exploring community diversity and resources, and broadening student perspectives*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. Atlanta, GA.

Nieman, P. (2017). *Group supervision: Strategies to support workers, strengthen practice skills, and improve client outcomes*. Workshop at 35th Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England University, Springfield, MA

Nieman, P. (2016). *Becoming a supervisor: Anticipating and managing the challenges of a new job role*. Half-day workshop at 34th Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England University, Springfield, MA.

Ostrander, J., **Nieman, P.**, & Sandler, A. (2015). *Increasing the political participation of social work students: Classroom and fieldwork approaches*. The Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Denver, CO.

Nieman, P. (2015). *Becoming a supervisor: Anticipating and managing the challenges of a new job role*. Workshop presented at 33rd Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England University, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P., Ostrander, J., & Sandler, A. (2015). *Political participation of social work students: Professional identity, motivation, specialization, and empowerment*. The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors' Annual Conference. Kansas City, MO.

Ostrander, J., **Nieman, P.**, & Sandler, A. (2015). *The Influence of professional identity and level of empowerment on political participation of MSW students* (Poster). University of Connecticut School of Social Work 6th Annual Research & Scholarship Exhibition. West Hartford, CT.

Kurz, B., Letendre, J., Beebe, G., Cohen, L.S., **Nieman, P.**, & Rojas, R. (2015). *"You know, group work is so powerful! This stuff changes their lives"* (Poster). UConn School of Social Work 6th Annual Research & Scholarship Exhibition. West Hartford, CT.

Ostrander, J., Sandler, A., & **Nieman, P.** (2015). *The influence of professional identity and level of empowerment on political participation of MSW students*. Society for Social Work and Research, Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Nieman, P. & Ostrander, J. (2014). *Let's get political! How busy social workers can and should enhance their political participation*. Workshop at 32nd Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England University, Springfield, MA.

Ostrander, J., **Nieman, P.**, & Sandler, A. (2014). *Social work identity and political participation* (Poster). UConn School of Social Work 5th Annual Research & Scholarship Exhibition. West Hartford, CT.

Nieman, P. (2012). *Professional ethics and boundaries in the era of Facebook*. Workshop at 30th Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England University, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2011). *Maintaining boundaries in professional relationships: Ethical and practical challenges*. Workshop at 29th Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England College, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2008). *Give me strength! How to use the strengths perspective in assessment and goal setting with clients*. Workshop at 26th Regional Social Work Conference, Western New England College, Springfield, MA.

Invited Presentations

Nieman, P. (2021). *The role of workers' emotions in social work practice: tensions and contradictions*. National Association of Social Workers, Pioneer Valley Chapter, CEU Training. [remote]

Nieman, P. (2019). *Responding to student food insecurity in the classroom and beyond*. Center for Teaching and Learning, Western New England University, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2019). *Safety issues in home visits and terminating with clients*. Social Work Skills for Human Service Personnel, Western New England University Certificate Program, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2016, 2018, 2019). *Self-disclosure and professional boundaries*. Social Work Skills for Human Service Personnel, Western New England University Certificate Program, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2016, 2017, 2019). *Working with reluctant clients*. Social Work Skills for Human Service Personnel, Western New England University Certificate Program, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2016, 2018, 2019). *Working with client strengths and resources*. Social Work Skills for Human Service Personnel, Western New England University Certificate Program, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2014). *Working with reluctant clients*. Workshop presented for Social Work Skills for Human Service Personnel, Certificate Program, Western New England University, Springfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2012). *Professional ethics and boundaries in the era of Facebook*. Featured speaker at Annual Supervisor's Conference, Smith College School for Social Work, Northampton, MA.

Nieman, P. (2011). *Developing and maintaining boundaries in professional relationships*. Workshop presented to Parent-Child Development Center, Community Action of Franklin, Hampshire and North Quabbin Regions, Turner's Falls, MA.

Nieman, P. (2010). *Challenges in communication: delivering difficult messages*. Workshop presented to Head Start Program, Westfield, MA.

Nieman, P. (2009). *Skills for engaging clients*. Basic Human Service Skills for Paraprofessionals, Certificate Program, Head Start Program, Southbridge, MA.

Nieman, P. (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012). *Basic interviewing skills*. Basic Human Service Skills for Paraprofessionals, Certificate Program, Western New England College, Springfield, MA.

PUBLICATIONS

Kurz, B., Letendre, J., **Nieman, P.**, Smith Cohen, L. & Beebe, G. (2019) Group work is ... powerful! This stuff changes ... lives: Training on group processes for facilitators of curriculum-based groups, *Social Work with Groups*, DOI: 10.1080/01609513.2019.1670122

Ostrander, J., Bryan, J., Sandler, A., **Nieman, P.**, Clark, M., Loveland, E., and Smith, T.R. (2018). The political participation of first year social work students: Does practice specialization matter? *The Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* 45(3): 39-59.

AWARDS

University of Connecticut School of Social Work, Hartford, CT
Undergraduate Faculty Career Mentor of the Year, nominee, 2024
Sterling Doctoral Research Facilitation Fund, 2019
Konover Dissertation Stipend, 2016-2017
Mary Elizabeth Sterling Scholarship, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

Vicki and Michael Konover Graduate Fellowship, 2013-2014
Debra and Bruce Fischman Endowed Scholarship, 2012-2013

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

Berkshire Center for Families and Children, Pittsfield, MA

Program Supervisor, Healing Homes, 2004-2005

Recruited and trained foster parents in therapeutic foster care program. Assessed needs of referred children and coordinated placements. Hired, trained, and supervised case management staff. Collaborated to develop programming for Treehouse Easthampton Meadows, an intergenerational community comprised of older adults and families adopting children from the child welfare system.

Dare Family Services, Springfield, MA

Clinical Supervisor, 1999-2003

Supervised casework staff in therapeutic foster care program. Provided field instruction to MSW student interns. Collaborated with management team in quality assurance efforts and program development. Provided on-call emergency response to over 100 foster families.

Mentor Supervisor, 1995-1999

Headed treatment team providing therapeutic foster care placements for children and youth. Provided case management, family mediation, crisis intervention and advocacy. Facilitated weekly supervision, training, and support group for foster parents.

Center for Urban Community Services, New York, NY

Program Director, The Edgecombe, 1993-1995

Oversaw social service program in SRO residence for formerly homeless adults with severe and persistent mental illness. Supervised all program staff. Coordinated job skills development program for residents in numerous supported residences throughout upper Manhattan.

Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, NY

Workshop Leader, Summer Youth Employment Program, 1993

Oversaw summer job placement for 130 youth. Supervised paraprofessional staff. Developed and taught workshops on career exploration, job skills and sexual decision-making.

Graduate Social Work Intern, 1992-1993

Provided counseling to children, couples, and families. Co-led therapeutic group for latency-age children. Co-directed afterschool service-learning program for middle-school students.

Regent Family Residence, New York, NY

Graduate Social Work Intern, 1991-1992

Provided case management for homeless families in city-run shelter.

South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Framingham, MA

Program Manager, Journey Inn Family Shelter, 1989-1990

Managed all aspects of daily operation of shelter for homeless families. Hired and supervised counseling and casework staff.

Project PLACE, Boston, MA

Program Coordinator, Hotline and Mutual Support Group Program, 1987-1988

Coordinated advocacy and meal program for homeless adults and volunteer-staffed crisis hotline and support group program. Created training curriculum for volunteer counselors and group leaders. Maintained information and referral database.

Volunteer Coordinator, Homeless Resource Center and Hotline, 1986-1987

Recruited and trained volunteer hotline staff. Led trainings in basic counseling skills.

SERVICE and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Service to the University of Connecticut

Committee Service - School of Social Work

BSW Committee, chair. August 2021-present
Academic Affairs Committee, member. August 2021-present
Research Curriculum Committee, member. September 2021-present
Educational Review Committee (MSW Program), member. August 2022-present
Just Community, member. April 2023-present
Continuing Education Committee, member. September 2025-present
Strategic Planning Subcommittee on Teaching & Learning, co-chair. September 2021-May 2023
Search Committee, member. (searches for 2 staff and 1 faculty position). 2021-2022

PhD Dissertation Examiner - School of Social Work

Teresa Works, PhD, November 2025
Maritza Vasquez Reyes, PhD, May 2024

PhD Dissertation Proposal Examiner - School of Social Work

Doreek Charles, May 2026

University-wide Service

Writing-Intensive Course (“W course”) Task force, member. October 2025-present

Service to Western New England University

President’s Visioning Committee, member. September-December 2020
Social Work Advisory Board, member and co-facilitator. 2005-2021
Campus Food Insecurity ad hoc working group, member. 2018-2021
Social Work Department Search Committee, member. 2014
Social Work Department, Dual Enrollment Initiative, chair. 2010-2013
Social Work Advisory Council, member. 2006-2011

Service to the Profession

Peer Reviewer

Council on Social Work Education Proposal Reviewer (2025, 2026)
Affilia (2024)
Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work (2024)
Families in Society (2024)
Journal of Community Practice (2025)

Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD)

Growing Leaders Committee, inaugural cohort member. 2020-2022
Program Directors, committee member. 2026-present.

CT State (Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT)

Advisory Board, member. 2025-present.

United Way of the Pioneer Valley, Springfield, MA

Working group: Campus Food & Housing Insecurity, member. April 2020-August 2021

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES (selected)

- **Social Work & AI: Distinguishing Between Hype, Harm, and Hope**, UConn School of Social Work, November 2025
- **mAI dAI, a day of AI-related conversations on teaching**, UConn Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, May 2025

- **29th Campaign School for Social Workers**, UConn School of Social Work, Nancy A Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, March 2025.
- **Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning**, Reading Group, UConn Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, November-December 2023
- **Program Directors Academy**, Council on Social Work Education, June 2022-July 2023.
- **Ethical Decision Making in Social Work: Complex Cases**, July 2023
- **Group Work Then and Now**, University of CT School of Social Work, June 2023
- **Moving Toward Anti-racism: Developing Actions for Social Work Academic Institutions**, National Association of Social Workers, August 2020
- **Voices of Hunger: Changing the Paradigm**, Campus Compact for Southern New England, Lowell, MA, May 2019
- **Reaffirmation Workshop**, Council on Social Work Education, Alexandria, VA, November 2019
- **Voices of Hunger on Campus: Meaningful Change Together**, Campus Compact for Southern New England, Worcester, MA, May 2018
- **Symposium 2018 – On the Front Lines**, National Association of Social Workers, Framingham, MA, April 2018
- **Qualitative Research Methods Workshop** (Deborah Padgett, Ph.D.), University of Connecticut School of Social Work, March 2017
- **Gender and Incarceration Symposium**, Blake Law Center, Western New England University, October 2016
- **Use of Groups & Teams for Problem- and Project-Based Classroom Learning**, Center for Teaching & Learning, Western New England University, September 2016
- **NVivo Techniques for Further Analysis** (full-day workshop), University of Connecticut School of Social Work, November 2015
- **Field Directors Training**, Full-day Pre-conference Workshop at BPD Annual Conference, Kansas City, MO, March 2015
- **Field Educator’s Seminar with Alex Gitterman** (1/2-day workshop), International Association for Social Work with Groups, Annual Symposium, Boston, MA, June 2013
- **Connecting with Field Education: Sharing Best Practices**, Council on Social Work Education, Annual Program Meeting, Washington, D.C., November 2012
- **Engaging Diversity Through Intersectionality: Facing the Challenge Within**, Full-day Pre-conference Workshop at BPD Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ, March 2009

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS and MEMBERSHIPS

Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW) in Massachusetts (continually, since 1998)

Licensed Social Worker in New York (1994-1996)

Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors, Inc. (BPD), current member

National Association of Social Workers (NASW), current member

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), current member

North American Network of Field Educators & Directors (NANFED), 2019-2021

Society of Social Work Research (SSWR), intermittent member

International Association of Social Work with Groups (IASWG), intermittent member