



## **FIELD INSTRUCTION MANUAL**

### **BACCALAUREATE OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

ACCREDITED BY THE COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

### **MASTER'S OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

ACCREDITED BY THE COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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## SECTION I

**DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK  
DOVER, DE 19901-2277**

### **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Agency Field Instructors  
Agency Task Supervisors  
Faculty Field Liaisons  
Students

FROM: Director of Instruction

RE: Field Instruction Manual

The field instruction manual has been prepared for Agency Field Instructors, Agency Task Supervisors, Faculty Field Liaisons and Students and/or any other individuals who are involved in teaching students in the field. This manual includes policies and procedures that are related to the field practicum course.

This manual should be used as a primary reference regarding such issues as appropriate field practicum assignments, the learning contract and assessment of student performance. When addressing these and other matters, students, Agency Field Instructors and Faculty Field Liaisons should refer to the manual for initial guidance.

The faculty and staff are always available to offer assistance about any matter regarding field instruction. We are pleased that the manual reflects input from both Agency Field Instructors and students. To maintain its relevance and usefulness, feedback from students and Agency Field Instructors is essential and encouraged.

Finally, it is important to appreciate that field is a significant, impactful, and engaging part of social work education. It is where you practice all of the knowledge, skills, and values of your social work program, and learn to be a professional social worker in practice. This intensive focus on field education is unique in social work education, and is what makes it our signature pedagogy.

Thank you for your support and cooperation!!!

## **Introduction**

As conceived by the Department of Social Work, field and classroom-based instruction and assignments are complementary and mutually supportive parts of an integrated professional social work education curriculum. While it is vitally important to teach and conceptualize social work theory in class, field instruction should be viewed as the heart of social work education. As such, students must be provided opportunities to apply and fully integrate practice theories, concepts and principles in diverse settings with, and on behalf of, individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

For undergraduate students, the principal goal of field instruction is to prepare them for generalist practice guided by the core competences and practice behaviors. BSW students are expected to engage all client systems at the micro, mezzo and macro levels of social work practice.

For graduate students, the field practicum is intended to provide learning experiences that enable them to practice as advanced generalists. Field practicum assignments in the graduate program should teach students to: (1) demonstrate the ability to practice independently; (2) intervene with client systems of all sizes; and (3) effectively intervene in situations where there is significant risk to the physical and/or emotional well-being of the client. Students in the advanced year must demonstrate the capacity to intervene in complex situations at all levels of social work practice.

## **Field Instruction as Signature Pedagogy**

**Field instruction is the heart of social work education.** As the signature pedagogy, it provides baccalaureate and graduate students the opportunity to apply the knowledge, values and skills that are taught in the classroom in actual situations involving real client systems that seek to change in some self-determined manner.

The primary objective of field instruction is to develop and refine the student's understanding and application of micro, mezzo and macro practice skills at both the entry level (for BSW students) and the advanced level (for MSW students) with and on behalf of all client systems (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities).

Field instruction affords students the opportunity to take risks and to evaluate their own supervised practice within a structured and supportive environment. At the same time, students test their commitment to the profession's change agent identity. Through learning assignments that entail evaluating agency programs and services, students discover their capacity to: (1) advocate for programs and services that meet the needs of individuals; and (2) assist agencies to develop programs that address the needs of individuals. Field instruction also helps students develop the ability to advocate for a society that supports the emotional and physical well-being of all persons and communities locally nationally and globally.

## **The Place of Field Instruction in the Department of Social Work Curricula**

### **BSW Program**

Students enroll in field instruction courses in their Senior Year. Field instruction is concurrently with fourth year courses, which include two practice courses. To be eligible for placement in the field, BSW students must have passed all prerequisites and social work courses. Completion of these courses with a "C" or better is required before the student is considered for placement in the field. Students who were required to take courses offered by the Comprehensive Learning Center must complete the Center's requirements before entering the field. BSW students are required to take two field instruction courses (SCWK 450 and 451) during the same semester they take Issues in Social Service Delivery (SCWK 421) and Senior Seminar (SCWK 460).

### **MSW Program**

In the MSW program, field instruction courses are provided concurrently with the eight courses that comprise the practice sequence. Students who are not enrolled in the required practice courses cannot enroll in any field instruction courses. Students who are enrolled as part time students entering the program do not take field instruction courses during their first year.

### **Generalist Practice for Social Work**

BSW and MSW students are expected to practice in a manner reflecting generalist practice.

Generalist social work practice refers to an orientation to social work intervention that is not limited to one field of practice, one problem area, one specific practice setting, or reliance on a particular theoretical intervention framework. Generalist practice perspective assumes the capacity of the social worker to apply culturally competent tools and employ multiple theoretical frameworks to assess clients and to assist all client systems in their efforts to solve their problems regardless of agency setting.

Generalist social work practice requires the practitioner to transfer knowledge, values, skills, and theoretical frameworks from situation to situation and from setting to setting. Generalist practice also requires practitioners to consider and utilize the transactional relationship between the person and the environment. This requires that attention is focused simultaneously upon the individual's idiosyncratic problems and upon societal issues including, but not limited to, poverty, racism, and sexism that contextualize the person's circumstances.

While the generalist social worker provides services to anyone in need, special emphasis is placed on vulnerable populations who are oppressed because of their ascribed unequal social status in society (e.g., ethnicity, gender, age, disability, economic status, and/or sexual orientation). Thus, the generalist practitioner is concerned with promoting social justice and eliminating social and economic problems that inhibit certain individuals, groups, and communities from fulfilling even their basic needs. The generalist social worker addresses the

forms of oppression and discrimination listed above by utilizing concepts, principles, and processes grounded in the philosophy of strengths and empowerment.

### **Advanced Generalist Practice**

Generalist practice, at the advanced level, is demonstrated by the ability to intervene in situations involving multiple systems where there is significant risk to the physical and/or emotional well-being of the client system. In such situations the advanced practitioner utilizes multiple theoretical frameworks to reduce and/or eliminate the client system's vulnerability to critical outcomes. These outcomes can include significant harm, danger and/or death (as in the case of suicide or sexual abuse), diminution in services provided by the agency and/or the destructive ramifications of serious social problems (e.g., poverty, inadequate housing, and drug abuse) for communities. The social worker, at this level, is capable of either working independently or with minimal supervision, and providing the knowledge and skills to promote sustainable changes in policy and service delivery at the micro, mezzo and macro levels of practice.

In addition, advanced generalist practice is evidenced by the social worker's ability to influence the outcome of services to clients by assuming roles that require leadership skills, (e.g., administrator, program evaluator, community organizer) and the ability to mediate conflict and/or to provide consultation.

### **Field Instruction**

**Field instruction is the heart of social work education.** Field instruction gives baccalaureate and graduate students the opportunity to apply the knowledge, values and skills that are taught in the classroom in actual situations involving real client systems that need to change in some way.

The primary objective of field instruction is to develop and refine the student's understanding and application of micro, macro and mezzo practice skills at the entry (for baccalaureate students) or the advanced level (for MSW students) with, and on behalf of all client systems (individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations).

Field instruction permits students to develop their readiness for and competence in dealing with difference and to experience the impact of difference on both the client system and him/her.

In addition, field instruction affords the student the opportunity to risk one's self and to evaluate one's own practice within a structured and supportive environment. At the same time, students test their commitment to the profession's change agent identity. Through learning assignments that entail evaluating agency programs and services, students discover their capacity to: (1) advocate for programs and services that truly meet the basic needs of individuals and (2) assist agencies in developing programs that address the needs of individuals who are in trouble. Furthermore, field instruction is intended to help students to develop the ability to advocate for a society that really supports the emotional and physical well-being of all persons and communities.

### **Department Underpinnings**

Part of an academic unit based in a Historically Black College and University, the BSW and MSW curricula at Delaware State University is distinguishable from many of the graduate social work programs nationally. A key to comprehending the curricula's uniqueness is accepting and understanding that one may see the world differently as an African-American. Being Black in the United States dictates that those persons who are members of "protected minorities" and others who belong to groups that are targets for discrimination, violence and prejudice must, at times, redefine themselves in order to maintain some control of their reality(ies). This perspective provides a starting point from which to observe and act upon the issues and social realities facing other groups in American society whether they are poor whites, other people of color, sexual minorities, disabled persons, or people facing various forms of systematic discrimination and oppression.

The Department of Social Work has adopted five underpinnings that support its mission and purpose and strengthen its explicit and implicit curricula. These underpinnings, listed below, are also included on the Department's website and in the BSW and MSW Student Handbooks. The underpinnings and their corresponding definitions are:

1. **Strengths Perspective** – "Internal or external features and assets that, if identified, mobilized or enhanced may be used by a client system to achieve positive change."
2. **Empowerment Perspective** – "The process the social worker applies in order to help individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities obtain power so that they gain greater control over their well-being presently and in the future."
3. **Rural Perspective** – "The understanding that people who are nurtured and live in rural communities have unique folkways and mores that shape some of their expectations and behaviors differently than people from other milieus."
4. **Global Perspective** – "An approach to helping that embraces the commonalities and differences that exist personally, communally, culturally, and religiously that all citizens in the world share regardless of their place of birth or citizenship."
5. **A Black Perspective for Social Work Practice** – "A prototype for understanding the unique experiences and world views associated with being of African genetic origin in the United States that can be used in practice with other oppressed client systems."
- 6.

### **The Field Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (CSWE, EPAS, 2015)**

#### **Educational Policy 2.2—Signature Pedagogy:**

Field Education Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline—to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and



conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program.

The nine Social Work Competencies are listed below. Programs may add competencies that are consistent with their mission and goals and respond to their context. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, while the preceding statements represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

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

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers: make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context; use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations; demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication; use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and

mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers: apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels; present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers: apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

**Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers: use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research; apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers: Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services; assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers: apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers: collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies; apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies; develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to

effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers: critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies; apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies; use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes; negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers: select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes; apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes; critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

## SECTION II

### **Criteria for Selecting Field Placement Settings**

Agencies and institutions interested in establishing an affiliation with the Department of Social Work as a field practicum setting must meet the following standards and agree to fulfill the duties and responsibilities that are a component of the standards:

1. The agency provides a service to the community that meets a recognized need.
2. The depth and scope of the agency's services ensure that learning experiences reflecting Department of Social Work curricula and students' learning needs are assured.
3. Agency personnel who meet the Department of Social Work's qualifications for agency Field Instructors are available.
4. Individuals who provide field instruction must have available time to conduct weekly conferences with students, meet with Department of Social Work faculty, read and analyze student records and process recordings, collaborate with agency staff to develop learning experiences, and attend agency field instructors' meetings and seminars.
5. The agency will provide an orientation to the agency for all students placed in the agency regardless of a student's level of experience. The orientation program will focus on topics including, but not limited to, the agency's function, goals and objectives, policies, procedures, client population, funding sources, organization, and other relevant descriptors and processes.
6. The agency has adequate space and equipment for the student to carry out the assigned learning assignments (i.e., desk, telephone, record keeping supplies, etc.).
7. Agency stability is sufficient to provide an uninterrupted field practicum experience for at least one year.
8. The agency's approach to social work practice reflects the values and ethics of the profession of social work.
9. The agency demonstrates it has a record keeping system that can track the hours a student has devoted to the field work placement.
10. The agency's orientation to service delivery is compatible with the theoretical frameworks that undergird the Department of Social Work's curricula for the BSW and MSW programs. These frameworks include the department's five underpinnings for social work practice, strengths, empowerment, rural and global and a Black perspective.

11. The agency views its relationship with students as fulfilling an educative function.
12. The agency is committed to changing those conditions that are averse to the well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities.
13. The agency will provide the Department of Social Work access to the cases in which the student is involved without violating client confidentiality.
14. The agency will, when appropriate, allow students to conduct their research projects, which will help ensure that students engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

### **Field Placement Process**

*NOTE: Student cannot stay in the same field placement setting two years in a row. Students must experience a different learning setting and Field Instructor.*

### **BSW Students**

Planning for field placement for BSW students begins in the junior year. The Director of Field Instruction meets with the juniors at their end of the spring semester.

1. Explain and discuss the purposes and objectives of field instruction;
2. Review eligibility requirements for field instruction;
3. Describe the scope and depth of learning experiences the students will be assigned;
4. Distribute the Application for Field Placement.
5. Prior to completing the Application for Field Placement, students are instructed to talk with their academic advisor to determine that all prerequisites for field instruction courses have been satisfactorily completed. This appointment also provides the student an opportunity to discuss field placement options in relation to their own learning needs, career interests, and experiences.
6. Students are instructed to complete the Application for Field Placement and meet with their academic advisor and obtain their academic advisor's signature on the application for approval. After receiving the application along with signature for approval, the Director of Field Instruction gives student referrals for possible field placements.
7. Subsequent to the above meeting, the student arranges a pre-placement interview with prospective field placement agencies. The purpose of these interviews is to: (1) meet the individual who will provide field instruction; (2) learn about the agency in terms of history, objectives and client population; (3) receive information about learning opportunities the agency can provide; (4) provide personal background information; (5) discuss the student's strengths and weaknesses; and, (6) identify desired learning experiences.

8. Following each pre-placement interview, the student completes a Verification of Pre-Placement Interview form, which is provided by the Field Instruction Office.
9. The placement is confirmed when the student, the Director of Field Instruction, and the placement agency reach a mutual agreement regarding the student's placement.

## **MSW Students**

### **First Year MSW Students**

The field placement process for first year MSW students proceeds as follows:

1. Following confirmation that the student has been accepted to the MSW Program, full-time students are sent the Application for Field Placement. Students are instructed to return the application to the Director of Field Instruction.
2. The Director of Field Instruction will contact the student to discuss:
  - a) Skills - those acquired, to be acquired, and to be refined;
  - b) What he or she desires to learn;
  - c) Professional interests and career objectives.
3. The Director of Field Instruction will recommend placement opportunities and will instruct the student to arrange a pre-placement interview at each recommend site. The purposes of the interviews are to:
  - a) Meet the individual who would provide field instruction.
  - b) Learn about the agency in terms of history, objectives and client population.
  - c) Learn about learning opportunities the agency can provide that are relevant to the needs and interests of the BSW and MSW students.
  - d) Provide personal background information.
  - e) Discuss strengths and weaknesses.
  - f) Identify desired learning experiences.
4. If the student indicates acceptance of the field placement to the Field Supervisor, the Director of Field Instruction will contact the agency to confirm acceptance of the student.
5. The Director of Field Instruction will contact the student to confirm the placement.

## Second Year MSW Students

The placement process for second year MSW students includes the following steps:

1. The Director of Field Instruction gives the student the Application for Field Placement at the end of the fall semester.
2. The student meets with the academic advisor to confirm that he/she is eligible for placement in the succeeding semester and to discuss the issues delineated in Step 2 of the placement process for first year MSW students.

Proceed with Steps 3 through 5 in placement procedures for first year MSW students.

## Time Requirements and Policies for Field Instruction

### BSW Program

Students must complete a minimum of 200 hours per semester and 400 hours for the academic year. Students typically attend the field placement two days per week and complete 14 hours per week.

### MSW Program Online and Face to Face

Full time students complete the field course their first and second year of the program. Part time students complete the field course their second and third year of the program.

**a. First year** students must complete 200 hours per semester and attend field weekly. Students typically attend the field placement two days per week and have their placement 14 hours per week.

**b. Second year/Advanced standing** students must complete 250 hours per semester and attend field weekly. Students typically attend the field placement three days per week and must be in the field 18 hours per week.

Completing minimum time requirements before the end of the semester does not mean that students may discontinue attending the field placement agency. Since field instruction in the social work program at Delaware State University is organized according to a concurrent model, field and practice courses are taken simultaneously. **Note: Most agencies only have day time hours for students. It is the student's responsibility to manage time and make arrangements with their job.**

### Holidays

Students are entitled to holidays observed by the agency as well as the holidays that are listed in the University's catalog and Field Syllabus. If, however, the agency expects the student to report to the placement during a holiday that the University observes (e.g., Christmas break),



this expectation should be agreed upon by the student and the agency during the pre-placement process.

When taking agency holidays or university holidays, students should understand that the agency's holiday schedule and university's holiday schedule does not preclude the program's minimum time requirements for field instruction. Students must make up any missed field hours and meet the program's minimum time requirements.

**Official University holidays are:**

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Recess
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- Spring Recess
- Easter Recess

**Sick and Snow/Weather Days**

Students may not count holidays, snow/weather days, sick days, or other days they are not in field as field time. Students and the Field Instructor must negotiate a plan to make up field hours due to the student's sick time, family illness, holidays or snow/weather days.

**Absences from the Field Practicum**

Students are expected to perform fieldwork responsibilities with the same degree of accountability as in a paid position which includes the observation of all personnel practices established by the agency. Students are expected to be present at the agency as scheduled. Changes to schedules should be negotiated ahead of time. In the case of emergencies or illness, agency Field Supervisors and Faculty Field Liaisons should be notified directly as early as possible. Because successful fieldwork relies on students becoming an integral part of the agency and assuming meaningful responsibilities, students must realize that their absences can have effects on quality of service to the agency's clients. Repeated absences will affect the student's field performance and evaluations. Students are expected to work the required hours per week in the agency. Any time off for sick days, emergencies, weather related events, etc. must be made up by the student.

**Exemptions from Fieldwork**

There are no exemptions from Field Education based on prior experience. The Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education specifically state that academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practice. If a transfer student took field courses at another institution, field courses do not transfer at any time.

## **Problems within the Agency**

Should a student have serious concerns regarding an agency policy, the workload, responsibilities, or any other significant problem, the student should take the following steps:

- Discuss the problem(s) with the Field Supervisor and attempt to find solutions.
- If this is not successful, then communicate with the Faculty Field Liaison to assist in problem resolution.
- If the problem can still not be resolved, may contact the Director of Field Instruction to meet to discuss the possible need for a change in agency and/or to problem solve.

## **Changing Agency Placements**

Students will remain in the same placement for the entire two semester course sequence. It is important to not only learn certain tasks within an agency, but to also perform these tasks until they can be mastered. In general, students spend much of the first semester/term learning about the functioning of an agency and practice the social work skills during the second semester/term. Therefore, changes in field placements during the year can pose problems for the student and the agency. Ultimately, the decision to change student field placements lies solely with the Director of Field Education. If a student chooses to change agencies after consulting the field office, they will be required to complete the total number of required field hours for that term.

Field placements are to occur in the two sequential semesters (fall and spring) at the same agency. If an agency cannot fulfill its obligation to the University, the Director of Field Education may offer the student another placement without the need to repeat time already spent in the previous placement.

Withdrawal from a field placement without departmental approval is, in effect, withdrawing from the social work major. In such cases the student will not be allowed to enroll in fieldwork and practice courses unless they are readmitted to the program. The student must begin this process by formally reapplying to the program.

## **BSW Students**

1. The agency Field Instructor is responsible for recommending the student's grade for field instruction.
2. The final assignment of field instruction grades is the responsibility of the Faculty Field Liaison and Director of Field Instruction.
3. The minimum passing grade for all field instruction courses for BSW students is a "C". Receiving a grade below a "C" will require the student to repeat the course.
4. Students who are assigned the grade of "D" or below for Field Instruction I (SCWK-450) cannot register for Field Instruction II (SCWK-451) until the previous course is passed.
5. Students who are assigned an unsatisfactory grade for Field Instruction II (SCWK-451) are not eligible to graduate until the minimum grade of "C" has been submitted to the Registrar.

## **MSW Students**

1. The agency Field Instructor is responsible for recommending grades for field instruction.
2. The final assignment of field instruction grades is the responsibility of the Faculty Field Liaison and Director of Field Instruction.
3. The minimum passing grade for all field instruction courses for MSW students is “B.” Receiving less than a “B” will require the student to repeat the course.
4. Field instruction courses are taken in sequence. Thus, students who earn the grade “C” in a field instruction course are not permitted to enroll in the next field instruction course.
5. Based on the curriculum, students must take the practice course at the congruently with the field course.

## **BSW and MSW Students**

### **Educational Review Policies and Procedures**

The policies and procedures pertaining to educational review of student performance are based upon the belief that an assessment of student performance is a process with outcomes that reflect the performance of the student, the agency Field Instructor and the faculty of the Department of Social Work.

The Department of Social Work is committed to graduating students who display attributes that exemplify the knowledge, values and skills that are essential for competent social work practice. When a student’s behavior, either in the classroom or the field placement, demonstrates that either he/she is unable to assume responsibility for her/his own learning, evidences a lack of capacity to maintain professional relationships, and/or demonstrates an inability to internalize the profession’s ethics or values, a formal review of the student will be initiated.

When, on the basis of feedback from the agency Field Instructor, the Faculty Field Liaison believes that the student’s performance is minimal but not yet unsatisfactory, the Faculty Field Liaison will inform the student and the academic advisor in writing of the student’s marginal performance. The Faculty Field Liaison will also initiate the process described below. This process however is not used in situations where the student does not agree with a grade that has been assigned for a field instruction course.

### **Termination of Field Placement Policy**

#### **Student Initiated Termination**

If a student becomes dissatisfied with the placement, the student discusses his or her concerns with the agency Field Instructor and, if issue is not resolved, the Faculty Field Liaison will attempt to develop a written plan with all parties to continue the placement. The student may make a request, in writing, to the Director of Field Instruction to terminate the practicum placement and the Director will provide a decision based on the concerns of the student, the ability of the student and agency to work together for the remainder of the placement, and/or the

likelihood that the placement can have a successful outcome. In cases where an appropriate replacement cannot be made, as determined by the Director of Field Instruction, the student may need to drop the field education and co-requisite courses.

### **Agency Initiated Termination**

Termination also may be requested by the agency for reasons related to poor academic and/ or non-academic performance. In these cases, the agency Field Instructor will inform the Faculty Field Liaison of any behaviors on the part of the student that cause the agency Field Instructor to question if the student should remain in the agency. As soon as issues about the student's ethics, behavior, or performance in the field experience arise, the agency field instructor must consult with the Faculty Field Liaison regarding the noted problems so that they are addressed and, subject to the agency's agreement, a corrective plan of action is developed and implemented as expeditiously as possible. If the terms of the corrective plan of action are not satisfied within the specified time period either because the student did not, or could not, perform as delineated in the plan, the Faculty Field Liaison must notify the Director of Field Instruction that continuation of the field placement is in jeopardy. At this point, the situation must be reviewed in accordance with Department policies and procedures, e.g., academic review listed in Field Manual and Student Handbook.

To initiate termination procedures, the Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison must prepare separate written summaries of the events leading to the recommendation to terminate the placement. Copies of the recommendation must be provided to the student, the student's academic advisor, Program Directors and Director of Field Instruction. The Director of Field Instruction will advise the Program Directors and Chairperson of the Social Work Department who will convene a faculty panel to conduct an Academic Review to determine the student's continued standing in the program.

A student's field instruction placement may be terminated solely by the agency at its discretion for the following reasons:

1. Serious or repeated violations of the agency's policies and procedures.
2. Failure to disclose critical background information in applications forms, pre-placement forms, or during the interview process.
3. Exhibiting behaviors and attitudes inconsistent or at odds with the values of the profession.
4. Violation of professional ethics and standards for ethical practice.
5. Unexcused and prolonged absences from the field experience.
6. Attempts to harm oneself or others.
7. Any inappropriate and/or sexual relationship with an agency client.
8. Reporting to the practicum site under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
9. Other reasons as determined by the agency.

### **Dismissal Criteria**

The Department of Social Work has developed criteria and procedures for decisions that can lead to a student's dismissal from the program and to fail the field course. Any and all of the following criteria will result in termination from the BSW and MSW program:

1. ***Inadequate Academic Performance*** – The student consistently performs below average levels in basic education courses and/or social work required courses.
2. ***Little or No Evidence of Professional Responsibility*** – The student is consistently late in meeting academic or agency deadlines or fails to complete requirements.
3. ***Inappropriate Adaptation to the Goals of the Social Work Profession*** – Through attitude and behavior, the student demonstrates a lack of commitment to the profession of social work. As the student advances through the social work curriculum, the student is expected to identify with and develop a commitment to social work values and goals. Diversity is valued and students are expected to express a variety of opinions and ideas. The student should be receptive to new ideas and accept learning about a variety of approaches.
4. ***Inadequate Interpersonal Skills*** – The student is unable to relate to others appropriately and/or in congruence with the values, ethics, and beliefs of the social work profession, which includes faculty, other students, and clients. The profession of social work requires that one possess the ability to relate to individuals non-judgmentally and with warmth and sincerity.
5. ***Personal Problems*** – The student's personal or emotional difficulties consistently and significantly interfere with performance and/or learning. They may also deter this student from relating helpfully to clients and/or developing self-awareness for professional practice in social work.
6. ***Violation of the Code of Ethics*** – Each student is appraised of the requirement to adhere to the National Association of Social Workers Codes of Ethics of the University, department, and the profession.
7. ***Use of alcohol, drugs, and illegal substances or the inappropriate use of prescribed medication during the field process and while in the field placement-*** Each student will conduct themselves in a safe and professional manner at all times. Any student that consumes alcohol uses drugs or any illegal substance, or uses prescribed medication in an inappropriate manner will fail the field course. The student will be reported to the program director for possible termination from the program and will be reported to judicial affairs.

## **SECTION III**

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Field Instruction Office**

#### **Director of Field Instruction**

The Director of Field Instruction has primary responsibility for the management of the Field Instruction Office. This responsibility involves developing field placements that meet the criteria of the department, arranging students' field placements, monitoring the Faculty Field Liaisons' interaction with agency representatives, and involvement in decision making in any issues pertaining to students and the Field Instruction Office. The Director of Field Instruction reports to the Chair of the Department of Social Work.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. Works with the Field Staff to develop placements and to evaluate the quality of those placements.
2. Informs placement agencies of the educational objectives of Field Education and to provide a general overview of the social work curriculum.
3. Works with the Field Staff to coordinate and implement the placement process for students.
4. Works with the Field Staff to communicate to students information about potential placement agencies.
5. Is available as a consultant to Field Supervisors and Field Liaisons.
6. Intervenes when difficulties arise in field placements that cannot be resolved by the Field Liaison, Field Supervisor and student.
7. Monitors field seminars to ensure consistency with curriculum design.

#### **Agency Field Instructor**

Agency Field Instructors are selected by the agency executive or an agency program director in conjunction with the Director of Field Instruction. The Department of Social Work seeks to recruit Agency Field Instructors who have a Master's of Social Work Degree from an accredited school or department of social work, plus two years' experience. The following criteria are used to select agency field instructors:

1. A personal commitment to his/her own professional development and growth within a developing profession.
2. A working understanding of the agency's program(s) and methods of providing services

to clients.

3. The ability to teach knowledge, values and skills consistent with the Department of Social Work's curricula for the BSW and MSW programs, and the social work profession.
4. Support of the agency administrator.
5. Ability to evaluate student performance.
6. Ability to provide 1.5 hours of supervision weekly.
7. Ability to stimulate students in the learning process.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Attends orientation for field instructors.
2. Provides the student a suitable workspace and orientation to the agency, program and services.
3. Develops learning objectives and tasks for students that are consistent with the curricula of the Department of Social Work, maximizing the student's exposure to policies, experiences and cases where issues such as diversity, populations at-risk, values, ethics, policy, human behavior and research are relevant.
4. Teaches students social work practice within a theoretical framework that includes the knowledge, values and skills that undergird professional social work practice.
5. Structures assignments to help the student learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice (including practice with individuals, families, small groups, organizations and communities).
6. Creates with the student a learning contract that reflects the individualized learning activities to reflect the practice behaviors.
7. Provides on-going evaluation of the student's progress in meeting his/her learning contract practice behaviors and core competencies.
8. Helps the student integrate the Field Education experience with academic learning.
9. Coordinates the involvement of other agency staff with the student's learning experience.
10. Reviews and signs the student's timesheets, learning contract, process recordings,

evaluations, etc.

11. Attends two seminars for agency field instructors conducted by the Department of Social Work a semester.
12. Collaborates with the Department of Social Work regarding the students' learning needs, interest and progress.
13. Assesses student performance and progress at intervals designated by the Department of Social Work.
14. Prepares and submits formal student evaluations to the Department of Social Work.
15. Contributes to the curricula of the Department of Social Work to insure that course content is relevant to developments in the field.
16. Provides assessment of the field practicum experience by submitting the Agency Field Instructor Feedback Form.

### **Agency Task Supervisor**

Agency Task Supervisors are designated by the Agency Field Instructor for times when they are not on site. Agency Task Supervisors also are used when there is not a Social Worker that possesses an MSW on site. Agency Task Supervisors either report to the Agency Field Instructor or the Faculty Field Liaison.

1. The agency task supervisor is the on-site, day-to-day person who assigns the student tasks to be accomplished.
2. The agency task supervisor reports to the MSW agency supervisor for direct relevant task assignments and regularly scheduled updates about the student's performance.
3. The agency task supervisor is present for conferences with the student and the MSW agency supervisor.

### **Faculty Field Liaison**

The Faculty Field Liaison is a member of the Delaware State University faculty or an individual designated by the Department of Social Work who is responsible for monitoring and supporting students' progress in the field.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Acts as the communication link between the agency Field Instructor and the Social Work Department, once a student is assigned to an agency, regarding pertinent issues related to the student and Field Education curriculum.



2. Visits students in the field placement setting at least one time each semester.
3. Plans and conducts field instruction seminars for all students at least once each semester as indicated by the Director of Field Instruction.
4. Reviews learning contracts to insure that the content is consistent with the program's curricula and the student's level of ability and progress.
5. Assists the agency Field Instructor to plan appropriate learning experiences for students.
6. Insures that students are assigned learning experiences that will enable them to master the competencies.
7. Mediates disagreements between students and agency settings.
8. Reads each student's field practicum log and meets with the student to reflect on the logs and the student's progress in the field.
9. Collects timesheets.
10. Assigns the student's field instruction grade.
11. Attends field seminars for students.
12. Submits Faculty Field Liaison Reporting Form and site visit forms to Director of Field Instruction.
13. Attends the Field Liaison orientation.
14. Is available as a consultant to the Field Supervisor and acts as the field instructor supervisor as needed.
15. Is available as a resource for the student.
16. Holds individual conferences with students who are having difficulties in Field Education and/or need clarification of Field Education related matters.
17. Recruits and markets for new field placement agencies.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Student**

#### **Student Interns**

The learner is placed by the school in an agency site to learn and integrate the knowledge, skills, and values of the social work profession, under the direction of the Agency Field Instructor,

following the Delaware State University Field Instruction Office, field curriculum, and guided by the school Faculty Field Liaison.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Follow school guidelines for placement.
2. Be on time for placement, field instruction, and field seminars.
3. Follow NASW Code of Ethics in placement.
4. Complete criminal background check.
5. Purchase professional student intern liability insurance through the NASW.
6. Complete all assignments on time.
7. Be open to constructive feedback.
8. Be pro-active in your role as learner by identifying learning needs and seek to meet them.
9. Maintain agency and practice guidelines.
10. Share concerns/issues/questions promptly with your agency Field Instructor and/or Faculty Field Liaison.
11. Complete and submit process recordings on time to your agency Field Instructor.
12. Be self-reflective; take time to process feelings, thoughts and actions.
13. Take initiative for using the field placement to enhance learning opportunities.
14. Abide by the rules established by the agency for hours worked.
15. Act as a professional in transactions with the client system in the delivery of service.
16. Demonstrate interviewing and assessment skills in a manner consistent with the practice model and core competencies.
17. Demonstrate acceptance and use of social work values, especially as applied to cultural, racial and gender factors.
18. Integrate theory and practice by applying principles of social work learned in the classroom to the field and striving to improve skills through periodic self- evaluation.

19. Develop, in consultation with the Field Supervisor and Field Liaison, the learning contract.
20. Participate in all required three-way conferences with the Field Supervisor and Field Liaison.
21. Discuss with the Field Supervisor and/or Field Liaison areas of disagreement, dissatisfaction or confusion in respect to any part of Field Education.
22. Complete all course requirements within the specified deadlines.
23. Understand the core competencies of Social Work practice.
24. Follow all University and Social Work Department policies and procedures.
25. Take responsibility for obtaining information pertaining to the agency's structure, function, policies, procedures, chain of command, funding sources, and charter.
26. Follow the university's academic calendar to ensure smooth integration between fieldwork activities and school requirements.
27. Prepare written materials for the classroom and field placement agency, including case materials and clinical notes with particular attention to maintain confidentiality.
28. Give the agency Field Instructor copies of syllabi for current courses, confirmation of liability insurance, signed confidentiality agreement before field begins.
29. Maintain confidentiality of clients and agency.
30. Participate in agency activities such as staff meetings, conferences, and in-service training.
31. Adhere to agency field placement criteria that, if not followed, could lead to a student's field placement termination, including: Serious or repeated violations of the agency's policies and procedures; Failure to disclose critical background information in applications forms, pre-placement forms, or during the interview process; Exhibiting behaviors and attitudes inconsistent or at odds with the values of the profession; Violation of professional ethics and standards for ethical practice; Unexcused and prolonged absences from the field experience; Attempts to harm oneself or others; Any inappropriate and/or sexual relationships with an agency client; and, Reporting to the practicum site under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Field Advisory Committee**

To ensure relevance to practice, the Department of Social Work Field Instruction Office has an Advisory Committee composed of agency field instructors, BSW/MSW student representatives, alumni, BSW/MSW student faculty, faculty field liaisons, and other social work professionals from various community agencies. The chairperson of the Field Advisory Committee is the Director of Field Instruction. The Committee assists the field office in reviewing and developing policies and changes related to field instruction. This committee advises field staff on issues in the field and reviews proposals for changes and improvements with regard to field education. Anyone interested in participating should contact the field office directly.

### **Professional Student Liability Insurance Policy**

All students in field placement must have liability insurance before beginning the field placement and the first day of classes starting. **There are no exceptions to this policy.** There are three ways to obtain coverage.

1. The student must submit proof of their own professional insurance at the time he/she enters the field. Coverage of personal policies must be approved by the Department of Social Work and the field placement agency.
2. Students are included in the placement agency's coverage. In this instance, the agency must indicate, **in writing**, that students are covered by the agency's policy.
3. The student obtains coverage through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Insurance Trust. To obtain insurance in this manner, the student must join NASW. NASW applications, as well as applications for insurance can be obtained from the NASW website ([www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)).

Since some agencies provide insurance for students, either fully or partially, students should inquire about liability coverage for students during the pre-placement interview. All students are encouraged to join NASW for the following reasons:

1. Belonging to NASW denotes identification with the profession and the responsibilities associated with social work practice.
2. Membership in NASW includes a subscription to the Journal of Social Work (one of NASW's professional journals), the NASW News, automatic membership in the Delaware Chapter of NASW, and notification of state, national and international conferences, seminars and workshops.

### **Background Checks, Fingerprinting, Driving Record and Drug Screening**

An increasing number of agencies, especially those dealing specifically with children and the justice system, require the disclosure of conviction records for misdemeanors and/or felonies. These agencies also may conduct periodic screenings to detect substance use. Therefore,

students are often required to submit to state and federal background checks and drug screening tests prior to the start, and possibly during the term of the practicum. Findings in the background checks and/or drug screening tests may affect a student's ability to participate in field internship and complete the social work program. Students should have their background checked prior to going into the field placement. Some agencies may require that students obtain a driving record history if the students will be driving the agency's car or transporting clients.

### **Policy on Transporting Agency Clients**

It is strongly recommended that students NOT transport agency clients in their own vehicles. Many agencies will require you to use your own vehicle to make visits during the course of your placement and most will reimburse you for mileage. Make sure to ask about the requirements and expectations of you and the use of your vehicle during the initial interview with agency staff. Also check to see if your vehicle will be covered by the agency's insurance.

### **Policy on Home Visits**

Students are expected to follow agency guidelines on home visits similar to those followed by agency staff members. All home visits must be made with the full knowledge of the agency. Students who feel they are being asked to conduct home visits that are not safe are urged to discuss the situation with their agency's Field Instructor. If the situation cannot be resolved, then students will consult their Field Liaison. If an agency is unable to accommodate the safety of a field student, the field placement may be terminated.

### **Policy on Sexual Harassment and Non-Professional Relationships**

NASW's *Code of Ethics* urges social workers to avoid dual relationships with clients whenever possible. It states, "Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively." The *Code* also prohibits sexual relationships and sexual harassment between social worker and client (previous or current) and between student and supervisor. Therefore, non-professional relations between social work students and faculty, agency staff, and agency clients or family members are unacceptable.

### **Policy on Reporting Abuse and Neglect**

It is the policy of the Department of Social Work that student interns follow all the state of Delaware statutes regarding the reporting of abuse and neglect that apply to professional social workers. Therefore, students in field placement have an obligation to report abuse and neglect if they have firsthand knowledge of it, or if they have personal knowledge of evidence that strongly suggests abuse or neglect. Each student should inform his or her agency Field Instructor, the Faculty Field Liaison and the Director of Field Instruction of firsthand and/or suspected abuse.

### **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

In 1996, federal legislation enacted the HIPAA regulations to assure a system of accountability for use, transfer, sharing and full disclosure of information regarding any health related matters for clients. As social workers, your responsibilities include supporting clients' rights. Many of the field placements require utilization of medical and personal information. While the confidentiality policy addresses your role in keeping client information private and protected, HIPAA further delineates responsibilities when involved with medical information that could identify an individual.

DSU field placement students will adhere to the following protocols when working in a medical or health related environment:

Students who are provided access to protected health information will review and acknowledge understanding of their agency policy regarding HIPAA. Information will be disclosed within protocols specified by the agency. In most cases, clients are entitled to know when information is being disclosed, unless otherwise specified by agency policy.

- HIPAA that requires clients are to be notified of their rights regarding privacy of information. When a field placement student is charged within unauthorized disclosure of information, processing these allegations will be coordinated by the Agency Field Instructor or other agency designee who may be the agency's designated HIPAA Compliance Officer.

Generally, information referred to as protected health information (PHI) may be disclosed under the following guidelines:

- Required by law. Disclosures of PHI are permitted when required by other laws, whether federal, tribal, state, or local.
- Public health. PHI can be disclosed to public health authorities and their authorized agents for public health purposes including, but not limited to, public health surveillance, investigations, and interventions.
- Health research. A covered entity can use or disclose PHI for research without authorization under certain conditions, including 1) if it obtains documentation of a waiver from an institutional review board (IRB) or a privacy board, according to a series of considerations; 2) for activities preparatory to research; and 3) for research on a decedent's information.
- Abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. PHI may be disclosed to report abuse, neglect, or domestic violence under specified circumstances.
- Law enforcement. Covered entities may, under specified conditions, disclose PHI to law enforcement officials pursuant to a court order, subpoena, or other legal order, to help identify and locate a suspect, fugitive, or missing person; to provide information related to a victim of a crime or a death that may have resulted from a crime, or to report a crime.
- Judicial and administrative proceedings. A covered entity may disclose PHI in the course of a judicial or administrative proceeding under specified circumstances.

- Cadaveric organ, eye, or tissue donation purposes. Organ-procurement agencies may use PHI for the purposes of facilitating transplant.
- Oversight. Covered entities may usually disclose PHI to a health oversight agency for oversight activities authorized by law.
- Worker's compensation. The Privacy Rule permits disclosure of work-related health information as authorized by, and to the extent necessary to comply with, workers' compensation programs.

DSU field placement students will always check with the agency HIPAA compliance officer or the field supervisor prior to making disclosure of information that is protected.

## **SECTION IV: THE FIELD PRACTICUM**

### **Field Instruction Process**

#### **Getting to know your student/pre-placement**

1. Who is the student and his/her level in the program?
  - a. Past experience
  - b. Goals
  - c. Reason for choosing social work
  - d. Expectations of supervision
2. Agency Field Instructor's Professional Background
  - a. Past experience
  - b. Goals
  - c. Reason for choosing social work
  - d. Expectations of supervision
3. Give the student a start date and time, where to park, what to wear, where to eat, etc.
4. Introduce your student to the agency before s/he arrives
  - a. Provide a brief student biography or other introduction
  - b. Set up space for the student – an office, a desk, and a mailbox
  - c. Talk with support staff regarding their role with student
  - d. Talk with professional staff regarding their role with student

#### **The First Day**

1. Meet your student on time in the morning
2. Introduce the student to support and professional staff (perhaps a breakfast or lunch)
3. Show student his or her space – office, desk, mailbox, telephone and how to use it
4. Provide a tour of the agency – give agency manual to student to read
5. Introduce the student to the community the agency serves

#### **The First Two Weeks**

1. Continue introductions to staff – help student get a sense of how agency operates.
2. Tour of the community: introduce your student to the community your agency serves, help her/him get a feel for the lives of the people coming to you for service.
3. Observation – set up opportunities for your student to observe you and other professional staff interviewing clients-have student process record these observation experiences.
4. Case Assignment – assign first case to student; be sure to review with student before client is seen, and role-play.



5. Continue to meet regularly for one and one-half hours of supervision per week. Remember to begin process recording as soon as possible. Give lots of feedback, positive and constructive!
6. Review field course outline, and practice course outlines in syllabi. Students should make all practice course syllabi available to Field Instructor.
7. Review learning contract outline; encourage student to begin to work on developing this in consultation with you.

### **Throughout the Semester/ Year: Practical Factors Regarding Supervision**

1. Continue regularly scheduled field instruction and use of process recordings.
2. Continue to assign cases, keeping in mind the student's learning goals, EPAS competencies and practice behaviors, and how case assignments will help students achieve them.
3. Develop macro practice assignments with student.
4. Facilitate integration of academic and field assignments and utilize practice course outlines.
5. Continually evaluate your student's work and provide ample feedback.
6. Maintain close contact with the Faculty Field Liaison.
7. Identify student's strengths and areas for development and incorporate these into your teaching plan and supervision/evaluation sessions.
8. Help student anticipate client and agency needs, as he/she moves through the year.
9. Facilitate the student's evaluation of his professional and conscious use of self, work with clients and staff, and management of work responsibilities, helping the student to identify their professional development and achievements over time.
10. Discuss termination issues with your student related to their clients, the agency, Field Instructor, and agency representatives with whom the student interfaced.

### **Field Instruction Seminar**

All agency Field Instructors are required to attend one field instruction seminar per semester and students are to attend orientation and two field seminars per semester. A field calendar is provided to field instructors. Field seminar dates that students are required to attend are listed in the course syllabus. Field Instructors have their designated field instruction seminar days aside from the students' field instruction days. One to two seminars are conducted by the Department of Social Work and held each semester for students. The seminars are a component

of the field instruction course and are required. **Students' attendance and participation in the seminars are a component of the field instruction grade.**

Seminars are planned and scheduled by the Department's Director of Field Instruction. Notification of the dates and locations of the seminars are the responsibility of the field instruction office to disseminate during the academic year.

The objectives of the field instruction seminars are as follows:

1. To facilitate the integration of knowledge, values and skills taught in the classroom in actual field practicum situations with, and on behalf of, individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
2. To insure that students are engaged in activities in the field that are consistent with standards set forth by the Council on Social Work Education and the Department of Social Work's curricula requirements for the BSW and MSW programs.
3. To give students the opportunity to share field practicum experiences with other students and for field instructors to address what their field agencies are providing for students.
4. To insure that students understand and are integrating the theoretical underpinnings for social work practice as defined by the Department of Social Work's curricula with, and on behalf of, all client systems. The theoretical underpinnings referred to are the Strengths, Rural, Global, Empowerment and a Black perspective for social work practice.

### **Learning Contract**

The learning contract plan sets forth "the script" that the student and the Field Instructor will follow during each semester that the student is in the field. As such, the learning contract delineates for the student, the Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison what is to happen, why it is to happen, and how the parts connect. The learning contract should be considered as the tool to plan field practicum assignments and as a benchmark with which to evaluate the student's competence.

The learning contract is a formal delineation of the student's educational goals and competencies, related learning tasks and level of expected competence. The contract also indicates the methods, techniques and tools the agency field instructor will use to assess a student's progress and competence. Its purpose is to clarify learning competencies and tasks based on the student's learning needs, practice interests and the curriculum.

Students are expected to participate in the completion of the learning contract. Thus, the contract should reflect the student's assessment of his/her learning needs and interests, and an assessment of his/her strengths and weaknesses. The department does not expect students who have little to no field experience to have the experience to initially specify their personal learning goals and objectives. However, it is expected that the student's input in the learning

contract will progressively increase both qualitatively and quantitatively over time. Thus, at the beginning of the spring semester, BSW students should be capable of demonstrating their ability to utilize the curriculum and the performance criteria in the evaluation form as a guide to delineate their learning goals and tasks. At the beginning of the fall semester, the advance year MSW student should be able to formulate a learning contract that reflects the curriculum, their learning interests, and an assessment of his/her competence.

Although students are expected to contribute to their learning contract, the Field Instructor is responsible for insuring that the content of the learning contract not only addresses a student's interests, but also details learning objectives and attendant learning assignments that will enable the student to practice either at the entry or advanced level, depending upon the program in which the student is enrolled. **Completing the learning contract is not the sole responsibility of the student.**

Learning contracts are completed each semester, and are due two weeks after each semester begins. The exact due dates for learning contracts are indicated in the Field Syllabus. Before completing the contract, the student and agency Field Instructor should review the mission of the program in which the student is enrolled. Two copies of the learning contract should be completed. One copy should be sent to the Faculty Field Liaison. The Faculty Field Liaison approves the learning contract by signing it and sends a copy of the signed document to the Field Instruction Office.

### **Student Mid-Term/Final Evaluation**

A full description of the student's progress and level of competence is documented twice during each semester that the student is in the field. The first evaluation is completed at mid-term. The second evaluation (the final evaluation) is completed at the end of the semester. The exact times that the evaluations are due are listed in the Field Syllabus.

### **Recommended Process for Completing Student Evaluation**

Evaluating student performance is one of the most critical events in field instruction. It is through the evaluation process that the student discovers his/her professional abilities and his/her commitment to the function and cause of professional social work. The evaluation enables the student to refine utilization of the professional relationship with, and on behalf of, individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Just as learning is an on-going process, so is the assessment of student competence. Thus, the specifics of the agency field instructor's evaluation should be shared with the student throughout the field practice experience.

In light of the above, the evaluation should be approached by the Field Instructor and student in a planned manner. It is recommended that the steps described below be followed to ensure a useful evaluation for both the student and the Field Instructor:

1. The Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison should discuss the student's performance prior to the evaluation conference to insure that the agency and the Department of Social Work have reached a consensus regarding the student's progress.
2. Prior to the interview, both the student and the Field Instructor should review the performance criteria that will be used to evaluate the student and provide feedback.
3. The student and the agency field instructor should meet prior to the evaluation conference to: (a) reach an agreement about materials, if any, the student is expected to submit to the agency Field Instructor prior to the evaluation conference; (b) review the areas of practice that will be the focus of the evaluation; and (c) set the date and time that the evaluation will be completed.
4. Prior to the conference, the student should complete a self-assessment. Results of the self-assessment can be used by the student to provide planned input regarding his/her performance. The student should be prepared to share his/her ratings during the evaluation conference.
5. At the actual evaluation conference, discuss the student's performance using the parameters (e.g., curriculum orientation discussed above), as a frame of reference. The student and Agency Field Instructor should share their respective ratings.
6. The agency field instructor should prepare an official evaluation to be reviewed and signed by the student, the agency Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison.
7. The agency Field Instructor obtains the student's signature and, after signing it, sends the evaluation to the Faculty Field Liaison.
8. The Faculty Field Liaison approves by signing the evaluation and then sends one copy to the Field Instruction Office.

### **Student Bi-Weekly Logs and Timesheets**

BSW and MSW students are required to maintain a bi-weekly log and timesheet. The log is submitted to the Faculty Field Liaison on a bi-weekly basis (every other Friday) unless otherwise arranged and approved by the Faculty Field Liaison. The log is a confidential document. Its contents are not shared with others without the consent of the student. It is not necessary for the student to obtain approval from the Field Instructor to comply with this requirement. The bi-weekly timesheet should be turned in every other Friday to the Faculty Field Liaison. The student and Field Instructor must sign the timesheet and each retains a copy for their respective records. **The student should retain the original copy for use as a reference when writing the final evaluation of the field practicum experience.**

Keeping a log serves a variety of purposes. However, the following objectives should assist the student in maintaining the log:

1. To reflect one's own feelings, attitudes, and responses to the needs, problems, and concerns of citizens in need of social welfare services.
2. To assimilate theories, principles, and concepts of social work practice and social welfare in the classroom into life situations being acted out in everyday life.
3. To assess one's own feelings relative to new experiences, feelings of uncertainty about agency policies, and the purposes of the program.
4. To gain an understanding of the social problems of a community, their impact and cost to society, and the attitudes and means by which a community attempts to alleviate them.
5. To express thoughts and feelings toward supervision, cases, and related matters and the means by which they are handled.

### **Process Recordings**

Students in the field are required to complete a minimum of five (5) process recordings during the spring semester. The purpose of the process recording is to afford students an opportunity to critically assess how they consciously use themselves in the professional social work relationship with, and on behalf of, client systems. This requirement applies to all students regardless of the client system that is the focus of intervention.

Upon review, you will note that the format is clear. It includes three columns. The first column is for the field instructor's comments. The second is used to write a detailed account of the interaction between the student and the client system. Students should use the third column to register their thoughts and feelings. This column provides, in part, the basis of the student's analysis of how the relationship was used to facilitate change on the part of the client system.

### **Field Placement in Student's Place of Employment**

In accordance with policies established by the Council on Social Work Education, if the student is employed in the agency where the field practicum is to take place, the availability of release time for field instruction must be assured. There must also be assurances that there is no diminution of the program's established requirements for class and field practicum; that field instruction is educationally focused rather than centered on agency services; and, that as one means of ensuring uniformly equal opportunity, the field practicum is administered in accordance with a pattern established for all students. Agencies involved in this type of field practicum plan must meet the same criteria as other agencies selected for the field practicum.

The Department of Social Work strictly adheres to the policy described above in the following manner:

The student may complete their practicum within their workplace one time during their matriculation in the program in which they are enrolled. This means that MSW students can complete field instruction requirements in a setting where they are employed only one time.

A field placement assignment in the student's workplace will be considered, if the following conditions are met prior to time the placement begins:

1. The field practicum assignment must be substantively different from the student's usual and customary employment responsibilities and activities. The field placement must be outside the unit where the student is employed. The practicum assignment clearly demonstrates that the student's duties and responsibilities are educationally focused and not centered on agency services.
2. The field practicum assignment must yield new learning.
3. The student's agency Field Instructor must be someone other than the student's regular supervisor. This individual must possess the MSW degree and meet department standards.
4. The agency must provide the agency Field Instructor sufficient time to engage in all activities pertaining to field instruction.
5. The agency Field Instructor must agree to attend meetings for agency field instructors.
6. The agency field instructor must agree to meet with program faculty, as necessary.
7. Students wishing to have their field placement assignment in the workplace must submit a formal proposal. The paperwork can be request from the Director of Field Instruction.

### **Adherence to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics**

The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers is available to all students in the Director of Field Instruction's office. The Code of Ethics is closely examined by students in the practice course and at the first field seminar of the academic year. All students are expected to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.

All students are expected to sign the Statement of Confidentiality for Field Instruction and Adherence to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers indicating that the statement has been read and that he/she understands the consequences for breaching confidentiality standards and violating the Code of Ethics. **This information can be found on the NASW website: [www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org).**

**The consequences for violating the Code of Ethics can include, but are not limited to, the following:**

1. Decision by the agency to institute procedures for sanctioning conduct reflecting violation of the Code of Ethics. These procedures are available for review in the Field Instruction Office.
2. Suspension of NASW membership (if student is member of NASW).
3. Review by the Department of Social Work of a student's suitability to remain in the program.