




**BSW**

**FIELD EDUCATION HANDBOOK**



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



UNIVERSITY OF  
ARKANSAS

J. William Fulbright College of Arts & Sciences  
School of Social Work  
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University of Arkansas School of Social Work  
BSW Field Education Handbook  
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## **I. FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES**

### **School of Social Work Mission, Goals, Objectives**

#### **Mission:**

As purposeful social work leader-practitioners we strive for cultural, racial, and anti-oppressive justice and greater understanding through student-centered experiential learning, world-class research, and relentless community engagement because we truly believe Arkansas can be a land of opportunity.

This mission is achieved through the research, education, and outreach activities of the School's students, faculty, and professional staff. Central to these activities is the search to understand and address the complex influences of human, geographical, and cultural diversity on personal, social, and economic prosperity and justice. A fundamental goal inherent in the mission is poverty reduction.

Research and education in innovative policies, programs, and technologies for personal, community, social, and economic development are hallmarks of the School. Collaborative and assets-based education and practice approaches are used to prepare non-profit, public, and private sector leaders and practitioners who are committed to social and economic justice and equipped with essential tools for community and organizational development, management, and finance. These professionals are prepared to effectively lead organizations and to assist individuals and communities in developing the social and economic capital and infrastructures necessary to move permanently out of poverty and attain well-being. The School prepares professional social workers with the technological and intervention skills for direct practice to effectively assist consumers in the development, accumulation, and use of internal and external assets in order to enhance social competence, problem solving skills, and a sense of purpose and future. Special attention is placed on understanding the political and philosophical underpinnings of strengths-based service delivery with a view of consumers as resilient clients and communities that possess the strengths and power necessary to thrive.

#### **Goals:**

The goals of the School of Social Work, flow from its mission and provide direction to its education, research, and service/outreach units including: the BSW program, the MSW program, and the Academic Partnership in Social Welfare. These goals are to:

1. Provide excellence in professional baccalaureate and master's social work education with special attention to poverty reduction and the integration of new technologies.
2. Conduct, disseminate, and apply social work research through faculty, student, and professional staff efforts, particularly in the broad area of poverty reduction.
3. Provide outreach/service in the forms of training, consultation, and continuing education to help address the needs of diverse vulnerable people locally, nationally, and globally.
4. Prepare students for life-long learning including graduate and post-graduate education required in a global context with ever expanding knowledge.

### BSW Field Program Objectives:

1. The ability to apply the knowledge and skills of culturally competent social work practice with systems of all sizes focusing on assets, resiliency, and consumer directed interventions.
2. The ability to practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation.
3. An understanding and application of the value base of the profession and ethical standards and principles.
4. The application of critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
5. Use of communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, professional disciplines, and communities.
6. Knowledge of traditional and alternative theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life course and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, communities, and global systems.
7. The ability to analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.
8. The ability to evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions and communicate findings.
9. An understanding of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination including their influence on poverty and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice locally, nationally, and globally.
10. The ability to understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.
11. The ability to plan for and implement appropriate life-long professional development activities to incorporate new knowledge and skills in practice.
12. The ability to use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
13. The capacity to function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
14. The ability to use technology effectively and appropriately to achieve the purposes of social work.

### Field Education Goals/Objectives

The Field curriculum is designed to allow students to demonstrate the accomplishment of foundational practice skills, knowledge, and values consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of social work and the BSW program, through effective performance in field internship. Special expectations include demonstration of leadership skills and ability for independent practice, preparation for intervention with global issues, use of current technology for practice, and successful interdisciplinary collaboration.

The educational objectives of the field sequence are consistent with the program's overall education objectives. Upon successful completion of all courses in the field sequence, students must demonstrate accomplishment of each BSW program educational objective.

### Foundation Competencies

#### **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behaviors**

1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.
2. Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.
3. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
4. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.
5. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

#### **Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.**

1. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
2. Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
3. Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

#### **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

1. Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.
2. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

#### **Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

1. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.
2. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
3. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

#### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

1. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.
2. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.

3. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

**Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

1. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
2. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

**Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

1. Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
2. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.
3. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies.
4. Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

1. Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment,
2. person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies
3. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
4. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
5. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

**Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

1. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
2. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes
3. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
4. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

## **II. FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

### **Field Education Program**

The Field Education Program consists of faculty and staff committed to providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate advanced practice skills, knowledge, and values consistent with the mission, goals and objectives of the MSW program through effective skill development in field internships.

The following is a glossary of terminology related to field education, followed by expanded descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of all partners.

### ***FIELD GLOSSARY***

***Field Education Program Director:*** The Field Education Program Director provides overall management of the Field Education Program. The Field Education Program Director assesses student readiness for field and collaborates with the student to determine the best placement “fit” based on student skills and interests as well as agency resources and availability.

***Field Liaison:*** The field liaison is the faculty member whose primary responsibility is to see that the student’s internship experiences are educational and meet the established learning objectives. This is achieved by integrating curriculum content in Field seminar, monitoring educational opportunities offered by the agency, connecting CSWE competencies and skill development, and evaluating the student’s progress.

***Field Instructor:*** The field instructor is a social worker that has received an MSW degree from a CSWE- accredited program. The field instructor provides a minimum of one hour of supervision per week to the student. In most cases, the field instructor will be on site at the assigned field placement; however, when a master’s level social worker is not available at placement, this role will be filled by a master’s level social worker who is not on staff at the agency, and who has been approved by the Field Education Program.

Frequently, this master’s level social worker will be responsible for assigning learning tasks for the student at placement.

***Task Supervisor:*** The task supervisor is the agency employee that assigns tasks to the student and who assists in evaluating the daily performance of the student. The task supervisor maintains regular contact with the field instructor and field liaison regarding the student’s progress in field placement.

***Field Placement/Internship:*** The Field placement or internship is a part of the social work student’s formal educational requirements, consisting of an ongoing work assignment at an organization which allows the student to apply social work theory, values, ethics, and competencies to practice. This work assignment is directly supervised by a field instructor and/or task supervisor.



**Field Seminar:** Field Seminar is the academic component of the social work student's field experience. In addition to working in an agency setting, the student is required to concurrently attend a weekly, two-hour seminar designed to integrate curriculum content with direct practice knowledge and experiences.

### **Student Internship Placement Process**

- a. Student will purchase access to Tevera, the online internship tracking system.
- b. Complete the BSW Field Internship Application **prior** to making a Field advising appointment. Indicate three areas of interest for internship placement.
- c. Students are prohibited from arranging their own placements, and unsanctioned contact with approved field organizations can result in a student's removal from the placement process, making them ineligible for Field for that semester.**
- d. If a student has 2 or more Student Retention and Success Level 1 Forms that have been submitted, the student will be required to meet with Field Education Program Director and the BSW Program Director, to determine field readiness.
- e. Schedule an appointment with the Field Education Program Director when the advising calendar is sent out via e-mail. If the BSW Field Internship Application Form has not been completed by the time of the scheduled Field advising appointment, the appointment will be cancelled, and the student will be provided an alternate advising appointment after all other BSW students have been advised. Please come to Field advising prepared to areas of interest, learning and professional goals.
- f. Student will receive an e-mail with referral for interview for possible placement. Pertinent contact information for the interview will be provided in the e-mail.
- g. The Field Education Director will make every effort to place students within 50 miles of the University of Arkansas main campus in Fayetteville. Reasonable efforts will also be made to place students in the locale of their residence if they reside more than 50 miles from campus.
- h. Student will craft a professionally written e-mail to request an interview with the designated placement.
- i. If accepted for placement, student will complete the **Field Internship Acceptance Form**, which is located on the Field page of the School of Social Work website. Please return the signed form to the Field Education Program Director.
- j. Students should arrange their schedule so that they can attend internship for full days if feasible, attending internship **no less than four hours at a time**.

**k. If a student is deemed field ready, the Field Education Program may make no more than three referrals for placement interview per semester. After each denial for placement, the student will be reassessed for field readiness. If a student is unable to secure placement after three referrals for interview, they will be deemed inappropriate for field placement for that semester.**

### **Workplace Internship Policy**

Students who wish to explore the possibility of using their place of employment as an internship site may submit a completed Workplace Internship Request in writing to the Field Education Director. Requests are decided on a case-by-case basis by the Field Education Director in consultation with the Field Education Committee. Requests must include the following:

#### **STUDENT**

- a. A **clear delineation** between prior work duties and new internship responsibilities. Duties and responsibilities must be significantly different from those routinely done in the students' role as employee with the agency. The volume of responsibilities also must be reduced to reflect the internship as a learning experience rather than an ordinary workload.
- b. Supervisors' names and titles for employment and proposed internship. These **supervisors may not be the same person.**
- c. Provision of a **field instructor** with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program, **who has not supervised the intern in other employment responsibilities.**
- d. Identify the employment department, and the proposed internship department. If these departments are in separate locations, please identify.
- e. A schedule of **hours for the internship clearly delineated and separated from work hours**, signed by both the employment supervisor and the proposed field instructor.
- f. Payment: If the agency is going to provide payment, it must be a stipend or **payment outside of payment for regular employment responsibilities.**

#### **AGENCY**

- a. Written approval from an agency administrator agreeing to proposed internship, as well as present employment supervisor, and proposed field instructor.
- b. Written documentation that internship time will be focused on learning activities, not employment duties.

If a workplace internship is approved, only one of the two required internships may be spent in the agency in which the student is or has been employed. Final approval of the work site internship depends on all the above criteria being met. The field liaison will monitor the agreed upon terms and failure to comply with the agreement may result in removal of student from the internship.

Students are generally discouraged from working part-time or “PRN” for the same agency at which they are interning. If the student seeks to do so during non-internship hours, a written **proposal must be submitted to the Field Education Director** as detailed in the Workplace Internship policy.

In addition, students are generally discouraged from doing an internship in settings in which the student is also employed. However, pending approval from the Field Education Program Director and the Field Education Committee, an exception can be made in which student field assignments and employment tasks may be the same and counted toward required field hours if the tasks have clear links to the social work competencies and practice behaviors. The field instructor and employment supervisor of a student may be the same person. In such cases, supervision time for field education learning must be separate from supervision time for employment.

### **CREATING NEW INTERNSHIP SITES**

Agency personnel who are interested in becoming a new internship site are encouraged to contact the Field Education Director to determine if the agency will be able to accommodate the learning opportunities required for social work students. If so, the agency may complete the Field Organization Application and Field Instructor Application. The Field Education Director will arrange a visit to the proposed internship site.

Following the visit, the Field Education Director in consultation with the Field Education Committee will determine if the agency is approved. Application to become a new site must be completed a minimum of 3 months prior to proposed placement.

### **Field Instructors**

Field instructors for BSW students must hold a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. For cases in which the agency offers valuable learning experience and does not have a social worker with a CSWE-accredited bachelor's social work degree, the school ensures that the placement is consistent with the philosophy and practice of social work by arranging alternate social work supervision. This may be accomplished in several ways:

- a. A School of Social Work faculty member may be assigned to provide social work supervision for the student while the task supervisor provides onsite supervision of activities. In these cases, the faculty member is expected to meet with the student a minimum of one hour per week.
- b. The organization/agency or the School of Social Work, depending on resource allocation, may designate a social worker that holds a master's degree from a CSWE-accredited program to provide off-site supervision. In this case, a task supervisor is assigned to direct student activities on site at placement.
- c. An agency social worker with a bachelor's degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program that is not the primary field instructor may provide weekly social work supervision to ensure that the student understands their work from a social work perspective.

### **Criteria for Selection of Field Education Sites**

The selection of agencies as field settings is based on the agency's commitment to shared responsibility for professional graduate education and the level of staff expertise and experience. To help ensure successful placements and high-quality learning experiences for the student, the School of Social Work carefully assesses all potential placement settings. Specific criteria for selecting graduate field placement agencies include the following:

1. The presence of a solid commitment by the administrator and/or staff to provide professional educational learning opportunities in cooperation with the School of Social Work.
2. Willingness to designate a field instructor who (a) is a bachelor's level social worker holding a degree from a CSWE-accredited program, and (b) whose schedule will allow for development of student learning opportunities of appropriate depth, breadth, and variety; and attendance at any meetings or trainings required by the Field Education Program.
3. The agency performs functions within the scope of what is generally recognized as professional social work. If social work is not the principal function of the agency, social work is identified as a sufficient professional service offered by the agency, and the social work practitioners are accepted by the agency as professional staff.
4. The willingness of participating personnel to provide students with educationally guided professional social work experiences.
5. The availability of staff willing and able to devote time to the additional assignment of a student along with their normal workload.
6. The presence of staff expertise in the form of professional education, experience, or other credentials which assure knowledgeable field supervision.
7. Willingness to accept students without regard to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
8. Willingness to allow students to actively participate in the overall agency program and activities, as appropriate to educational needs and practice competencies of the student.
9. Willingness to provide access to agency case records which are pertinent to student activities and learning needs.
10. Willingness to provide support services and appropriate facilities for student use, including an adequate and regular place from which the student can operate, clerical services, necessary supplies and equipment, access to telephone, and (if possible) reimbursement for travel expenses incurred during assigned duties.
11. The agency's reputation within the social service community for assuring standards of competent practice and service.

### **Organization/Agency Application Process**

1. Agencies meeting the criteria are encouraged to complete an electronic Organization/Agency Application and submit it to the Field Education Program.
2. Applying agencies will be reviewed by the Field Education Program for approval. Agencies will be notified of acceptance status by mail, with any special conditions noted in the Field Education Program's letter to the agency.

### **Field Instructor Certification Process**

Criteria for Selection of Field Instructors:

Social workers wanting to become a field instructor for the School of Social Work must complete an application and be approved by the Field Education Director and Field Education Committee. Approved field instructor must practice in an approved field internship site.

1. Field instructors hold a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. It is preferable that the field instructor be licensed in the state of Arkansas as an LSW. Occasionally practitioners from other disciplines may be considered appropriate task supervisors, however, students will still be supervised by a field instructor with a bachelor's degree from a CSWE-accredited program.
2. Field instructors must practice in a School of Social Work approved internship site.
3. Field instructors must demonstrate a commitment to the education of BSW students and have adequate time and resources to supervise a student on a consistent basis.
4. Field instructors must observe the NASW Code of Ethics and operate within its context.

### **Field Instructor Application**

1. Eligible individuals within qualifying agencies who have an interest in providing field instruction will complete an application in addition to the general organizational application.
2. Field Instructor certifications shall be determined by the Field Education Program.
3. Qualifications for certified field instructors include the following criteria:
  - a. Bachelor's degree from CSWE accredited social work program
  - b. Licensure preferred
  - c. Expertise in their area of practice
  - d. Experience in field instruction preferred
4. Field instructors certified by the School of Social Work shall participate in training by the school each year to maintain certification.
5. Field instructor certification shall be considered valid for three years, at the end of which the field instructor will be contacted by the Field Education Program to update and resubmit the application for review.
6. A field instructor's certified status may be reviewed at any time by the Field Education Director and Field Education Committee if concerns develop regarding the quality of the educational experience, supervisory relationship, or if ethical concerns arise regarding the Field Instructor's behavior. Certification status may be suspended at any time by the Field Education Director in conjunction with the Field Education Committee.
7. Any field instructor whose certification has been suspended may appeal this to the Field Education Director in writing. The Field Education director and the Field Education Committee will review any such appeals and reply to the organization and field instructor within 90 days of appeal submission.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Field Team**

### ***The Field Education Director is Expected to:***

1. Assume responsibility for the overall management and direction of the Field Education Program.
2. Assign a field liaison to work conjointly with the agency-based field instructor.
3. Provide suggested learning goals to aid the design of learning objectives and the selection of learning activities by the student and field instructor.
4. Provide guidelines, evaluation tools, and protocols for the evaluation of the student.
5. Provide needed orientation and training to field instructors.
6. Be available to the student, the field liaison, and the field instructor to facilitate a resolution to problems that may arise.
7. Monitor and evaluate the quality of internship experiences provided by the various agencies and organizations utilized as field placements.

### ***The Student Intern is Expected to:***

1. Purchase access to Tevera, the online platform utilized by the School of Social Work Field Program.
2. Demonstrate awareness and adherence to all relevant professional standards, including, but not limited to the NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Adhere to the Standards of Social Work Education.
4. Meet all academic pre-requisite and co-requisite requirements for Field education.
5. Read the Field Handbook and demonstrate understanding of its policies.
6. Meet with the field instructor on a regular basis, at a minimum, weekly.
7. Prepare for all meetings with the field instructor and alert the field instructor to topics that need to be discussed during the upcoming meeting.
8. Meet with the field instructor and the field liaison jointly at least twice during each semester.
9. Attend the agency on days and at times agreed on by the student and field instructor, and if unable to attend, notify the agency supervisor and prior to or at the start of the workday.
10. Behave in a professional manner: take responsibility to understand and carry out assigned duties, meet all deadlines and seek direction when needed.
11. Identify themselves as a social work intern in all professional interactions and interventions.
12. Carry out agency related assignments in a manner consistent with agency policy and procedures.
13. Prepare records and reports in accord with agency policy, procedures, and format.
14. Identify learning needs and prepare a learning contract with specific learning activities that are acceptable to the field instructor and field liaison.
15. Purchase professional liability insurance and provide proof of professional liability insurance. Cost of insurance will be reflected in student fees.
16. Take responsibility for ensuring personal safety while performing internship duties.

17. Complete and submit all field monitoring and evaluation forms and reports required by the agency and school.
18. Discuss with the field instructor, field liaison, or Field Education Director any areas of significant disagreement, dissatisfaction, or confusion related to the field experience.
19. Complete the required number of hours and course requirements for the field internship.
20. Meet all course requirements of field seminar.

***The Field Instructor and Field Agency Are Expected to:***

1. Describe and explain what is expected of the student during placement with the agency.
2. Provide the student with a thorough orientation to the agency, its purpose, structure, policies, procedures, and ethical standards.
3. Provide regularly scheduled supervision to the student (at least weekly).
4. Provide the student with suitable workspace, equipment, and support staff.
5. Include the student in regular staff meetings and staff training sessions.
6. Assign duties and responsibilities that are appropriate to the student's learning needs and that are increasingly difficult, demanding, and challenging.
7. Assign duties and responsibilities that help the student develop a broad range of social work knowledge and skills.
8. Work with the student in ways that recognize the internship first and foremost as a learning experience.
9. Monitor the student's work and progress and regularly provide feedback.
10. Evaluate the student's performance in a fair, respectful, rigorous, and thorough manner.
11. Meet at least twice each semester with the student and Faculty Liaison to discuss the internship and student's progress.
12. Complete all evaluation forms and reports required by the school.
13. Model ethical practice and refrain from any inappropriate or unethical behavior toward the student (e.g., verbal abuse, sexual harassment, dual relationships).

***The Field Liaison is Expected to:***

1. Assume responsibility for assisting in the development of a learning plan that will provide the student with an array of appropriate and challenging learning opportunities.
2. Monitor the student's internship experience and assist in evaluating the student's performance.
3. Assist the Field Instructor and other agency personnel in connecting the school's expectations of students, the social work curriculum, the school's goals for internship, and the agency's goals for internship.
4. Facilitate the student's learning by providing guidance and serving as a source of information.
5. Meet with the student and the field instructor for mid-term and final evaluations, to discuss the internship and evaluate the student's progress.
6. Assist the student in integrating social work theory and the specific experiences of the practicum through facilitation of field seminar.

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

#### Field Seminar

Seminar is a co-requisite with field internship. Student competencies are explored in the field sequence and, as such, evaluation of performance leading to mastery of these competencies is essential. Each field seminar is similarly designed as a small group, solution-oriented learning environment where, students' complete assignments reflecting their ongoing learning process and skill development with focus on professional development. Field seminar is an interactive class that requires student engagement both with their field liaison and their student colleagues. Assignments specific to the seminar class can be found in the syllabus on the designated Blackboard site.

#### Seminar Section Assignments

All students register in one section of field seminar, and enrollment of these students is distributed among available sections by the Field Education Director. Seminar section assignments are made based on available resources, type of internship, student grouping, and other issues which might affect the student learning environment. As such, for some students the School of Social Work may change the initial registration to reflect the assignments made by the Field Education Director.

**All students are expected to complete the requisite number of hours in field within the parameters of the semester they are enrolled in Field. For BSW students that is 220 hours per semester for two semesters for a total of 440 hours.** If this is not going to be accomplished within the time frame of a semester, the student may receive an "incomplete" or fail the course. When an incomplete is assigned for the grade, the student must obtain approval from the Field Education Program Director and the internship placement for completion of internship hours. Failure to obtain an approved plan to fulfill the course requirements will result in the student receiving a failing grade.

**\*\*It must be noted** that the student cannot begin the second semester of field until a grade has been earned for the previous semester. When this cannot be accomplished, the student will have to postpone field until eligible for matriculation into second semester field. If the hours required cannot be completed by the end of the semester for students in their final field placements, the student may receive an "incomplete", which will delay graduation.

If a field student is absent for a significant period, there are four options:

- a. Withdraw from field, with the consent of the field liaison and the Field Education Program Director.
- b. Be assigned by the Field Education Program Director to repeat the semester either in the same agency or a different one.
- c. Earn an "incomplete" and complete internship requirement the next time that field course is offered, or under special circumstances, complete the course requirements with an extension of time and approval from the field placement; or
- d. Earn a failing grade.



Students may take off all school holidays and any holidays observed by the agency. It is the student's responsibility to make their internship placement, including their field instructor and task supervisor, aware of university holidays. The student must still, however, complete all required field hours. If the student elects to work through a holiday with the approval of their field instructor and field liaison, the hours earned will count toward the required hours. Students in general are not allowed to work internship hours on holidays, evenings, or weekends. Students who wish to complete internship hours on holidays, evenings, or weekends, must complete a Request for Special Internship Hours form one week prior to the completion of the internship hours. If a student receives special permission from their field instructor and field liaison to work after hours, the field instructor or other appropriate task supervisor must be available to the student by phone, if not in person for supervisory consultation if needed.

Students may be given time away from the agency to attend conferences or other educational activities if the activity is relevant to the student's learning experiences. This is done only with the advance approval of the field instructor. Students may count to 16 hours of continuing education per semester as field hours. Other community meetings and agency specific training shall count as regular internship hours with approval from the field instructor.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO RETENTION AND CONTINUATION**

##### **Monitoring Student Progress**

Monitoring of student progress is important for the field instructor, the field liaison, and the student. Each must take responsibility to see that monitoring is an on-going process that takes place from the first day of field until the last day. Evaluation of practice takes many forms, student self-evaluation, evaluation provided by the field instructor, task supervisor, and field liaison are all integral parts of performance informed practice. The student and the field instructor will meet on a weekly basis to review the learning contract, adjust tasks and assignments, and discuss progress. The field liaison will monitor student progress via the weekly journal entries, participation in field seminar, individual meetings and through open communication with the field instructor. It is also the student's responsibility to monitor her/his progress by appropriate use of supervision and ongoing review of the learning contract and progress toward learning goals. The mid-term evaluation plays a significant role in monitoring student progress, facilitating communication among the field instructor, field liaison, and student, and identifying any need for mid-course corrections to the learning plan. At this point, it is important that all parties agree with the evaluation of progress, the need for any changes, and future monitoring expectations.

##### **Evaluation of Field Experience**

Evaluation is a critical component for learning and overall professional growth. It is especially important during field internships since the student is expected to be continuously refining their social work skills and preparing for independent social work practice. Evaluation provides essential information on the student's strengths and identifies areas where additional growth is needed. Because parts of the evaluation process are subjective, it is imperative to have open communication between all parties involved in the field internship. The student, the field instructor, and the field liaison all play essential roles in the evaluation process and in making field a meaningful professional learning experience.

The fundamental purposes of student evaluation in field internships can be categorized by the following:

1. Evaluation provides the student with an assessment of competency development in the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for advanced professional practice.
2. Evaluation provides the student with guidance, encouragement, and incentive to continue Professional growth.
3. Evaluation provides the program and the student with a written record of performance.
4. Evaluation is an important piece of shaping effective practice in the professional development of students.

Evaluation, in the form of performance feedback, is an integral part of the supervisory/teaching conferences between the graduate student and the field instructor and/or field liaison. Students meet regularly, a minimum of once a week, with the field instructor for this purpose. The weekly field seminars serve as another source of feedback through peer and field liaison consultation. In summary, evaluation is on-going throughout each of the field courses and provides critical analysis of performance by the student, other student colleagues, the field instructor, and the field liaison. Formal evaluations of student performance are conducted and documented at mid-term and end of each field internship course. The following sections offer a more detailed description of the formal evaluation process.

### **Mid-Term Evaluation**

This evaluation occurs at the mid-point of the semester. The meeting is scheduled at a time when the field instructor, field liaison, student, and task supervisor (if applicable) can all be in attendance. Both the student and the field instructor should have their written evaluation completed at the time of the meeting with the field liaison. It is good practice for the field instructor to have reviewed the evaluation with the student prior to the mid-term evaluation meeting, so the meeting is not the first time the student receives the evaluative feedback, allowing the student an opportunity to formulate questions, or a plan to address any areas of concern. In addition to assessing the student's progress, this is the time to adjust assignments, reaffirm or modify the learning contract, and in general, make plans for effective use of time remaining in the semester.

### **Final Evaluation**

The final evaluation also involves the student, the field instructor, and the field liaison. This final evaluation allows for a comprehensive review and documentation of student performance. As

with the mid-term evaluation, the field instructor and student are encouraged to make the evaluation process as collaborative as possible, discussing openly student strengths and areas for growth/improvement.

### **Field Evaluations and Reference Requests**

Field evaluations that were completed prior to Fall 2020 are stored electronically by the School of Social Work and are available upon request to third parties if the student has signed a release of information for that purpose. Third parties include, but are not limited to, potential employers, other schools, licensing boards, etc. These documents may be obtained by e-mailing a request to [scsw@uark.edu](mailto:scsw@uark.edu). Please include name, graduation date, contact information, and name and address of the school or university requesting the evaluation. Field evaluations completed during or after Fall 2020, are available on each student's Tevera account.

### **Student/Field Liaison Evaluation of Field Internship**

In addition to evaluation of student performance, both student and field liaison complete an evaluation of the field internship. The purpose of this evaluation is to assist the field instruction staff with future planning. The information derived will be used in on-going evaluation of internship sites and field instruction. Data regarding the placement and field instructor evaluations are compiled and evaluated by the Field Education Director and the Field Education Committee. These data are utilized to provide feedback to the agency and the field instructor regarding strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, this information will be used to inform programming for field instructor training and orientation.

### **When A Student Is Not Making Satisfactory Progress in Field**

The field education course is quite different from other Social Work courses. While a field placement in a community agency is organized around educational objectives determined by the program curriculum, it also involves professional responsibilities to clients, agencies, and the community. As a result of the involvement of these many stakeholders, it is imperative that we recognize early and respond quickly to students' performance problems.

When problems occur, it is crucial that the field instructor, student and faculty field liaison attend to several issues:

- The rights of clients to adequate professional service.
- The educational needs of the student (including access to corrective and supportive services, as appropriate)

At any point during a student's placement, an agency, the Field Education Program Director, or the Student Retention and Success Committee can remove the student from placement and bypass the problem-solving suggestions listed below. In such a situation the reason for removal of the student and any efforts made by the agency to remediate the student issue will be documented on the Termination Form and/or Supervision Form. If the student is terminated from placement by the agency, they will not be referred for another placement that semester. The student will be free to re-enroll in the internship class at the next possible opportunity that the

internship class is offered provided the Field Education Program deems them ‘field ready’. If at any time the student is referred to the Student Retention and Success Committee, the Field Education Program defers to the committee’s recommendations.

1. When a student is not progressing at a satisfactory rate any or all, of the below may occur:
  - a. The field instructor may notify the field liaison as soon as a problem is identified.
  - b. The field liaison may arrange a conference with the field instructor.
  - c. The field instructor, field liaison, and/or student may meet to discuss and assess the problem.
  - d. The student may be given formal notification that his/her performance is substandard as documented on the Immediate Intervention Form. Guidelines are developed in writing for the student to improve the standard of performance. In this process, the student may be referred to or request the involvement of the Student Retention and Success Committee. Any party can request the involvement of the Student Retention and Success Committee by making a request in writing for referral from the Field Education Program Director.
  - e. If the student does not meet the requirements of internship within the allotted time frame, a failing grade is earned.
2. If it is determined by the Field Education Program Director, with input from the field liaison and/or field instructor, that there is a legitimate and compelling reason that the student did not meet the learning and professional objectives of placement, the Field Education Program Director, field liaison, field instructor and/or Student Retention and Success Committee may allow the student extra time to complete the internship. It is important to note that substandard performance is not considered a legitimate and compelling reason for the student not to meet the learning and professional objectives of field placement. The decision to allow additional time to complete learning and professional objectives is based on the student’s work to date, the agency’s willingness to commit continued resources, the field instructor’s willingness to commit extra time, and the student’s commitment to the identified plan. When it is possible that a student may meet the learning and professional objectives of internship if given extra time:
  - a. The student will be assigned an “incomplete”, and a specific plan will be identified to complete the internship hours and learning activities/assignments, following the University policy and timeline regarding assignment of “incomplete”.
  - b. If the student has not accomplished the objectives of field by the end of the extension, the student may earn a failing grade.
3. If a student does not wish to spend the additional time necessary to successfully complete the field assignment, the options are as follows:
  - a. Formally withdraw from the field seminar and internship courses, or
  - b. Earn a failing grade for both courses.
4. Documentation of student progress can be assessed using the following tools:
  - a. Direct observation of skills

- b. Client records
- c. Seminar assignments
- d. Feedback from other agency staff or other professionals
- e. Written work
- f. Use of supervision
- g. Field instructor assessment of performance
- h. Field liaison assessment of performance

## CHANGE OF FIELD PLACEMENT

Changes in field placement after the placement has started are only considered in extreme cases. Factors such as a shift in area of interest, or outside employment are not sound academic reasons for change of placement.

The following are policies regarding the change of students from an agency or organization.

### 1. If the student requests a change of placement:

- a. The student will discuss issues warranting the proposed change in placement with the field liaison. The field liaison, student and field instructor may meet and discuss the issues involved. If the issues can be resolved, the student will remain at the placement.
- b. Should the student still desire a change in placement after a meeting to attempt resolution of the issues, the field liaison will discuss the issues with the Field Education Program Director to clarify the status of the student and agency.
- c. A joint conference with the Field Education Program Director, field liaison and student may occur. The agency field instructor may or may not be involved in this meeting.
- d. If the decision is made to remove the student from the field placement, and the student is 'field ready', a suitable agency will be contacted, and arrangements will be made for the student to interview for a possible alternate placement. This shall be accomplished as soon as feasible so the student will not fall behind in internship hours.

**\*\*There is no guarantee that an alternate placement can be made. In this situation, the same protocol for field advising will be followed. Original referral counts as one referral for the semester. The student may receive two other referrals for possible placement if necessary and the student is deemed field ready. The Field Education Program will make no more than three referrals for placement interview per semester. If a student is unable to secure placement after three referrals for interview, they will not be placed for field that semester, and will be referred to Student Standards and Support Committee.**

- c. If a change of placement is granted within the first two weeks of internship, and the student has been actively involved in appropriate internship activities, the student may count hours earned at the initial placement toward the total internship hours requirement for the semester.

### 2. An agency may request removal of a student from placement for any reason. Should an agency request the removal of a student, for whatever reason:

- a. The School of Social Work will remove the student within a time frame that is agreeable to the

agency.

- b. Either prior to, or after removal of a student from the agency, depending on the urgency of the removal and/or the agency concerns, the field liaison will discuss the situation that led to the agency request with the agency and Field Education Program Director, and the Termination Form will be completed.
- c. If the agency simply wishes to explore whether a student should be removed from placement, the field liaison and/or Field Education Program Director may meet with agency representatives to determine options.
- d. If it is possible for the student to complete placement, with special attention from the school, it is deemed better for the student's overall learning.
- e. If this is not possible, and the student is terminated from placement by the agency, they will not be referred for another placement that semester. The student will be free to re-enroll in the internship class at the next possible opportunity that the internship class is offered provided the Field Education Program deems them 'field ready'.

### **Removal of a Student from Field**

A student *may* be removed from field under the following circumstances:

- 1. Request of the student.
- 2. Request of the placement agency.
- 3. Recommendation from Student Retention and Success Committee.
- 4. Decision of the Field Education Program, including the recommendation of the field liaison in consultation with the Field Education Program Director. The following are grounds to remove the student from field:

- a. Failure to maintain confidentiality about a client as mandated by agency policy and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.
  - b. Failure to abide by the NASW and Arkansas Code of Ethics.
  - c. Failure to follow the policies or procedures of the School of Social Work or the University of Arkansas.
  - d. An attempt or threat to harm oneself.
  - e. An attempt or threat to harm someone else.
  - f. Repeated tardiness at the agency and/or tardiness without notification.
  - g. Repeated absences from the agency and/or absence without notification.
  - h. Repeated change in scheduled field hours without prior approval.
  - i. Refusal to accept supervisory direction from field instructor, task supervisor, or agency staff.
  - j. Inappropriate behavior in connection with the field placement.
  - k. Student's lack of progress in correcting issues or concerns identified in field instructor or field liaison documentation.

Students who are removed from field for any of the reasons listed above, may be referred to the Student Retention and Success Committee to make recommendations to the student and Field Education Program regarding the student's status.

The final decision regarding removal from field may be made by the Field Education Program Director, the agency, or Student Retention and Success. The student may appeal the decision following the guidelines in the UA SCSW Student Handbook.

Whether the student will be allowed to return to field in the same or a different agency will depend on the seriousness of the incident requiring termination from placement and/or the ability of the student to work through the issues resulting in termination from placement.

## **V. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the University of Arkansas to prohibit sexual harassment of its students, faculty, and staff. Incidents of sexual harassment are demeaning to all persons involved and impair the ability of the institution to perform its educational function. Sexual harassment of students may constitute discrimination under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and sexual harassment of employees is prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual harassment of students includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct which takes place when: submission to the conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's academic status or advancement. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; and/or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment. Students who believe that they have been subjected to sexual harassment are encouraged to report the problem promptly to their academic dean or to the Dean of Students. University grievance procedures are available to individuals who wish to pursue complaints of sexual harassment. Students may use the Student Complaint Procedure or the Student Academic Appeal Structure. For additional and specific information refer to the "Sexual Harassment Policy" in the graduate catalog.

## **VI. OUT OF REGION/INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS**

Students may qualify for out of region or international placements. Any student interested in such a placement should arrange a meeting with the Field Education Director at least 6 months prior to placement. Students are eligible for out of region/international placement for their final placement only. Only those students in good standing who are not under any type of oversight by Student Standards and Support may qualify for out of region/international placement. To begin the process of determining feasibility of out of region/international placement, the student will:

1. Inform the Director of Field Education Director by email as early as possible of interest in out of region/international placement. Identify the area of interest and region preferred.
2. Submit three reference letters to the Field Education Program indicating appropriateness of student for this type of placement.
3. The student will provide the Field Education Director a list of potential placement agencies which the Field Education Director will utilize to determine placement opportunities
4. A proposed site may only be approved after confirmation of appropriate learning opportunities for the student, appropriate supervision, application, and approval by the Field Education Committee.



5. Following approval of a placement, the referral process utilized for in area placements will be utilized.

#### **VII. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- See document link on School of Social Work website at [standards-for-social-work-education.pdf \(uark.edu\)](https://www.uark.edu/soa/standards-for-social-work-education.pdf) for:
- Standards for Social Work Education
- 3 Levels of Review for Student Standards and Support