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LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY  
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK  
FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL 2020-2021

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LOMA LINDA  
UNIVERSITY

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**NASW**

<https://www.socialworkers.org/>

**FORWARD**

This manual has been prepared for the purposes of assisting agencies, students, and field instructors to understand the objectives, policies, and procedures governing field education for the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program at Loma Linda University (LLU). Students and faculty will receive a copy of the manual to use as a reference guide. Students and faculty can access this manual in Canvas and through our Intern Placement Tracking system (IPT).

## PREFACE

To better assist in understanding the Field Education Program of the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology better, it is important to be familiar with the background of LLU and the School of Behavioral Health (SBH).

**History:** LLU has grown out of the institution founded at Loma Linda, California in 1905 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The original schools were Nursing and Medicine. These two schools were joined by Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Public Health, Pharmacy, Behavioral Health, and Religion.

**Philosophy:** As implied by the University's motto, "To Make Man Whole," the University affirms the following tenets as central to its view of education: God is the creator and sustainer of the universe; mankind's fullest development entails a growing understanding of the individual in relation to both God and society; and the quest for truth and professional expertise, in an environment permeated by religious values, benefits the individual and society and advances the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

**Mission:** The mission of LLU is to further the healing and teaching ministry of Jesus Christ by educating Christian health professionals, expanding human knowledge of health, and providing compassionate health care for the whole person.

**SBH:** In the SBH, the essential concern of both faculty and students is the quest for meaning and service to others. Because that quest is served by knowledge, graduate students are obliged to achieve both broad and detailed mastery of their chosen field of study and also to participate with the faculty in the process by which knowledge is augmented.

**Department Policies:** A more complete source of Department policies is located in the MSW Student Handbook.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FIELD EDUCATION

June 24, 2020

Dear Student:

Welcome to the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology in the SBH! This Field Education Manual contains information that will guide your understanding of the learning objectives, policies, procedures, and requirements of the LLU MSW Field Education Program.

Please review this document and thoroughly familiarize yourself with the content. The Field Education Manual is a valuable resource for students, field faculty, and field instructors alike. The information contained in this manual will assist you in negotiating your field experience and should be readily accessible for continued reference.

The field practicum experiences are an integral part of your social work education that will help you to develop the knowledge and practice skills required of professional social work practitioners. Students must demonstrate competent performance in all MSW practice behaviors in order to successfully complete the MSW Program. Student learning goals are guided by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies and practice behaviors.

The MSW Field Education Program compliments the mission of LLU to “*Continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ.*” You will be challenged as you work to understand and appreciate the needs of diverse populations. Students will be expected to integrate classroom content with direct practice in a practicum setting. Students are highly encouraged to take initiative and seek out additional learning opportunities.

It is the goal of our MSW Program for you to have a positive learning experience while completing your field practicum. On behalf of the MSW Field Faculty, I wish you a successful and productive academic year!

Sincerely,

Talolo Lepale, LCSW, MBA  
Director of Field Education

# FIELD EDUCATION IN THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM

## INTRODUCTION

Field education is a signature pedagogy in social work education. It is in field where theory, information, and concepts are learned, applied, and internalized. Field education provides the guided practice needed to prepare MSW students to become advanced social work professionals.

## RATIONALE AND PURPOSE

Field education, historically and currently, is an integral component of social work education. Agencies that provide practicums are legally contracted with the Department to provide practicing social workers assigned as field instructors within their agency and approved by the Social Work Program. Certain underlying assumptions guide the organization and implementation of the practicum and give direction to agency personnel and University faculty involved with practicum education.

The assumptions are:

- Students, agencies, and faculty share a common commitment to graduate level social work education and the promotion of the MSW Program mission, goals, and objectives as the primary purpose of field education. Service to the agency, its clientele, and the community are some of the additional benefits that result from the students' involvement in field practicum.
- Field practicum occurs in settings that reinforce students' identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession, and in settings where instructors model social work values and ethics at all times.
- Field practicum should provide students with preparation in one or more specific areas of social work practice and should present students with opportunities to engage in a variety of practice activities that fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge and the development of professional competence.
- Field practicum, is a signature pedagogy of social work education, is designed to be sensitive to diversity in the following areas: (a) race, (b) ethnicity, (c) culture, (d) class, (e) gender, (f) sexual orientation, (g) religion, (h) physical/mental ability, (i) age, and (j) national origin. This sensitivity is accomplished through careful examination of the placement process, the agency context, and the roles of field instructors, faculty liaisons, and students.
- Field practicum experiences are necessary to effectively translate social work knowledge into practice skills and may take a variety of forms including direct practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Agencies and the MSW Program share a commitment to social work education and provide equal opportunities through the provision of field practicum sites and practicum instruction.

- Field practicum should present opportunities for the students to become knowledgeable about social welfare and social work practice within the larger community and should include opportunities to become sensitive to broad issues and trends in social welfare services.
- Agencies and institutions selected as field practicum sites provide environments that are reflective of the standards established by National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for personnel practices and interactions.
- Field practicum will provide students the opportunity to engage in cooperative and collaborative interdisciplinary practice.
- Agencies selected as field practicum sites agree to provide one hour of one-on-one supervision per week.
- Field education is evaluated based upon demonstration of achievement of the MSW Program objectives.
- Field practicum experiences should assist in preparing students for leadership roles in the future.

To this end, the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology has developed a graduate curriculum for both classroom instruction and field practicum that provide for the study of generalist and advanced clinical areas that prepares students for professional social work practice.

### **FIELD EDUCATION GOALS**

The overall goals of field education are:

1. To provide experiential opportunities in which core skills, associated with professional communication and interactions can be developed.
2. To provide professional experiences and educational supervision through which self-direction and awareness can be developed.
3. To promote an ecological practice perspective that regards the intersectionality of people in relationship to their environment within an historical and cultural context.
4. To provide opportunities for the integration of social work knowledge, values, and intervention skills with sensitivity to special populations (i.e., ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age, and national origin).
5. To provide opportunities for understanding and internalizing social work values, ethics, and principles into a professional practice perspective.
6. To provide opportunities for understanding and applying biological, sociological, behavioral theories, and research methodologies in the delivery and evaluation of practice and development of knowledge.
7. To provide an appreciation for the interrelationship of historical and contemporary expressions of injustice and discrimination.

8. To provide understanding of social policies and service delivery systems, and consequent appreciation for ways in which professional social workers can provide leadership in advocating and promoting needed change.
9. To advocate and effectively build collaborative relationships with allied professionals in interdisciplinary settings.

### **INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Field education occurs concurrently with classroom instruction. The integration of theory and practice in the orientation and seminar classes are emphasized through three avenues:

***Field Orientation SOWK (578):*** This course orients students to the field education requirements and core social work skills. During this two-day orientation, instruction is held regarding the field placement process, the roles of the field faculty, field policies and procedures, the development of the learning contract, professionalism and standard of conduct, and a brief introduction to the DSM-5.

***Field Seminar Class (SOWK 678, SOWK 757, & SOWK 787 sequences):*** The seminar class is taken concurrently with the student's field placement. The two-hour class is interactive in nature. The seminar provides a forum for mutual support, case analysis, discussion of ongoing concerns, and peer learning. The class acts as a bridge between the field work experience and academic course work to ensure the proficiencies in the following core competencies:

***Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior***

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

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

***Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice***

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

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

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

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

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

***Field liaison:*** The field faculty liaison acts as a mentor and ombudsman between the university and the student's field placement. The assigned liaison is responsible for facilitating the field seminar classroom experience. The liaison is responsible for visiting with the student once quarterly at their assigned field placement agency. Additional visits can be held as needed. The liaison is also available to help student's problem-solve concerns that may arise during practicum.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There are many key personnel involved in facilitating MSW field education. Each person, from the professor to the field instructor, to the student, performs an essential role, thus enhancing the well-being of the whole program. The following is a description of the roles and responsibilities of the components involved in field education:

1. Director of Field Education
2. Field faculty liaison                      nnhj b jhb
3. Field Instructor
4. Field Education Committee
5. Student's Field Education Responsibilities
6. Responsibilities of the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology to the Agency
7. Responsibilities of the Agency to the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology

## **DIRECTOR OF FIELD EDUCATION**

The Director of Field Education is a faculty member of the LLU Department of Social Work and Social Ecology and as such, reports to the Chairperson of the Department. The Director is responsible for the coordination of practicum instruction.

Specific coordination responsibilities are:

1. Developing and accessing of practicum facilities.
2. Preparing the student for the practicum through Field Seminar and Field Orientation.
3. Placing students in their respective practicums.
4. Providing to agencies significant information pertaining to the operation and development of the educational program, including the orientation and training of field instructors.
5. Assigning of field faculty liaison to agencies.
6. Planning innovations which will enhance practicum instruction.
7. Managing changes in practicum placements.
8. Maintaining and storing practicum records.
9. Overseeing the submission of practicum grades based on the recommendations of the field liaison.

10. Resolving concerns and problems related to all areas of field placement.
11. Developing, maintaining, and ensuring standards for field education.
12. Revising and updating the Field Education Manual when necessary.

### **FIELD LIAISON**

The Department of Social Work and Social Ecology designates field liaisons who serve as representatives in the field on behalf of the Department. They are responsible for teaching a field seminar section of up to 12 students and monitoring those students' field placement. Specific responsibilities include:

#### **Teaching seminar:**

- Field liaisons will be provided a syllabus to following for each segment of their assigned practicum sequence, e.g., SOWK 757A, SOWK 757B, & SOWK 757C.
- Specific pedagogy is up to the discretion of the liaison, but student activities must remain within the course structure described in the assigned syllabus.
- Tracking attendance and completion of course assignments will be recorded through the CANVAS shell of the assigned course.
- All communication specific to the assigned seminar section will occur through the CANVAS course shell.
- Liaisons will report any student performance concerns to the field director and field committee when appropriate.

#### **Monitoring students' field placement:**

- Liaisons will begin monitoring student placement once a student has been matched with an agency and referred out to schedule an agency interview.
- If a student's interview is unsuccessful then the liaison will notify the field director and field committee (if in session). They will also assist the field director in re-matching the student for a new agency interview.
- All student related contact should be recorded in the contact log on the student's profile page within IPT.
- Liaisons will meet with the student and field instructor a minimum of one time per quarter.
- Liaisons will keep the agency informed on current and changing Department expectations regarding the content and structure of field instruction.
- Liaisons will consulting with the agency regarding the development of the student's field assignments and Learning Plan.

- Liaisons will monitor the proper and timely completion of all placement related field documentation each term. This includes, the agency orientation check list, the learning plan agreement, time logs, process recordings, and the field practicum evaluation. Any unresolvable concerns relating to documentation will be reported to the field director and field committee (if in session).
- Liaisons will confer with the student and the field instructor concerning the student's experience and performance in accordance with the Department's educational expectations.
- Liaisons will confer with the agency about the student's progressive assignments.
- Liaisons will deal with special learning problems.
- Liaisons will monitor the student's conduct to ensure that it is in keeping with University standards.
- Liaisons will communicate with the field instructors about the school's curriculum and any changes in the MSW Program.
- Liaisons will assist in resolving problems between the student and field instructor or other agency personnel.
- Any unresolvable concerns will be reported to the field director and field committee (if in session).

**During field site visits, the field faculty liaison may not share information about a student's academic progress or classroom behavior(s) with the field instructor without written permission from the student.**

## **FIELD INSTRUCTOR**

Field instructors serve in the capacity of monitoring and being responsible for the overall tasks and duties performed by the student. The emphasis of practicum instruction is on the development of sound educational experiences for the student based on reaching their identified educational outcomes. In working toward this, the field instructor assumes three functions: (a) administrative, (b) educative, and (c) supportive.

### *Administrative Functions of the Field Instructor*

1. Assigning tasks that will best meet the educational needs of the student that can be developed in relation to the student's capacity to carry out the function of the agency.
2. Meeting MSW Program requirements (i.e., attending meetings for field instructors, writing evaluations on student performance, and submitting recommended grades).
3. Keeping the field faculty liaison informed about the student's progress and raising questions as needed.
4. Providing feedback to the Department regarding various components of the curriculum and the appropriateness of the placement in helping plan the future use of the placement.
5. Advocating for the student to gain access to learning experiences within the agency and the professional community.

### *Education Functions of the Field Instructor*

1. Assuming overall responsibility for developing the student's practicum assignment.
2. Assessing the educational needs of the student.
3. Establishing with the student learning objectives that address the student's specific needs and interests.
4. Making available to the student appropriate learning experiences in relation to each type of educational outcome.
5. Helping the student to learn and integrate theoretical knowledge based on the field instructor's knowledge and experience.
6. Providing an educational climate that challenges the student to expand professional skills, knowledge, and values.

### *Supportive Functions of the Field Instructor*

1. Orienting the student to the agency, its history, function, policies and procedures, and target populations.

2. Informing the student about the strengths and limitations of the agency and the community's service delivery system.
3. Working closely with the student in the actual delivery of service.
4. Integrating the student's work with that of agency personnel.
5. Scheduling the student's work week and assisting the student in meeting professional responsibilities and using time appropriately.
6. Providing one hour of formal weekly scheduled supervision with the student as time for teaching, as well as offering emotional support.
7. Providing regular feedback to the student about her/his performance in the practicum.
8. Providing quarterly feedback through the Educational Outcome Assessment form at the end of each term.

### **FIELD PRECEPTOR**

There are some agencies that may assign both a field instructor as well as a preceptor to be involved with the student. A preceptor may be responsible for task assignments; feedback to the assigned field instructor on student performance; help orient the student to the practicum site (including, but not limited to, review of policies and procedures); and provide information on community resources and relationships. A preceptor's role is supplemental to the assigned field instructor and consequently their scope of practice is limited. The field instructor retains the primary and overall responsibility for the student's learning and evaluation.

### **FIELD EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Field Education Committee is chaired by the Director of Field Education and consists of three other faculty members within the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology as well as all active field liaisons.

Specifically, the Field Education Committee is responsible for:

1. Reviewing and updating field policies and procedures.
2. Ensuring CSWE competencies are integrated into the Learning Plan, outcome evaluation, and classroom content.
3. Resolving problems and addressing all field related concerns.
4. Advising the Director of Field Education in the planning, staffing, and evaluating of the Field Education Program and field agencies.

## **STUDENT FIELD EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Department of Social Work and Social Ecology regards each student as an adult learner, capable of recognizing her/his learning needs and assisting in shaping the educational process. This philosophy is exemplified by the student's responsibilities within a practicum assignment.

The student's responsibilities include the following:

1. Using the field education as an opportunity to enhance and extend her/his academic programs.
2. Assuming professional responsibility and appropriate accountability for assigned client services and other agency activities.
3. Participating in weekly supervisor conferences with the field instructor. This includes:
  - a. Preparing an agenda.
  - b. Presenting material representative of interventions with clients.
  - c. Sharing reactions and preparing questions about the practicum experience.
  - d. Discussing new learning needs with the practicum field instructor.
4. Participating in selected agency activities (i.e., staff meetings, conferences, in-service trainings, and committee work) when these are not in conflict with courses, seminars, or other academic commitments.
5. Obtaining agency approval for the use of case material or records outside the agency (e.g., maintaining accepted standards of confidentiality).
6. Informing the field instructor of classroom assignments that relate to practicum instruction.
7. Conferring with the field faculty liaison about learning experiences and any problems and/or concerns related to the practicum assignment.
8. Timely completion of all documentation relating to field practicum.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MSW PROGRAM TO THE AGENCY**

1. Consulting about the assignment of individual students to the agency to ensure appropriate learning opportunities that fit the agency's service functions.
2. Providing the field instructor with information about the student, the curriculum, and school policies.
3. Assisting the field instructor through consultations and conferences.
4. Designating a member of the faculty to serve as liaison to the agency.
5. Planning periodic meetings with field instructors to integrate practicum instruction with the total curriculum.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGENCY TO THE MSW PROGRAM**

1. Admitting the student into field practicum without regard to age, race, religion, gender, lifestyle preference, or national origin.
2. Recognizing the student as a developing professional, thus, assigning tasks appropriately.
3. Providing a qualified field instructor who has sufficient time and expertise to develop the student's learning experiences, prepare, and conduct individual student conferences (minimum of one hour weekly), attend school-sponsored meetings, and complete quarterly evaluations. An MSW field instructor must have an MSW degree from a CSWE accredited program and two years full-time post-master's social work practice experience.
4. Providing adequate facilities and equipment appropriate to the student's needs and assignments.

# **AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM<sup>1</sup>**

Integral to the profession of social work is the concept of experiential training for the graduate student. This experiential learning opportunity is guided through the Field Education Program. Students are placed in a variety of settings consistent with the social work profession, objectives of the MSW Program, and the mission of the University. The Program is designed to give each student a generalist and subsequent advanced clinical practicum experience. Practicums are enhanced through a weekly interactive seminar class. Several requirements are expected of students by the Department to enhance the field education learning process. These are documented in the following sections:

## **FIELD ORIENTATION**

All generalist and advanced standing year practicum students are required to attend an orientation training prior to the start of their field practicum experiences. This training will typically be held the week prior to the beginning of the school year. Topics for the training will include professional conduct expectations, overview of field education policies and procedures, brief overview of the DSM-5, introduction to generalist practice principles, engagement skills, self-care, instruction in personal safety, and an introduction to the Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) software system.

All advanced clinical field practicum students are required to attend a half-day reorientation training where students will review field education paperwork requirements, orient themselves to advanced standards of professional conduct, review of program policies and procedures, and an orientation to the IPT system.

## **PROCESS FOR SECURING A FIELD PRACTICUM**

The process of securing a field placement involves a tremendous amount of collaborative work between the Director of Field Education, faculty liaisons, students, field agency staff, and community partners. It is imperative that a student disclose during the field application process (first or second year) information that has a direct bearing on their suitability to work in a child welfare, health, or mental health environment. (See Background Check policy in the MSW Student Handbook.)

All students are expected to complete the Field Education application by the established deadline. Students must be available to complete field hours on weekdays during normal business hours.

In terms of starting the process for securing a field placement, the Field Director reviews field applications and a matching interview appointment is established with either the Field Director or a faculty designee. It is during this meeting that students are matched to a prospective agency. Once a match has been determined, a referral to the prospective practicum site is made. Students will be given the agency contact information and will initiate contact with the agency to arrange a preplacement interview.

Students are prohibited from, independently (on their own) initiating contact with a prospective field practicum agency. Failure to comply with protocol may result in the student becoming ineligible to interview at additional agencies and will be referred to the Academic Standards Committee for review.

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<sup>1</sup> All field practicum forms are available on IPT.

Failure to complete the Field Education application or submit the application by the assigned deadline may result in a significant delay or failure to begin practicum at the assigned time.

#### First Year (Generalist) Student Placement Process

Students entering the generalist practicum will be contacted in person or via LLU email beginning in January of the current academic year by the Director of Field Education to initiate the field practicum application process. A summary of the placement is as follows:

1. Confirmation of acceptance into the MSW Program is received by the Director of Field Education by the MSW Admissions Coordinator.
2. The Field Education Administrative Assistant contacts the student to arrange for an orientation to the field education tracking software and instructions on how to complete the field education application. The student is responsible for completing the application for the Generalist Year Field Practicum and for attaching a current resume.
3. Once the application is complete the administrative assistant will schedule the student to meet with the Field Director or faculty designee for an agency matching interview. During this interview, the student's education and work background are reviewed along with determining career goals and areas of interest (i.e., mental health, child welfare, etc.).
4. The field director will review the available practicum slots with the student and select a best match. Once a match is made a referral form will be sent to the agency, student, and field liaison (if one has been assigned). Once received, students are advised to call the agency to set up a preplacement interview. Students will only be referred to one agency at a time rather than multiple placements. It is the student's responsibility to contact the agency for a preplacement interview, to keep the Director advised as to the time and date of the visit, and to provide general feedback regarding the interview process. The Director of Field Education will forward to the agency the Placement Agreement Form which indicates whether the student will be accepted. Upon receiving information regarding acceptance or denial, the student is then contacted by the Director regarding the status of placement. If accepted at the agency, the student will subsequently sign the Field Practicum Agreement form during their field orientation (SOWK 578). Students are expected to maintain active communication with the Director of Field Education during this process in order to prevent delays in the placement process.
5. Students who are not accepted after interviewing at their third practicum assignment will meet with the Director of Field Education and the MSW Program Director to discuss readiness to enter a field placement and options for the Program. Students who demonstrate a basic incompatibility with and/or inability to perform the Program's field practicum requirements, may be dismissed from the Program.

#### Second Year (Advanced clinical) Student Placement Process

Students begin their Advanced Clinical Practicum selection process the January prior to beginning their second-year practicum. The Director of Field Education will visit current seminar classes and communicate with students via LLU email the process of securing a placement including the application for the Advanced clinical Year Field Practicum. A summary of the placement process is as follows:

1. Students are to submit a resume and the application for Advanced Clinical Year Field Placement by the assigned deadline.

2. The field applications are reviewed by the Director of Field Education or designated faculty member and matching interviews are scheduled.
3. During the matching interview, students will be orientated to the placement process and will discuss their interests, experience, qualifications, and review scope of work at current placement site.
6. The student is subsequently provided with the name and contact person at a potential agency placement. It is the student's responsibility to contact the agency for a preplacement interview, to keep the faculty member advised as to the time and date of the visit, and to provide general feedback regarding the interview process. In some cases, the agency interviewer is responsible for contacting the faculty member with a placement decision. Upon receiving this information, the student is then contacted by the faculty member regarding the status of placement. **Students are expected to maintain active communication with the Director of Field Education during this process in order to prevent delays in the placement process.**
4. Students who are not accepted after interviewing at their third practicum assignment will meet with the Director of Field Education, who will then convene a meeting of the Field Education Committee and make a referral to the Academic Standards Committee for a disposition to be made. Students who demonstrate a basic incompatibility with and/or inability to perform the Program's field practicum requirements, may be dismissed from the Program.

Student requests to interview at a specific agency or with a population will be taken into consideration during the matching interview process, however it will not be automatically granted. The amount of time it takes to secure a placement varies depending on numerous factors (i.e., agency openings, number of students the agency may accept, work and vacation schedules, etc.). In general, most field placements are secured by June but it is not uncommon to secure a placement in late summer/early fall.

Students interested in interviewing with an agency that has not been preapproved as a field site may submit the name and phone number of the agency administrator to the Director of Field Education for further exploration. Students are **not** allowed to conduct an independent search for a field practicum. **Students who do not follow the administrative policies of the Field Education Program may forfeit their eligibility for placement.**

## **TIME REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Full-time Main Campus Students***

Full-time first year students are required to complete 16 hours per week in their field placement starting the fall quarter of their first year in the Program. Students complete a total of 480 hours in field practicum. Second year students are expected to complete 20 hours per week for a total of 600 hours in field practicum. Students complete a total of 1,080 hours of field practicum during the MSW Program.

### ***Three-year Part-time Main Campus Students***

Part-time generalist students are required to complete 16 hours per week in their field placement starting the fall quarter of their second year in the Program. Students complete a total of 480 hours in field practicum. Third year students are expected to complete 20 hours per week for a total of 600 hours in field practicum. Students complete a total of 1,080 hours of field practicum during the MSW Program.

### Four-Year Part-time Main Campus Students

Four-year part-time generalist students are required to complete 16 hours per week in their field placement starting the fall quarter of their second year in the Program. Students complete a total of 480 hours in field practicum. During year four, students are expected to complete 20 hours of advanced clinical practice per week for a total of 600 hours in field practicum. Students complete a total of 1,080 hours of field practicum during the MSW Program.

### Hybrid Students

Hybrid students are required to complete 8 hours per week of generalist practice in their field placement starting the fall quarter of their first year in the Program. Students complete a total of 480 hours in their generalist field practicum sequence. Starting spring quarter of the advanced clinical sequence, students are expected to complete 12 hours per week for a total of 600 hours in field practicum. Students complete a total of 1,080 hours of field practicum during the MSW Program.

### Advanced Standing

The field practicum for Advanced Standing students begins in the summer quarter following their admission into the MSW Program. Advanced Standing (non-stipend) students are expected to complete a total of 800 hours in field practicum averaging 18 hours per week over the course of four quarters.

### Dual Degree Students

Dual degree students enrolled in the combined MSW - Criminal Justice or MSW - Gerontology Program are required to complete an additional 200 hours beyond the expected 1080 hours of field practicum (for a total of 1280 hours). Full-time dual degree students are expected to begin their second-year practicum in the summer quarter following completion of their first year in the Program. Part-time dual degree students begin their practicum after completing the second year in the Program.

### Block Field Practicums

In special circumstances, students may petition to complete the first-year practicum as a block placement. Block practicums are completed within three months rather than the traditional nine months. The required 480 hours of a first-year field practicum are completed within this time frame. To be eligible, students must have successfully completed **all of the generalist curriculum and cognates**, be in good academic and behavioral standing, and demonstrate a proficient ability in generalist practice skills. Block practicums must be completed during the summer prior to entering the Advanced Clinical practicum. Block practicums are only granted with permission from the Director of Field Education and the Field Education Committee. Neither Advanced Standing students nor dual degree students are eligible to complete a block field placement.

## **FIELD SEMINAR CLASS**

Concurrent with each field practicum is a seminar course which is required of all field students, and encompasses a minimum of 20 hours per quarter of group interaction. The purpose of the seminar course is to provide a forum for discussion of practicum experiences and to integrate theoretical and practicum knowledge obtained from the field agency and course work. In addition, each student is expected to participate in role-plays, simulation of client issues, treatment planning, methods of intervening with clients, and exploring the roles/dynamics of a treatment team. These experiences are intended to assist

students in their development of specific practicum competencies. Students are expected to attend all scheduled seminar classes and complete all assigned readings and assignments in order to receive a passing grade for this class. The seminar is graded on a “pass/fail.” However, a “pass” grade is based on the proficiency of at least receiving a “B” in required assignments for the class.

### **INTERN PLACEMENT TRACKING (IPT)**

The MSW Program utilizes the Intern Placement Tracking software system to facilitate the management of all field placements and tracking of field forms. In using this system, students will be able to complete required field forms. Field instructors will be able to complete field assessments providing feedback immediately to the participating student. Students will be assigned an identification (ID) number at the field orientation class (SOWK 578). Students will then need to set up a password to access the system.

### **FIELD EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND OUTCOMES**

Two tools are used to identify and measure the students’ educational goals and outcomes specific to the students’ field education experiences: (a) the Learning Plan Agreement Form, and (b) the Educational Outcome Assessment (Field Evaluation). In addition, other performance measures utilized include the field seminar class assignments (i.e., case presentations, written assignments, and the Wholeness Portfolio).

#### *Learning Plan Agreement*

Students enter the MSW Program with different learning needs and levels of practice experience. The Learning Plan addresses major performance categories as outlined under MSW Program goals and CSWE competencies. The Learning Plan also helps to identify individual student needs and educational activities to guide the student in meeting the educational competencies of the field practicum. In addition, the Learning Plan is a tool for the field instructor to identify and measure competencies and strategies toward goal attainment. It is developed through a **collaborative process** between the student and field instructor, and is to be completed by the end of the **third week** of the academic quarter. Identified activities include field experiences that will provide opportunities to learn and practice skills in intervening with clients. Under each competency, a minimum of five activities (measurable tasks) are outlined that the student is expected to achieve during the year. The Learning Plan is written to encompass activities for the entire year. If additional activities are added to the Learning Plan, an addendum must be completed. A new Learning Plan is completed for each year that a student is in field placement. Copies of both the first- and second-year Learning Plans are maintained online using the IPT. The IPT can be accessed by going to <https://www.alceasoftware.com/web2/login.php> and entering the login and password provided by the Department. The student is strongly encouraged to download a hard copy of the Learning Plan for their personal record.

#### *Field Evaluation: Educational Outcome Assessment*

The purpose of the Educational Outcome Assessment (Field Evaluation) is to provide an evaluation of the student's progress in field placement. The Educational Outcome Assessment measures the practice behaviors linked to the nine Social Work Competencies that describe the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for competent practice. The document is to be completed and submitted through IPT by the field instructor at the end of each quarter. As in the case of the Learning Plan, the student should download a copy of the Outcome Evaluation for their personal record.

## **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICUM SEMINAR CLASS**

As a supplement to the field practicum and to enhance experiential learning, students participate in concurrent field seminars during both the generalist and advanced clinical years of the MSW Program. Provided weekly in small group settings under the direction of the students' field faculty liaisons, these seminars are designed to deepen and integrate the learning occurring in students' field practicum. These seminars also support dialogue regarding a broad range of professional issues along with the opportunity to focus on and discuss various practice issues. Seminars utilize a variety of interactive teaching methods including: (a) role-plays, (b) demonstration of specific interventions, and (c) case presentations. These experiences are tools to enhance a student's acquisition of skills appropriate to their progression through the MSW Program. Students are encouraged to videotape their use of skills and techniques and then present these to their seminar group for review and critique. Any presentation of videotapes from the students' field sites would require an appropriate client release of information. The field seminars provide the context for application of the Wholeness Portfolio that begins during the first quarter of the generalist practicum and concludes in the final quarter of the advanced clinical practicum. Students are required to complete all assignments and attend all seminar classes in order to receive a passing grade for each field practicum experience (see the attendance policy in the MSW Student Handbook). The seminar is graded on a pass/fail. However, a pass grade is based on the proficiency of at least receiving a B in required assignments for the class.

## **WHOLENESS PORTFOLIO**

Incorporated into the field seminar is a virtual professional Wholeness Portfolio that students begin developing during the first quarter of the generalist practicum and concludes with the completion of the advanced clinical practicum. The virtual Wholeness Portfolio is a tool to assist students in identifying goals for their career and organizing educational materials such as resumes, advanced clinical papers, and any academic item(s) that exhibit the students' accomplishments. Documents or references that identify client information are never included in the virtual portfolio. During the students' final quarter in the MSW Program, they will present their completed portfolio and discuss future plans for employment and further professional development. This is seen as facilitating closure to the Program and a final state of reflection on their graduate school experience.

## **EDUCATIONALLY BASED PROCESS RECORDINGS**

It is a requirement that all students complete educationally based process recordings weekly. Students are to submit one process recording per week beginning the second week of each academic quarter. Process recordings are to be submitted weekly to the field instructor and will be reviewed during supervision. Formats of process recordings vary depending upon the agency's preference and the student's job maturation level. Examples of process recording formats will be reviewed with new students during Field Orientation (SOWK 578). Process recordings can be downloaded through the IPT system to be completed and submitted via hard copy to their field instructor.

## **TIME LOGS**

Each student will maintain documentation on the number of hours and the types of activity undertaken during each field practicum experience. Students will log their field hours in the IPT. This documentation will be reviewed and monitored by the University Field faculty liaison during the quarter. Students are encouraged to keep a hard copy of all hours completed in practicum.

## FIELD EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS

During the first year of field practicum, the emphasis will be on developing “generalist” practice competencies. This means utilizing a systems framework to understand the many issues that impact on a client's functioning (bio-psycho-social-spiritual dimensions). Also, students will be learning basic interviewing and interventions skills. It is not an expectation of the Department that first year students learn to formally diagnose clients utilizing the DSM-5. However, some agencies may require students to be familiar with diagnostic categories and may expose students to diagnostic practice.

### BASIC EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL FIELD EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

The primary goal for all our agency partners is to provide students with practice, education, and experiences enabling them to demonstrate all CSWE competencies. This can be done through the following:

1. Opportunities to utilize consultation with agency professionals, to take initiative regarding problem solving dilemmas, and to provide the opportunity for the student to participate in multidisciplinary interactions.
2. Develop awareness of community resources and the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of specific resources used by the agency including collaboration with community agencies.
3. Be exposed to a range of social work practice activities, specifically psychosocial assessments. This can include diagnostic classification, goal setting, and consultation. Additional responsibilities include development of treatment strategies, networking, case management, and opportunities for varied treatment modalities, such as crisis intervention, time-limited and long-term treatment, and group treatment.
4. To experience a diversity of client populations including gender, age, race, socioeconomic class, and disabilities.
5. To have a minimum of one hour of supervision per week. One hour per week should be in traditional one-on-one supervision with additional time being made available to the student as needed. Group supervision may supplement individual supervision but **cannot** replace individual time in supervision.

#### First Year (Generalist) Practicum Expectations

In the first year of field practicum, students are expected to complete the assigned number of hours given their program option with a minimum of 50% of their weekly field hours in direct practice areas, with the exception of the first term where adequate time should be dedicated to learning the organization's policies and procedures and collaborating community organizations. Direct social work practice is the application of social work theory and/or methods to the resolution and prevention of micro, mezzo, or macro level problems experienced by individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations in the context of social work values and purposes. The remaining hours may be spent in supervision, agency meetings, community agency networking, collaboration, and documentation time. The following are general expectations and guidelines for student caseload assignments which may vary depending on the type of agency and client population.

1. Preliminary orientation is expected to be completed within the first 32 hours of placement and caseload assignments are to begin within the first 48 hours. An Orientation Checklist will be

completed through the online field practicum tracking application and sign by both the student and field instructor. Ongoing agency didactic training may be incorporated into the regular field practicum hours. The faculty liaison will ensure compliance of these requirements.

2. Students are to be assigned the following: (*Note: When an agency is not able to meet this expectation, the Field Liaison will be notified and a plan to assist the student in meeting the competency will be developed.*)
  - a. One to six ongoing individual cases per quarter. The first-year student is expected to apply problem solving approaches, conduct biopsychosocial assessments, and understand systems perspectives. The cases assigned should be appropriate for the student to selectively apply such theoretical approaches.
  - b. One to three family cases per quarter involving family intervention or case management services. It is recognized that the term "family" may apply to a variety of familial patterns. Should a student not have the skills developed yet to effectively work with a family, it is strongly encouraged they first observe either a senior clinician providing family work or their direct supervisor/field instructor.
  - c. One 6 to 8-week group experience (can be crisis/time-limited). This experience should begin no later than January to ensure adequate time for completion. The student is expected to co-facilitate a group experience. If a group experience is not available, the field instructor should consult with the field faculty liaison about the possibility of organizing a group experience at a related facility. Group experiences may be varied such as psychosocial groups, educational groups, socialization groups, etc.
  - d. One long-term case at minimum. The duration is left to the discretion of the field instructor based on the nature of the facility, taking into consideration that the student should have the opportunity to monitor the psychosocial adjustment of the client, over several months if possible.
3. The student will actively participate in weekly supervision. This includes discussing case management, problem solving, enhancement of the therapeutic process, and student self-awareness.
4. Students will experience case conferences, in-service training, and/or staff meetings.
5. Students will be exposed to the termination process for both students and clients.
6. Field instructors will review weekly process recordings completed by the student to enhance their understanding of the clinical process.

### Second Year (Advanced clinical) Practicum Expectations

In the second-year practicum, the emphasis for students is on developing diagnostic skills and utilizing more advanced interventions in working with individuals, couples, families, and/or groups. The caseload typically involves working with progressively more complex problems. Certain placement sites may require students to diagnose clients using the DSM and documenting goals and interventions using an electronic charting system. In the second year of field practicum, students are expected to fulfill a minimum of 50% of their field hours in direct practice experiences. Direct clinical practice is defined as the ability to clinically engage, assess, intervene and evaluate practice with individuals, families, and groups. The remaining hours may be spent in supervision, agency meetings, community agency networking, collaboration, and documentation time. Generally, students in the clinical specialization will be placed in behavioral health agencies, residential settings, hospitals, or other specialized nonprofit

agencies. Students are to be individually supervised at a minimum of one hour for every 20 hours while in their practicum. The following are expectations and guidelines for student caseload assignments. The guidelines may vary slightly depending on the type of agency and client population.

1. Preliminary orientation is expected to be completed within the first 40 hours of placement and caseload assignments are to begin within the first 60 hours. Ongoing training may be incorporated into regular field practicum hours. An Orientation Checklist will be completed through the online field practicum tracking application and signed by both the student and field instructor. The faculty liaison will ensure compliance of these requirements.
2. Students are to be assigned: *(Note: When an agency is not able to meet this expectation, the Field Liaison will be notified and a plan to assist the student in meeting the competency will be developed.)*
  - a. Ten to twelve ongoing cases per quarter. The advanced clinical student is expected to apply therapeutic case management skills, intrapersonal and interpersonal theories, treatment intervention strategies, develop treatment plans, and apply diagnoses using the DSM.
  - b. Two to three cases involving family intervention, therapeutic case management, or direct therapeutic interventions. It is recognized that the term family may apply to a variety of familial patterns.
  - c. One 10 to 12-week group experience (can be crisis/time-limited). The student is to function as either a lead therapist or as a cotherapist actively facilitating the group process. For new groups, the student may be given the responsibility for designing the content and recruiting for the group. For ongoing groups, the student is expected to learn the dynamics and structure of the group. In both circumstances, the student is obligated to learn interactional processes and group analysis. Group experiences may be varied such as psychosocial groups, educational groups, socialization groups, etc.
  - d. One long-term case at minimum. The duration is left to the discretion of the field instructor based on the nature of the facility, taking into consideration that the student should have the opportunity to monitor the psychosocial adjustment of the client over several months.
3. Students will participate in case conferences, in-service training, and/or staff meetings.
4. The student will actively participate in weekly supervision. This includes discussing case management, problem solving, enhancement of the therapeutic process, and student self-awareness.
5. Students will be exposed to the termination process for both students and clients.
6. Field instructors will review weekly process recordings completed by the student to enhance their understanding of the advanced clinical process.

### **BLOCK FIELD PRACTICUMS**

Block field placements entail completing an entire year of the traditional generalist fieldwork practicum within 12 to 14 weeks and are available for only a limited number of students. Block placements are completed during the summer quarter. Students with exceptional circumstances that have prohibited the completion of the generalist field placement during the regular academic year are eligible for block field placement consideration.

To petition a block placement, students must submit in writing a request to the Director of Field Education who then presents the proposal to the Field Education Committee for review. The Committee makes a formal motion to accept or deny the request. The Director of Field Education will contact the students with the Committee's decision. Block placements are only approved if the student meets the following criteria:

1. Students must have completed all of the MSW generalist curriculum and cognates.
2. Student is in good academic and behavioral standing and currently enrolled in the MSW Program.
3. Student does not have significant outside commitments that would impact on being able to complete the block within the prescribed time frame.
4. No disciplinary actions pending for either academic work or behavior.
5. Has previous or concurrent work, volunteer, or practicum experiences in the field of social work.
6. Students in a block field placement are expected to complete the same academic and field requirements as those in a traditional 9-month placement (i.e., total number of process recordings, 50% of time in direct practice, outcome assessments, etc.). However, the requirements are to be met within a 3-month time period.

#### **PAID FIELD PRACTICUMS**

The majority of field practicums are unpaid. There may be occasions where a field agency will offer a stipend or payment as part of the practicum. Rates of pay vary tremendously depending upon the practicum agency's budget. Other requirements may include an early start date, mandatory agency orientations, or an extended end date.

#### **OPTION FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN FIELD PRACTICUMS**

Federal Work-Study money provides for students an additional means of augmenting students' financial aid and in some cases, may be used as pay for practicum hours. Eligibility for Work-Study is determined by the University's Office of Financial Aid following federal guidelines for nondiscrimination.

#### **FIELD PRACTICUM POLICIES**

1. Students are assigned to start field practicum based on their academic curriculum planning guide (i.e., two-year program track, three-year program track, four-year program track, or three-year hybrid program track).
  - a. Full-time students are required to complete a practicum during each of the two years enrolled in the program.
  - b. Three-year part-time students complete a practicum during the second and third years of study.
  - c. Four-year part-time students may complete a practicum during the second and third years of study or during the third and fourth years of study.
  - d. Three-year hybrid students will complete practicum in two 60-week sequences.

2. Students who find that they must defer or alter the field practicum requirements of their academic plan due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, personal emergency, etc.) must discuss the issue(s) with their academic advisor, their field liaison, and the Director of Field Education. The student must submit a request for an alternate curriculum plan to the Academic Standards Committee. The request must be specific and include:
  - a. A proposed curriculum plan for completing practicum and concurrent program requirements.
  - b. The academic year in which the proposed plan is to be implemented.
  - c. Delineation by the student of her/his understanding of the impact that the delay will have on completing the MSW Program (i.e., the projected graduation date).
3. Field practicum is contractually arranged with participating agencies by the MSW Program. These agreements require the appropriation of considerable agency resources in staff expertise and time to provide an environment capable of supporting the learning expectations of professional social work practicum. As such, all students are expected to remain in the same field practicum site for the entire academic year for which the assignment is made. Any student who discontinues her/his practicum assignment prior to the end of the academic year (or before all requirements are met) for any reason **may** be required to begin the entire field practicum experience again. It is crucial that students remain within their assigned field site in order to maximize their learning and minimize any impact upon their assigned client population. This recognizes the nature of developmental learning inherent in professional social work practicum, and the time needed for students to demonstrate competent practice skills.
4. Any student that withdraws from a practicum course and is not in good standing may not be allowed to re-enroll in field practicum.
5. The special circumstances necessitating the discontinuance of a field practicum must be discussed with the field faculty liaison, academic advisor, and Director of Field Education. The field faculty liaison and academic advisor will propose the specifics and timing of re-entry into the field practicum sequence, with approval from the Director of Field Education and notification to the Academic Standards Committee, so that appropriate arrangements can be made for the restart of the field practicum within MSW Program guidelines.
6. Prior to the student's re-entry into the field practicum sequence, a meeting will be held with the student, Director of Field Education, field faculty liaison, and academic advisor. This will determine the student's readiness to re-enter a practicum, review audit requirements, and to finalize any outstanding arrangements.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. Are background checks required for students in field practicum?

*Background checks are required by the University for all students who have been accepted for placement within all LLU entities. The majority of field agencies require background checks, Live Scans, and/or fingerprinting prior to the start of the practicum. Background checks from the University and field agency legally cannot be shared with one another. Consequently, most students will end up completing two background checks (University and field agency). In the event that the field agency does not assume the financial cost of the background check, then the student assumes complete financial responsibility.*

*It is imperative that students speak directly with the Director of Field Education regarding any prior convictions which could impact their ability to secure a field placement. Even with closed or expunged records a “hit” may sometimes appear on a background check, which could impact on field placement, stipend eligibility, and/or standing in the MSW Program.*

2. How are field practicums arranged?

*When obtaining a field practicum, the student must be accepted into the MSW Program. Students are given or emailed the “Application for Field Practicum” and must return the applications on the specified date. The Director of Field Education reviews the applications in order to assess the applicant’s education and work history. Subsequently, the Director of Field Education or designee will meet with the students on a 1:1 basis in order to explore a potential match for field placement. The student is then matched with an agency and given the contact information to arrange for a preplacement interview.*

3. If I am a part-time student, in what year do I begin field placement.

*Part-time students begin their first-year field practicum in the second year of their academic program.*

4. If I am full-time, when do I start field placement?

*Full-time students begin field placement in the fall of their first year in the academic program.*

5. Are there late afternoon or evening field practicum sites available?

*There are very few agencies that can provide late afternoon or evening field hours. A meeting with the Director of Field Education to discuss special circumstances is required.*

6. Can I complete field placement hours on weekends?

*With rare exception, weekend practicums are prohibited as weekend agency experiences do not facilitate students’ learning in meeting the MSW Program competencies.*

7. Do I have to work during school breaks?

*Some agencies may require a student to work during breaks in order to avoid prolonged interruption of services to clients (e.g., residential treatment facility, group homes, mental health clinics). It should be clarified during the preplacement interview whether the agency has such a requirement. Students are strongly encouraged to begin this dialogue with their field instructor immediately to determine if a modified practicum schedule needs to be developed for the holidays and school related breaks.*

8. Can I change a field placement?

*It is very difficult to change a field placement. Any request for a change in field placement needs to be made to the designated faculty liaison who will then share this request with the Director of Field Education. (See Field Practicum Policies section.)*

9. What if I don't complete my required hours during the quarter?

*If a student is short in completing the minimum required field hours, then they will receive an In Progress grade (IP).*

10. Do students have input into the selection of their field practicum site?

*Yes, the Director of Field Education or a field faculty member will meet with each student to discuss her/his learning needs and a potential site.*

11. When do Block Field Practicums begin?

*Block placements begin at the start of summer quarter and end in mid-September.*

12. What occurs if I am dismissed from my field practicum?

*In the event of a dismissal, your faculty liaison should be immediately advised of this situation. The liaison will discuss with you and the agency the reason for dismissal. Then the Field Education Committee will convene to determine and recommend a course of action. The Academic Standards Committee is also notified of the dismissal. Recommendations and final decisions vary depending upon the reason for dismissal.*

13. Am I required to drive clients in my personal automobile?

*Before students consider using their personal vehicle, the agency should make every effort to use agency vehicles. Some agencies may require transporting of clients, particularly of minors. Prior to transporting clients, students should meet with their field instructor to discuss safety (e.g., child lock, car seat, etc.) and security of both the student and client. It is strongly recommended that the student's field instructor or designee accompany the student when transporting a client. Further, students should contact their insurance carrier to ensure adequate coverage.*

# GRADING METHODS

Assessment is an integral tool of education. The process of assessment not only provides an avenue for discussion concerning performance, but it also enables both the field instructor and the student to examine progress made toward reaching specified learning objectives and outcomes. Without this tool, it would be difficult to determine the educational growth of the student.

## OVERVIEW

The ongoing evaluation of a student's performance is an integral part of the field instructor's role. To ensure the continuous nature of the evaluation process, both weekly supervision and quarterly assessment conferences are required.

## WEEKLY SUPERVISION CONFERENCES

The weekly supervision conferences help the student identify performance strengths and weaknesses, review process recordings, review case issues/dynamics, and evaluate progress toward achieving goals identified in the Learning Plan Agreement (LPA). If there are any difficulties in maintaining regularly scheduled supervision conferences, this should be immediately brought to the attention of the faculty liaison. The field instructor is required to be an **MSW with two years post graduate experience and must have completed at least eight hours of Field Instructor Training.**

## QUARTERLY ASSESSMENT CONFERENCES

The LLU field faculty will complete a minimum of three agency visits during the academic year. In the fall quarter, site visits will occur within the **first 2 to 3 weeks** of the start of the practicum placement. Subsequently a follow-up phone consultation with the field instructor will be conducted during the latter part of the fall quarter. For winter quarter, onsite visits will take place between **weeks 2 and 3**. During the spring quarter, onsite visits typically take place between **weeks 6 and 8**. The onsite meetings will focus on the student's progress during the quarter as well as reviewing process recordings and times sheets. At the end of the quarter, the field instructor and student are responsible for ensuring the submission of the Educational Outcome Assessment form through the online field practicum tracking application. The student should keep a copy of the outcome evaluation and time sheet for their records.

## PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

There may be times when a field instructor has concerns about the performance of a student beyond the routine learning experience. Either personal issues or problems in job knowledge or skills may affect a student's performance. Where there are concerns about performance, it is expected that field instructors follow a progressive disciplinary action plan. The following steps are recommended:

Step 1: The instructor discusses the concern directly with the supervisee to try and reconcile the identified areas of performance difficulty. At this stage, it is not required but it is recommended for the faculty liaison to be consulted. In the event a problem has a significant impact on performance (agency protocol and mandates not being adhered to or followed, or clientele being negatively impacted) the faculty liaison must be notified.

Step 2: If the issue continues, the instructor is to give the supervisee a “verbal” warning and contact the faculty liaison. A copy of the verbal warning is to be given to the faculty liaison. The field instructor is to consult with the faculty liaison to determine whether the faculty liaison needs to intervene at this step. If there is a determination made that the faculty liaison should be involved, then a joint meeting is to be scheduled between the three parties within seven calendar days. The liaison is to contact the Director of Field Education for consultation and the matter is also referred to the Field Committee for discussion.

Step 3: With a continuation of the problem, the next step would entail a mandatory joint meeting with the field instructor, faculty liaison, and the student. At that time, a decision would be made whether the problem could be resolved with closer supervision and monitoring or whether an addendum to the Learning Plan needs to be implemented. The purpose of an addendum is to **identify the specific learning needs of the student that continue to challenge the student, and the steps necessary to promote professional development.**

Step 4: When it has been identified that an addendum needs to be written to the Learning Plan, the Field Committee is to be advised of the problem and make recommendations for the content areas that should be included in the addendum. These would include the following:

- a. Identification of the specific objectives that have not been met, or have been marginally met.
- b. Specific activities to assist the student's development and time frame for completion.
- c. The responsibilities of the student in the completion of the activities and the responsibilities of the field instructor and field faculty in assisting the student (see Grading Policies).

The addendum will be written by the faculty liaison in collaboration with the field instructor and the Director of Field Education, and cosigned by both the student and the faculty liaison.

Step 5: Finally, should the problem continue, the matter will be referred to the Academic Standards Committee to develop a corrective action plan (see Grading Policies). A corrective action plan is written when a student has "not attended to the requirements of a Learning Addendum or for whom a serious situation or problem identified that has immediate ethical consequences which may affect the well-being of the student and/or clients. In these cases, the student may be placed on academic and/or professional probation" (see LLU MSW Student Handbook - Disciplinary Actions).

Documentation related to the above steps are placed in IPT and as appropriate in the student's academic file. There may be occasions when the field instructor immediately suspends or terminates the student's field placement. In either case, the faculty liaison is to be immediately notified by the field instructor. The faculty liaison subsequently notifies the Director of Field Education who will then convene an emergency meeting with the Field Committee. The Committee will review the issue(s) leading to suspension or dismissal and make recommendations and a disposition on the matter.

### **GRADING POLICIES FOR FIELD PRACTICUMS**

1. The Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading system applies to all field practicum and seminars (SOWK 757A, B, C; SOWK 787A, B, C). These courses require a B proficiency to receive a Satisfactory (S) grade.

2. The recommendation of a grade for the field practicum is made by the field seminar class instructor (who in almost all instances is the liaison to the student). The Director of Field Education assigns final grades. Grades are based upon three criteria:
  - a. Student's performance and participation in the seminar class.
  - b. Completion of required assignments for the seminar.
  - c. Student performance in the agency practicum as reflected in the written evaluation completed by the field instructor and reviewed by the field faculty liaison.

The seminar course is worth 50% of the total grade, with the field practicum assignments worth 50% of the remaining grade. Unsatisfactory performance in either of these areas may result in a grade of U (see Unsatisfactory Grade in LLU MSW Student Handbook).

3. In Progress (IP) Grade

- a. **In Progress Grade for Satisfactory Work:** An In Progress grade signifies that a portion of the required course work or practicum requirements have not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period. This grade is usually given for unforeseen but justified reasons, and when there is a strong likelihood of course completion.

It is the responsibility of the student to bring pertinent information to the field liaison and to reach agreement on the means by which the remaining course requirements will be satisfied. Agreement to the conditions for removal of the IP grade shall be put in writing by the field liaison in IPT. A final grade is assigned when the practicum and seminar course requirements have been evaluated as acceptable. An IP grade cannot exceed five quarters.

- b. **In Progress Grade with an Addendum to the Learning Plan:** An IP in field practicum may also be given if an Addendum to the Learning Plan needs to be in place signifying that the student has not met one or more of the competencies for the practicum. The competency requirements identified by the seminar field instructor must be completed prior to the end of the next quarter of field practicum. The completion date for practicum requirement(s) will be indicated by the Addendum to the Learning Plan. The hours completed during the quarter in which the IP grade is given will count toward the total number of completed field practicum hours upon meeting all course requirements.

The Learning Addendum should be developed by the field liaison in collaboration with the field instructor. The purpose of the addendum is to identify the specific learning needs of the student that continue to challenge the student and the steps necessary to promote professional development. The addendum will include the following:

- 1) Identification of the specific objectives that have not been met, or have been marginally met.
- 2) Specific activities to assist the student's development and time frames for completion.
- 3) The responsibilities of the student in the completion of the activities and the responsibilities of the field instructor and field faculty liaison in assisting the student.

If it is identified that the student's learning needs are beyond amelioration during the period when the addendum is in place, an unsatisfactory (U) grade will be given and the student removed from the practicum agency.

- c. **In Progress Grade with a Corrective Action Plan:** If it is found that a student with a grade of IP has made some progress during the additional quarter but not sufficient enough to have removed the IP, the Academic Standards Committee, based on information provided by the Field Education Committee, will recommend to the SBH that the student be placed on probation. The Academic Standards Committee shall convene and develop a Corrective Action Plan.

A Corrective Action Plan may include the following: (a) personal therapy, (b) additional coursework, and/or (c) other items deemed appropriate to assist the student in ameliorating identified problems. Under these circumstances, the grade of IP continues and additional practicum time is required beyond the minimum designated for the practicum year. In some cases, the entire practicum (i.e., the total number of hours) may need to be repeated at a new agency setting. In this instance, the field instructor at the new practicum site will be informed of the circumstances surrounding the reassignment as well as the learning outcomes needing attention. If the entire practicum is repeated, the student must also audit all related seminars. The IP will be removed once the student demonstrates the expected level of skill commensurate with the practicum year being completed.

If at any time during the probationary quarter it is determined by the Program and agency that the student's learning needs are beyond amelioration, the student will immediately be dismissed from the field practicum with potential recommendations to the Academic Standards Committee for academic amelioration, leave, or dismissal from the MSW Program. The student's continuation in other course work will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

4. Unsatisfactory Grade
  - a. An Unsatisfactory (U) grade in field practicum may be grounds for dismissal from the Program, as successful completion of field work is a requirement for graduation.

### **FIELD PRACTICUM ISSUES**

1. If students demonstrate a basic incompatibility with and/or inability to perform the Program's field practicum requirements, they may be dismissed from the Program. Students may demonstrate an overall pattern of incompatibility with, and/or inability through the following:
  - a. Students rejected by three or more agencies during the preplacement process for reasons related to inappropriate behavior and/or responses to questions in the agency interview (e.g., rigidity to agency expectations, not open to accepting the student role in the learning process, extreme withdrawn personality style, persistent incongruent affect, volatile and inflammatory responses, and persistent angry and hostile mood).
  - b. Student shows unwillingness to participate in the field placement process as demonstrated by turning down three placement sites within a given academic year.
  - c. Student demonstrates repeated incapability with the field learning process by requesting unwarranted practicum reassignment within a given academic year.
  - d. The standards of competency delineated in the Program competencies are not met.
  - e. Noncompliance with or demonstration of an inadequate level of skill outlined in the corrective actions provided by the Field Practicum Committee and/or, when applicable, the Academic Standards Committee.

- f. Persistent failure to appear at the designated practicum site at the prescribed time and/or days.
  - g. Consistent failure to meet agency deadlines.
  - h. Failure to complete agency assignments.
  - i. Violation of specific agency policy and procedures.
  - j. Violation of the professional Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.
  - k. Violation of LLU student policies regarding personal and academic conduct (see LLU Student Handbook).
  - l. Violation of professional performance standards of the MSW Program.
  - m. Personal issues which significantly impact the student's ability to meet agency or client obligations or needs.
  - n. Falsification of client records or fraudulent billing.
2. The following are considered areas of zero tolerance and will result in **IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL** from the Program:
- a. Dual relationships with clients (whether forced or coerced) including, but not limited to, personal friendships with clients; unauthorized transporting or contact with clients; relationships of a business or financial nature; sexual activity with clients including, but not limited to, kissing, fondling, or sexual intercourse.
  - b. Physical, verbal, or emotional threats directed toward clients, students, faculty, or staff.
  - c. Treating a patient while the student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  - d. Physical actions directed at clients, students, faculty, or staff, such as hitting, spanking, or slapping.
  - e. Illegal or unethical behavior that limits or takes away clients' rights or results in financial, material, or emotional loss for clients or gain for social work students.
  - f. Current illegal activities including, but not limited to, drug trafficking, persistent trouble with the law, possession of fire arms (see LLU MSW Student Handbook), fraud on admissions documents, sexual harassment, assault, inappropriate sexual conduct with clients, DUI, driving with a suspended license, intentional intimidation of others, or violation of the personal rights of others.
  - g. Failure to report previous criminal convictions and charges which have not been cleared from the individual's criminal record that may make practicum with specific populations or the bonding requirements of agencies impossible.
  - h. Sexual harassment (see LLU Student Handbook).

- i. Students are expected to maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 (B) throughout the course of the MSW Program and during the period in which they are enrolled in the field practicum sequence (see LLU MSW Student Handbook). (The complete MSW Professional Performance standards are found in the LLU MSW Student Handbook.)

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE AGAINST THE FIELD INSTRUCTOR**

There may be situations where a student believes her/his academic or personal rights have been violated by their field instructor. Examples may include disagreement over the content on the evaluation at the end of the quarter, disagreement over case assignments, disagreement over the quality of her/his work with clients, or personality conflicts which negatively impact the field learning experience.

- Step 1: It is expected that the student will first try and reconcile conflict by openly addressing concern(s) with their field instructor. A student is to make every attempt to use professional demeanor and respect in meeting with her/his instructor to problem solve.
- Step 2: If after talking with the field instructor and the problem continues, the student is to then discuss the matter with the faculty liaison. The liaison will decide in consultation with the student, possible ways of dealing with the conflict (i.e., alternative problem solving strategies, meeting with the field instructor). The liaison will document in IPT issues discussed and suggested methods of resolution.
- Step 3: In the event the problem is still not be resolved, then the student can request in writing to the Director of Field Education a review by the Field Committee for further disposition. There could be any number of possible recommendations made to the student or agency depending upon the severity of the issue(s). These could range from the faculty liaison more closely monitoring the placement, the student being changed to another field site, termination of the contract with the agency, or dismissal of the student from the Field Program. The result of the Committee's decision will be provided to the student in writing within 14 days of its referral to said Committee.
- Step 4: Should the student believe the action plan developed by the Field Committee does not adequately result in a solution to the issue(s), the student may then request in writing that the Chair and Program Director review the grievance. The Chair in consultation with the MSW Program Director may choose to refer the matter to the appropriate standing committee within the Department. The committee may reaffirm the decision, modify the decision, or overturn the decision based on subsequent information. The result of the committee's decision is provided to the student in writing within 14 days of its referral to said committee.
- Step 5: If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the Department, he/she may appeal to the Dean of the SBH (See LLU Student Handbook or academic grievance procedure).

# ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF FIELD EDUCATION

## INTRODUCTION

In order to accomplish the goals of field practicum efficiently, it is necessary to establish a series of guidelines. The guidelines, set forth through official policies and procedures, allow for effective administration of the Program.

## BACKGROUND CHECKS

Background checks are required by the University. Field placement agencies may also require background checks. Live Scans and/or fingerprinting may also be required prior to the acceptance and start of a field practicum assignment. All background checks must be completed in a timely manner and the student must successfully complete a background check prior to the beginning/starting of the field practicum. Students are strongly encouraged to speak directly with the Director of Field Education should there be any past convictions (misdemeanor or felony) or other violations. Even with expunged records, it is likely that such hits will be detected and could result in the delay or disqualification of the field practicum. Delays or disqualifications may have an impact on academic progress in the MSW Program and needs to be addressed immediately.

## HEALTH CLEARANCES

Field Agencies may require a student complete a health clearance, tests, or immunizations as part of the placement process. Students are expected to abide by the agency's requirements and provide documentation if appropriate. Students are responsible for any fees incurred if not covered by the field placement agency site.

## CHANGE OF FIELD INSTRUCTOR DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR

In the event that a student's field instructor suddenly takes ill, transfers, or resigns from the agency, the student needs to notify the field faculty liaison and the Director of Field Education immediately. A plan to transfer the student to a new field instructor must be developed and discussed in person with the student, field faculty liaison, and agency representative.

## AUTOMOBILE USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is required of all students who participate in the Field Program. Students are responsible for providing reliable transportation to and from the field agency. Students who do not drive must present a plan for transportation to the Director of Field Education for approval. In Southern California use of **public transportation to attend field practicum is NOT a viable option that supports students' success.** Attempts are made by the Director of Field Education and the field faculty to attempt to place students at a reasonable distance from their home. When this is not possible, students can expect an average driving time of 45 to 60 minutes to a field practicum site. Students must show proof of a valid California driver's license, automobile registration, and proof of automobile insurance. Students are to

maintain their automobile insurance coverage throughout the field practicum assignment. All costs associated with automobile use and maintenance is the financial responsibility of the student.

### **ATTENDANCE**

The student is responsible for observing regular agency working hours arranged by the field instructor. The student will keep a record of attendance and hours worked by using the Field Practicum Time Log form located on IPT. It is a requirement that the specified time requirements are met for each quarter. The Field Practicum Time Log should be completed each day the student is in their field practicum and reviewed each week by the field instructor. The field instructor is to initial at the bottom the Field Practicum Time Log that the review has been completed. This document will be reviewed by the field faculty liaison during on-site visits. At the end of each quarter, the Time Log is archived in the IPT system.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The student must adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and all agency policies regarding confidentiality. No related schoolwork, including class discussions and written materials, should contain client names or other identifying information. Information should be adequately disguised to preserve client anonymity and always be cleared through the field instructor.

When confidentiality cannot be adequately maintained, the student must obtain written consent for release of confidential information appropriate to the agency's policies and procedures.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AT THE AGENCY SITE**

During a student's field practicum, very sensitive information pertaining to clients will be discussed with your field instructor. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss with their field instructor agency policies relating to client confidentiality.

Issues to discuss include:

1. Determining whether messages can be left on a client's home phone.
2. Deciding which family members (if any) can be included in discussion about client(s).
3. Policy on faxing information about clients.
4. Determining what information can or should be shared with treatment team members.
5. Discussing what information can be written in chart notes about the client and family members.
6. Determining where confidential client's records are to be maintained.
7. Every effort should be made to not discuss clients in hallways, elevators, or other public areas.

## CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

One of the major foci in seminar class is discussion of client dynamics. This includes assessment of the client, major presenting stressors, treatment methodology, diagnosis, application of theory, and use of self. Given the very sensitive nature of the information being shared, it is imperative that the last names of clients NEVER be revealed in oral discussion or in any written material. Rather, a pseudonym should be used. If the student has any questions or needs clarification relating to confidentiality these should be addressed with the field liaison.

## CONFIDENTIALITY ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Students are required to maintain ethical practices in the use of social media. Students are to make every effort to refrain from posting any information regarding a client, a client's session, personal feelings about a client, or any related material on social networking sites regardless of how "disguised" the information may be. This is considered a direct breach of confidentiality and is unethical and unprofessional practice. Students who may be engaging in this practice should be reported to the Director of Field Education or to a member of the field faculty. Students who maintain their own social media sites should take careful consideration of their own practices and follow the suggested guidelines:

1. Students are not to accept "friend" requests from clients.
2. Students should activate all privacy settings so that clients cannot have access to personal information.
3. Students are to strictly follow all agency procedures and protocols regarding the use of social media.

## HIPAA

The Health and Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA) went into effect in April of 2003. This Act in-part strictly regulates confidentiality of client records. It is the responsibility of the student to know and discuss with their field instructor how the agency regulates and enforces policies pertaining to HIPAA. Violation of HIPAA would result in dismissal of a student from the agency.

## FIELD PRACTICUM DAYS AND HOURS

Field days and hours are arranged by mutual agreement between the student and the field agency. **Students are not allowed to complete additional hours per week or quarter toward the purpose of leaving the practicum site before the end of the current or final quarter.** Field days and hours may not conflict with the class schedule or other school requirements. Some portion of practicum hours may take place after regular hours if appropriate supervision is available at the agency.

There may be occasions when the field agency requires students to start a practicum experience prior to the beginning of the University's official academic quarter. Should this be necessary, the student **MUST be registered for field practicum with the University** (i.e., SOWK 757 for first year students or SOWK 787 for second year students) and have obtained financial clearance. The student must also submit to the Director of Field Education a proposed calendar of field hours for approval. The goal of the calendar review is to ensure that field hours are evenly distributed across the academic year.

In the event that an agency requires a student to begin early, the hours for the practicum will start accruing immediately towards the total number of hours required for that quarter **provided that the student has successfully registered and financially cleared**. The practicum requirement is that students complete 160 hours per academic quarter for the first year and 200 hours per academic quarter for the second year in practicum. This is the *minimum* standard and in some cases, students will exceed the minimum number of hours per quarter. Students are expected to remain in field practicum and will not reduce the hours at their practicum site without permission of the agency and the Director of Field Education. Students are to be additionally reminded that the field practicum is an integral part of the MSW education and that having the mindset of just “doing the time” can be detrimental to the practicum learning experience.

The agency, student, and field faculty liaison should monitor the student's accrual of hours toward the minimum requirement for each academic quarter (i.e., 160 hours for first-year students, or 200 hours for second-year students), understanding that a balance between continuity of services to clients and students' rights must be sought. Thus, the agency may have a student continue seeing clients once the minimum practicum hours have been met in order to avoid significant interruption of services. The student may carry over a maximum of **20 practicum hours** to any quarter within the same academic/practicum year. Given this, an agency that requires an early start date must present a carefully constructed plan to ensure that the student's time will not exceed **20-hours. This plan is to be presented to the field faculty liaison**. In either of the above situations where a student has completed hours prior to the end of the quarter (per agency mandate), then the student may stop attending the practicum at the agency prior to the end of the University's academic quarter **ONLY** when the following has occurred:

1. The field instructor has given permission for an early ending date for the quarter in question in collaboration with the faculty liaison; **AND**
2. The early ending date has previously been requested and approved by the Director of Field Education.

All students, however, are required to attend the Department's weekly field seminar class for the duration of the quarter regardless of the ending date of a field practicum.

### **HOLIDAYS, RELIGIOUS EVENTS, MANDATED FURLOUGHS, TIME OFF**

The student may observe holidays, religious events, agency mandated furloughs, and time off although this time will need to be made up in contact hours. The student must keep in mind that time off needs must be correlated with agency needs for continuity of client care. This need for continuity may require adjustment in time off hours. The student and the field instructor at the agency will negotiate the number of hours the student is to work. Further questions regarding these issues are to be addressed first to the field faculty liaison. The Director of Field Education only becomes involved in the event a conflict arises.

### **ILLNESS OR PRACTICUM INCIDENTS**

A student does not receive sick day credit in field practicum. Students must make arrangements to make up the time missed from field due to absences from illness during the academic quarter or some other period of time by special arrangement with the field instructor, field faculty liaison, and/or Director of Field Education. In the event of absence or illness, the student is expected to telephone the field instructor at the beginning of the field day to report the reason requiring absence from the practicum.

In the event a student is injured during field practicum hours, the student is to immediately contact both the field instructor and the field faculty liaison who will immediately contact the Director of Field Education. The Director of Field Education will then discuss the situation with the MSW Program Director. A course of action will be developed and communicated directly to the student, field instructor, and field faculty liaison to ensure the well-being of the student. All parties will document the incident.

### **SOCIAL WORK CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS**

Attendance at social work conferences and meetings occurring during field practicum may be counted as field hours at the discretion of the field instructor. The student may be required to complete a process recording and discuss their experience in supervision.

### **NASW LOBBY DAYS**

Students are strongly encouraged to attend NASW Lobby Days in the spring as a part of an integrated field experience. Students are responsible for arranging time off, well in advance, from field practicum to attend. Credit for field hours is **not** given for attending the event.

### **SOCIAL EQUITY**

#### *Nondiscrimination*

The LLU MSW Field Education Program is committed to equal opportunity, promoting diversity, and works to ensure that the program is executed without discrimination. Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to immediately notify the Director of Field Education and the MSW Program Director.

#### *Sexual Harassment*

The LLU MSW Field Program is committed to providing learning experiences free of sexual harassment. Should a situation of sexual harassment arise, the program will comply with LLU guidelines. A student who is feeling uncomfortable, receives threats, or believes they are being sexually harassed or discriminated, should notify the Director of Field Education and MSW Program Director immediately.

### **STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY**

The University and the MSW Program support the integration of all qualified individuals into the Program and are committed to full compliance with all laws regarding equal opportunity for all students with a disability (see LLU Student Handbook and University Catalog for policies regarding students with a disability). It is the student's responsibility to disclose to their field instructor needed accommodations. Students should also inform the Director of Field Education of any accommodations that may be necessary during field education at the field site.

### **INSURANCE**

The University has assured, through the University/Agency contract, professional liability coverage for the faculty liaison, student, or any other University representative interacting with the agency on behalf of the University. This coverage is to be considered primary, and the University discourages students and representatives from obtaining their own liability insurance. Liability insurance commences upon the student registering for classes for the quarter in which they are completing field placement.

The liability insurance coverage only extends to students during their assigned field placement days and hours. It does not cover students who choose to remain at the agency after completion of their field placement. If an agency independently hires a student during summer hours or non-practicum hours, then liability insurance through the University would not be a covered benefit. Any questions regarding this coverage should be addressed to the Director of Field Education.

Students are required to arrange and provide transportation to and from their field practicum sites. When using a personal vehicle, each student is required to provide documentation of a current driver's license and automobile insurance.

Failure to notify the Department of changes in insurance coverage is grounds for removal from practicum and/or dismissal.

### **SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE**

An area of increasing concern in the field of social work is recognizing and trying to ensure to the greatest extent possible the safety of students in field placements. Students need to recognize that given the nature of social work, there may be a potential for risk to their personal safety.

In order to minimize risk, field instructors are required to discuss, as part of their orientation with student's agency, safety protocols. Field instructors are further required to have students initial on the Orientation Checklist, having reviewed pertinent safety issues within the work environment.

Students can also minimize risk by being aware of their environment. Within the office, students should consider following:

1. When seeing a new client, advise your field instructor of the time and date of the appointment.
2. When seeing a client with a history of violence, drug use, or psychosis, both advise your field instructor of appointment time and consider having either your field instructor or another senior staff person join you in session.
3. Review the policy and procedure manual of the agency particularly relating to safety management.
4. Give to agency staff your schedule.
5. Avoid working at nights unless authorized by the agency.
6. Ask for an escort to your car if working at nights or in an environment where safety is a concern.
7. Do not give to clients your home phone number or cell phone number.
8. Avoid wearing valuable jewelry or jewelry with sharp edges to your placement site.
9. Do not have potentially dangerous objects in the office (sharp or heavy objects).
10. Avoid giving clients personal information (place of residence, spouse, and children).
11. Be aware of the agency's emergency exits.

12. Know where an agency disaster kit is located.
13. Be aware of verbal and nonverbal cues of escalation.

If working in the field (home visits), in addition to the above listed safety guidelines, students should also try to observe the following:

1. Give your field instructor the time, date, and place of your scheduled visit.
2. Inform the secretary or other staff of your scheduled visit.
3. Call in to your field instructor or other staff during the day.
4. Do not park your personal car in front of a client's home.
5. Do not accept food or drinks from clients.
6. Go out on initial interviews with your field instructor or other senior designated staff.
7. Carry a cell phone.
8. Have a full tank of gas along with road maps.
9. Know your destination and route.
10. Lock your car and regularly maintain it in good condition.
11. Know the location of the police department.
12. Be alert and aware of gut feelings.

# **SELECTION OF FIELD PRACTICUM AGENCIES AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS**

## **FACTORS IN SELECTION OF AGENCIES**

The settings for practicum instruction reflect the breadth of options for professional social work. Selection criteria for practicum sites include the following:

1. Consumer practices and services that are in keeping with the values and ethics of the social work profession.
2. Commitment to contributing to the professional education of MSW students.
3. Support for the MSW Program's, mission, goals, and competencies reflected in the articulation of generalist practice and the Program's advanced clinical specialization.
4. Willingness to provide direct practice and/or advanced clinical practice experiences appropriate to the students' educational level, Program requirements, and leaning needs.
5. Willingness to provide adequate personnel in terms of qualifications, supervision of direct services, time for instruction, and support for educational integration.
6. The provision of adequate office space, clerical aids, and, when possible, travel reimbursement for the student.

In order for an agency to be considered for a practicum site, the Director of Field Education or designee conducts an in-person visit at each prospective field agency in order to determine the agency's commitment to the mission, goals, and objectives of the MSW Program; ability to meet students' learning needs; and to determine the appropriateness of agency commitment and resources. Provided the agency meets these criteria, the Director of Field Education coordinates the completion of an Agency Information Form along with a Contract for Advanced clinical and Instructional Programs Form. The contract is signed by both agency personnel as well as University administrative faculty as a means of ensuring a mutual understanding of field policies and responsibilities.

## **FACTORS IN SELECTION OF FIELD INSTRUCTORS**

An MSW field instructor must have a MSW degree from a CSWE accredited program and two years full-time post-master's social work practice experience. It is important that the field instructor's assignments are adjusted in order to have sufficient time for the development and implementation of the student field practicum.

If a qualified MSW is not employed by the host agency, arrangements may be made with other agencies or with the MSW Program to provide this educational component. It is permissible for a non-MSW to assist only in the daily implementation of the educational outcomes and have the title of preceptor. However, the provision of a preceptor does not replace the requirement of a qualified MSW level field instructor. The following are essential qualities needed for a field instructor:

1. Demonstrated skill in practice.
2. Demonstrated commitment to the education of social work students.
3. Independence, creativity, and flexibility in the use of professional self.

### **FIELD INSTRUCTOR TRAINING**

The MSW Program provides an orientation for all field instructors. The purpose of this component of the Program is to orient field instructors to the mission of LLU, the philosophy and operation of the field work program, and to provide an opportunity for field instructors to enhance their skills in the area of field instruction and supervision.

The field instructor training is held before the beginning of fall quarter. Included in this orientation is training related to the development of the Learning Plan Agreement Form and the process of evaluating the student. Other areas discussed include characteristic expectations of field performance needs of adult learners, techniques of field instruction and supervision, termination issues, specific content of legal issues in supervising students, dealing with problems in student behavior, and cross cultural dynamics. A certificate of completion will be provided to participants who attend the entire training series.

### **DEVIATIONS FROM A TRADITIONAL FIELD PRACTICUM MODEL**

When unique circumstances directly impact a student's ability to complete a traditional field practicum schedule, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Director of Field Education immediately. The process begins with written notification to the Director of Field Education and will then be reviewed by the Field Education Committee. Each circumstance will be independently evaluated and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

# SPECIAL SITUATIONS

From time to time special situations arise, directly or indirectly affecting the Field Practicum Program for a particular student. Several of these situations are addressed below. In all instances, including those listed below and others that may occur, the special situation must be cleared through the Director of Field Education.

## FIELD PRACTICUM AT THE STUDENT'S CURRENT JOB LOCATION

It is possible for a student to obtain a placement at the agency where she/he currently works providing that the educational experience includes substantial "new learning" in the areas of knowledge, values, and skills. Students requesting a field practicum at a current job site must complete a Use of Employment Agency as a Field Practicum Site form. The proposal will describe the student's current work assignments and identify how fieldwork activities will be significantly different from employment responsibilities. The proposal will be reviewed by the Field Committee. Students receiving approval to complete their practicum assignment at their current job site will be allowed this approval for one academic year only. One year of field practicum must be completed outside the student's job site.

In all cases, the following items will be reviewed by the Director of Field Education and approved on a case-by-case basis:

1. Social work practice can be clearly distinguished from other employment roles.
2. The employment site meets all MSW Field Education Requirements.
3. Change of primary work assignment where the practicum assignment for the student is vastly different from employment responsibilities, tasks, and activities.
4. Practicum field instructor must be different from the employment supervisor and must meet the requirements to be a MSW Field Instructor.

## CHANGE IN PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

The student enrolled in the MSW Program may seek a change in her/his field practicum when problems make continuation of the practicum an issue. It is the function of the student's designated field faculty liaison to review the request for a change in field practicum. Examples which might generate such requests:

1. Inadequate agency resources to support the field practicum (i.e., lack of student office space, lack of clients for student case, insufficient supervisory time, loss of practicum instructor due to illness, change of job, etc.).
2. Learning experiences in the agency are too narrow (i.e., the student lacks opportunities to work with individuals, families, and groups). Placement error based on needs of student or practicum site. For example, agency learning experiences are too advanced for the student, or the converse. It is more a problem of an unanticipated "mismatch" than a difficulty in student performance.

3. Agency reorganization. For example, during the academic year, the agency substantially changes its administrative structure that creates a chaotic situation for the student and adversely affects available learning opportunities.

### **PROCEDURE FOR CHANGE IN FIELD PRACTICUM SITE**

The student attempts to resolve the issues with the field instructor. If this is unsuccessful, the student is to submit in writing to the field faculty liaison a brief, specific review of the issues.

The faculty liaison, student, and field instructor meet to discuss the issues and explore alternative solutions. If a solution is not found within the agency, a request to terminate the practicum is then made to the Director of Field Education and the Field Education Committee.

The final decision regarding a change of field practicum is determined by the Director of Field Education and the Field Education Committee.

In most cases, students changing field practicum sites are not assigned a new field faculty liaison.

## REFERENCES

California Business and Professions Code; Division 2. Healing arts; Chapter 14. Social Workers; Article 3. Licensure § 4996.9. (2014)

Walsh, J. (2013, June 11). Direct Social Work Practice. Retrieved August 28, 2020, from <https://oxfordre.com/socialwork/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199975839.001.0001/acrefore-9780199975839-e-105>