

Brenda Mack, DSW, MSW, LICSW, is an Assistant Professor and the Director of Field Education in the Social Work Department at Bemidji State University (BSU). Before joining the faculty at BSU, Brenda worked for twenty years as a program manager, outpatient and in-home therapist, and mobile behavioral health crisis responder for Alluma, formerly known as Northwestern Mental Health Center, Crookston, MN. She was the Polk Collaborative Children's Mental Health Coordinator and helped launch school-based mental health services in 21 school districts. Brenda enjoyed building relationships with health and human service providers and administrators, local educators and leaders, corrections personnel and law enforcement, and liaisons from the MN Department of Human Services and the MN Department of Education. She has Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in Social Work from the University of North Dakota and a Doctorate in Social Work from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. She is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker through the Minnesota Board of Social Work.

Brenda's scholarly work focuses on helping those in education, health, and human services address stress, burnout, and wellness through relational and individualized resiliency-building strategies. She emphasizes the importance of organizational and managerial approaches to support the well-being of those in the workforce. She conducted a research study in the summer of 2019 with social workers' supervisors about these topics and wrote an article discussing her findings, which was published in the March 2022 edition of the National Association of Social Work's Research journal. Brenda developed the Resiliency-Focused Supervision Model © (RFSM) for health and human services supervisors and wrote an article describing the framework that was published the fall 2020 issue of the Advances in Social Work journal. Brenda was selected as a 2021 National Rural Health Association (NRHA) Fellow and in 2022 serves on the NRHA Governance Affairs Committee as a behavioral health expert. She has been heavily involved with the Cultivating Resiliency Collaboration for Women in Agriculture, where she addresses the topics of stress, wellness, and resiliency through webinars and monthly virtual coffee chats. In November 2017, Brenda received the outstanding service award from the Minnesota Association of Children's Mental Health and in August 2018 Minnesota Monthly magazine identified her as an Innovative Educator. She loves teaching and leading in higher education, both on-campus and online.

Brenda was born and raised in a farming family in Northwestern Minnesota and is married to a fourth-generation crop farmer. She splits her time between Crookston, MN and Potato Lake, MN and enjoys being with family, lake life, kayaking, loon-watching, pickleball, reading, writing, presenting, and traveling.