



Wellstar College of Health  
and Human Services

Department of Social Work  
and Human Services

# MSW Field Education Manual

*2020-2021*



Department of Social Work and Human Services  
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Dear Student,

Welcome to Wellstar College of Health and Human Services (WCHHS) Department of Social Work and Human Services at Kennesaw State University. The social work faculty, administration, and staff trust you will have a successful and rewarding educational experience as you prepare for professional social work practice. This Manual contains all the information necessary for understanding and successfully navigating the field education program at KSU.

It is expected that all students meet not only academic performance standards and abide by the University's Code of Conduct and professional standards of behavior as well. The National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics explicates those standards. Students are expected to observe the provisions of the Code of Ethics in the classroom, field setting, and the community. The Manual is regarded as supplementary to Kennesaw State's Graduate Catalog and to the current curriculum materials concerning the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program.

This *Field Education Manual* provides policies and procedures pertaining to student field internships. It will answer many of the questions students may have about the MSW field internship experience. Students should understand the policies and procedures in the manual to successfully complete field internship requirements. The manual is intended to:

- 1) Enhance the quality of learning which occurs during field placement
- 2) Support the effective use of Field Education as part of the Department of Social Work and Human Services MSW curriculum, and
- 3) Establish standards consonant with Council on Social Work Education policy and KSU graduate education.

The guidelines suggested should not supplant professional judgments nor become constraints to the creative use of experience in directing field learning.

It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the manual and refer to it when there are questions. We hope that you find this manual a useful guide as you pursue your professional studies at KSU. The administration and faculty are grateful to all who participate in the field internship component of the curriculum, enabling and enhancing the integration of theory, social work practice and professional development.

Sincerely,

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## INTRODUCTION

### Overview of Master of Social Work Program

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program at Kennesaw State University (KSU) is an academic unit in the Department of Social Work and Human Services (SWHS) in the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS). The MSW Field Education Program is organized around the belief that structured supervised graduate level internships are a critical generalist for the education and training of competent clinical social workers. The program offers concurrent field practicum experiences for students such that first year generalist level students are in field practicum two days per week and second year specialization level students are in field practicum three days per week. Field agencies for students are selected based on their ability to provide experiences that integrate students' theoretical knowledge with the constantly evolving practice of the profession and for their capacity to prepare and train future social workers for clinical practice in a range of settings.

Field practicums serve as arenas in which students test and apply theory, knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes gained in the four academic areas: Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Social Welfare Policy and Services, Social Work Practice, and Research. Students test their commitment to the social work profession and work to consolidate an identity as a professional social worker. Throughout these learning experiences students are expected to gain a working knowledge of and to comply with the NASW code of ethics.

Students enrolled full-time complete the MSW program in two years.

The MSW program is a clinical program. Clinical social work is defined by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) as:

Clinical social work shares with all social work practice the goal of enhancement and maintenance of psychosocial functioning of individuals, families, and small groups. Clinical social work practice is the professional application of social work theory and methods to the treatment and prevention of psychosocial dysfunction, disability, or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders. It is based on knowledge of one or more theories of human development within a psychosocial context.

### Accreditation

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) establishes guidelines and policies for all accredited bachelor and master social work programs. The KSU MSW program has been accredited by CSWE since 2005.

### MSW Program Mission Statement

The mission of the MSW Program at KSU is to produce innovative social workers who facilitate and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### MSW PROGRAM GOALS

**Goal 1: Students will demonstrate the principles, values, and ethics of the social work profession. (Competency 1)**

In order to “*facilitate and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities*” social work graduate students understand, practice and demonstrate the social work intervention skills and values that are responsive to the needs of the different systems.

**Goal 2: Students will demonstrate embrace and apply dimensions of diversity and its value in advancing human rights, and social, economic and environmental justice. (Competency 2 & 3)**

Social work students must be innovative in different contexts as they create value for clients and different stake holders while facilitating and enhancing well-being at different system levels.

**Goal 3: Students will demonstrate apply research-informed practice modalities and conduct practice-informed research at all levels of practice. (Competency 4)**

In order to be innovative, social workers must collect appropriate data, make sense of the data within different contexts, before identifying either appropriate evidence-based practice and/or an innovative strategy to address the needs.

**Goal 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize contextual factors that influence policies and practice for effectively advocating on behalf of vulnerable, oppressed, and diverse populations. (Competency 5)**

MSW students intervene at different system levels across different contexts and in order to be innovative and responsive in these different levels and contexts, they must understand policies and contextual factors before designing interventions/advocating for clients.

**Goal 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply bio-psychosocial-spiritual, cultural, economic and social dimensions of development and human behavior to inform engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at all practice levels. (Competency 6, 7, 8, 9)**

“The program is well-placed in the WellStar College of Health and Human Services, dedicated to preparing students to be leaders who improve quality of people’s lives, similar to the MSW program that is dedicated to producing innovative social workers who facilitate and enhance well-being at all levels. The program’s mission also aligns with KSU’s mission of enabling students to succeed through collaboration and rigor by uniting diverse background and abilities for preparing professionals that serve the community”.

## **MSW FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE MSW CURRICULUM**

### **What is Field Education?**

Field Education is the “*signature pedagogy*” of social work education. It gives students the opportunities to learn by doing, by integrating curriculum into field practice under the supervision of a field supervisor and field faculty instructor. Social work education includes both classroom and field internships, it is a part of social work curriculums. At KSU, the MSW program requires students to complete field internships concurrently with course work during. All students must be enrolled in field seminar to complete an MSW field internship. The goal of field internship is to strengthen the students’ learning in both the classroom and field internship.

Field education constitutes 12 credits of the 60 credits required to earn an MSW in the program. The Social Work Program requires 480 clock hours at an organization for Generalist field practicum (3 credits each of two semesters) and 720 clock hours at an agency for Specialization field practicum (3 credits each of two semesters). *See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 changes ONLY.*

The generalist field placement is a generalist social work practice experience that allow students to learn generalist social work practice. This means that each student will focus on practicing basic skills and understanding how human service programs are developed, implemented, and evaluated. All students should have the opportunity to interact directly with the agency’s clients, most often assessing needs and resources, and providing and identifying resources and improving service delivery to clients. Students may also assist in program activities, such as collecting information about the community, budgeting, grant writing, fund raising, and attending interagency community meetings.

The specialization field placement is compatible with the student’s choice of their concentration of study. Students participate in “Micro” (clinical) practice at an agency with a variety of different populations for their concentration.

Second year student placements are at agencies that correspond with their area of interests and allow students to learn Specialization clinical social work practice skills. Students experience multiple clinical roles through their internships and learn to work within the many environments in which clients live so that they can facilitate therapy, social networking, mediation, brokering, and advocacy.

Field internship sites are located throughout Metropolitan Atlanta and surrounding areas.

### COVID-19 Field Internship Hour Exceptions

Due to COVID-19 there will be several changes to the field internship experience for fall 2020 only. For the fall 2020 semester only, please see the COVID-19 Addendum for all field education changes. Throughout the field manual when the following sign is present, please see the COVID-19 addendum for field education changes for the for fall 2020 only.

### Integration of Class and Field Internship

The integration of class and field learning is achieved through multiple methods involving faculty, field supervisors, and students. The MSW field faculty prepare course syllabi, infusing opportunities throughout their courses for students to apply theoretical concepts to field activities through assignments. Through classroom dialogue and case presentations, students share field experiences, projects, cases, and learning from their agencies.

### Field Seminar Courses

Field Seminar allow students in diverse field placements an opportunity to share information and personal observations with one another, and to support each other’s effort to integrate course learning with practice experience. It is a time for additional educational learning and reflection. Field Seminars serve as an integral part of the field placement experience, providing students with further guidance and assistance in the integration of theory and practice.

Field Seminar courses are facilitated by MSW field faculty instructors and are required as part of the field experience for the generalist and specialization year internships. The field seminar topics are established by the field education program. However, changes can be made at the discretion of the field seminar instructor based on the student needs within the seminar grouping.

### GENERALIST YEAR – Field Internship & Integrative Seminar

Course Name	Credits	Schedule/Hours	Co-requisites	Catalog Course Description
SW 7708 – Internship I	3	Students attend Bi-weekly 2 hours field seminar during fall and spring semesters; Minimum 7 class meetings each semester	Student complete 16 hours of field internship each week (Mon & Tues)	This seminar provides a service-based educational experience with specific objectives in an agency setting, which requires students to complete 240 required hours of field internship for Semester I of Year I. <i>See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 changes</i>



				<b>ONLY.</b>
SW 7709 – Internship II	3	Students attend Bi-weekly 2 hours field seminar during fall and spring semesters; Minimum 7 class meetings each semester	Student complete 16 hours of field internship each week (Mon & Tues)	This seminar builds upon SW7708. Generalist Internship/Integrative Seminar I. Students continue a service- based education experience with specific objectives in an agency setting, which requires students to complete 240 required hours of field internship for Semester II of Year I.

The generalist year Field Internship/Integrative Seminar provides an arena for students to discuss cases and any other issues they may be experiencing, to learn from each other, and to receive constructive feedback from their field faculty instructor. Field seminar is an integrative seminar that is required for all students completing an internship. It is designed to help students integrate their coursework learning with their experiential learning in the field internship, the integrative seminar is taught by field faculty who remains in communication with the students' agency supervisors on issues pertaining to the students' field experience. Through class discussions, process recordings, and agency presentations, students learn about professional social work practice with an emphasis on critical thinking, self- awareness, ethics and values, and culturally responsive practice with an emphasis on human rights and social justice.

During the generalist field placement, students are in field for approximately 240 clock hours per semester for two semesters. Students complete 2 full days a week, for a total of 16 hours per week. The generalist year field internship requires two full days in an agency setting where the student will complete 480 hours of supervised field experience (240 clock hours for each semester). Students must have a minimum of one hour of agency supervision per week by a MSW with 2 years post-MSW experience. Students in the generalist field placement focus on development of generalist knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive and affective processes that provide the groundwork for the Specialization Year. *See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 changes ONLY.*

Students begin internship the second week of classes in the fall semester and continue through the spring semester. Students may not start their internship hours prior to the start of classes. There are two exceptions, orientation and training. However, students that complete orientation and/or training prior to the start of classes may count no more than 16 hours towards the field hour requirements in the fall semester.

Assignments will vary depending on (a) agency and community resources, and opportunities; and (b) student interests and career goals. Typically, students engage in direct services with individuals, families, or small groups. Working with these client systems, the student develops the ability to assess, design, and implement social interventions and to evaluate outcomes.

In addition, each generalist field student is assigned an organization/community project or activity to

develop skills in macro service assessment, intervention, and evaluation. In developing skills to promote the improved functioning of organizations and communities, students have hands-on responsibilities just as they do in working with direct services clients. Passive observations of organizational or community functioning *are not* considered adequate to meet this learning goal. In general, generalist internship learning activities should include micro, mezzo, and macro activities.

***SPECIALIZATION YEAR - Field Internship & Integrative Seminar***

Course Name	Credits	Schedule/Hours	Co-requisites	Catalog Course Description
SW 8712 Specialization Internship III	3	Students attend Bi-weekly 2 hours field seminar during fall and spring semesters; Field seminar classes can be virtual, face-to-face, and/or trainings during fall and spring semesters; Minimum 7 class meetings each semester	Student complete 24 hours of field internship each week (Wed-Fri).	This specialization integrative seminar provides a service based second year educational experience that builds upon the first-year field internship/integrative seminars and internships. Students develop specialization clinical skills in Children and Family Services, Mental Health Services and the sub-specialty, Substance Abuse. Students in Specialization Field Internship III will complete 360 hours of supervised internship by dedicating 3 full days per week in their field internship. <b><i>See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 changes ONLY.</i></b>
SW 8713 Specialization Internship IV	3	Students participate in monthly virtual, face-to-face, and/or trainings for the field seminar course during fall and spring semesters; Minimum 4 class meetings each semester	Student complete 24 hours of field internship each week (Wed-Fri).	This specialization integrative seminar continues the services based second year educational experiences that builds upon the first year and first Specialization internship experiences. Students continue to refine their clinical skills by completing the final 360 hours of field work (a total of 720 field hours for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year) supplemented by an integrative seminar.

In field, specialization students are expected to apply a variety of practice methods appropriate to the client system, the setting, and the presenting need of the client system. Students have the opportunity to work with different types of client systems, including individuals, families, and groups. Students work with clients from a variety of backgrounds representing various dimensions of diversity, including age, race/ethnicity, gender (including identity and expression), sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

Students actively evaluate direct practice outcomes and their own practice. Students learning opportunities should primarily focus on direct practice with clients. Students learning activities should also include areas in Community, Management, and Policy Practice (macro practice).

Specialization students build on the knowledge and experience gained in their generalist year. The specialization year field internship requires three full days in an agency setting where the student must complete 720 hours of supervised field experience (360 clock hours per semester). Students must have a minimum of one hour of agency supervision per week. All Specialization year students must be supervised by an LCSW. However, they can receive daily/task supervision by a licensed clinician from another discipline. Specialization year field internship allows the student to engage in direct specialization clinical practice. *See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 changes ONLY.*

The specialization field internship requires that students experience in-depth interviewing techniques; practice the application of multi-dimensional bio-psychosocial-spiritual assessment tools; synthesize and differentially apply theories of human behavior and the social environment to guide clinical practice; employ Specialization ethical decision making skills; apply knowledge of diverse populations to enhance clients' growth; assess clients' readiness for change; modify treatment goals and interventions as appropriate; and use research methodology to evaluate clinical practice.

Students begin internship the second week of classes in the fall semester and continue through the spring semester. Students may not start their internship hours prior to the start of classes. There are two exceptions, orientation and training. However, students that complete orientation and/or training prior to the start of classes may only count up to 16 hours towards the field hour requirements in the fall semester.

Assignments vary depending on, level of student skill, placement opportunities, and community resources. Example of assignments are clinical interviews, clinical case treatment plans, biopsychosocial assessment, macro change agent project, and professional presentations presented to students and/or faculty within the department at the end of each semester. All placements are designed to enable students to work with disadvantaged, vulnerable, and oppressed populations.

### MSW Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The field education experience is how each student connects theoretical and conceptual knowledge learned in the classroom to the practice of social work through placement in a community-based agency. Core Competencies, Practice Behaviors and Specialization Practice Behaviors are utilized throughout the curriculum and field education as the threshold for professional competence.

In 2015, the Council on Social Work Education CSWE approved revisions of the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors for accredited social work programs. There are 9 Core Competencies and 32 Practice Behaviors established by CSWE and have been adopted by the MSW Program for generalist year. In the specialization year there are 9 Core Competencies and 33 Practice Behaviors established by CSWE and the MSW Program. The MSW Program Core Competencies for Generalist and Specialization Year are listed below.

#### Generalist Year

Educational Policy & Core Competencies	Practice Behaviors
<p><b>Core Competency 1</b> <i>Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Make ethical decisions by applying 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.</li> <li>2) Use self-reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.</li> <li>3) Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and oral, written, and electronic communication.</li> <li>4) Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice</li> </ol>

	<p>outcomes.</p> <p>5) Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 2</b> <i>Engage diversity and difference in practice</i></p>	<p>7) Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.</p> <p>8) Present themselves as learners and engage client and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.</p> <p>9) Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse client and constituencies.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 3</b> <i>Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice</i></p>	<p>10) Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and systems levels.</p> <p>11) Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 4</b> <i>Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice</i></p>	<p>12) Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific research.</p> <p>13) Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.</p> <p>14) Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 5</b> <i>Engage in policy practice</i></p>	<p>15) Identify social policy and the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services</p> <p>16) Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.</p> <p>17) Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 6</b> <i>Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</i></p>	<p>18) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in- environment, and other multi-disciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.</p> <p>19) Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage diverse clients and Constituencies.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 7</b> <i>Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</i></p>	<p>20) Collect and organize data and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.</p> <p>21) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in- environment, and other multi-disciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.</p> <p>22) Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges with clients and constituencies.</p> <p>23) Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.</p>

<p><b>Core Competency 8</b> <i>Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</i></p>	<p>24) Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies. 25) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in- environment, and other multi-disciplinary frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies. 26) Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes. 27) Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies. 28) Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 9</b> <i>Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</i></p>	<p>29) Select and use appropriate methods of evaluation of outcomes. 30) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in- environment, and other multi-disciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes. 31) Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes. 32) Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.</p>

### Specialization Year

Educational Policy & Core Competencies	Practice Behaviors
<p><b>Core Competency 1</b> <i>Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior</i></p>	<p>1) Readily identify as social work professionals; 2) Demonstrate professional use of self with client; 3) Identify professional strengths, limitations, and challenges; 4) Use of technology tools ethically for clinical social work practice; and 5) Demonstrate ethical use of clinical modalities in practice</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 2</b> <i>Engage diversity and difference in practice</i></p>	<p>6) Use and apply research knowledge of diverse populations to work effectively with diverse populations to enhance client wellbeing; 7) Identify and use practitioner/client differences and life experience from a strengths perspective; and 8) Identify tailored treatment approaches to the characteristics and needs of diverse populations.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 3</b> <i>Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice</i></p>	<p>9) Apply their understanding of the intersectionality of culture and context to guide their selection of the appropriate theories and approaches needed to assess equity of the distribution of goods, rights and responsibilities at the individual and system levels; 10) Discern which specific actions or strategies are most effective to promote and/or facilitate social, economic, environmental justice, and human rights; and 11) Identify and engage stakeholders to advance social, economic, and environmental justice at all system levels.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 4</b> <i>Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice</i></p>	<p>12) Apply understanding of empirically informed practice and systematic monitoring of problems and interventions to guide assessment activities with clients and selection and application of intervention strategies; 13) Identify risks of using non-empirical methods to assess human problems and the risks of using methods that have weak outcome evidence; and 14) Demonstrate fidelity in applying systemic empirically based assessment and case monitoring tools to guide practice decisions.</p>
<p><b>Core Competency 5</b> <i>Engage in policy practice</i></p>	<p>16) Apply critical thinking skills to help shape policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice; 17) Utilize knowledge gained from practice to advocate for changes in policies to improve well-being, service delivery, and access to care; and 18) Identify and engage stakeholders and policymakers to advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice</p>

<p><b><u>Core Competency 6</u></b>  <i>Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</i></p>	<p>19) Develop culturally responsive therapeutic relationships with clients;  20) Develop relationships that see clients as equal partners in the therapeutic process and as experts on their own situations;  21) Identify interpersonal forces and power differentials that may interfere with the therapeutic relationship; and  22) Demonstrate the ability to recognize and address personal biases that may negatively impact the engagement process.</p>
<p><b><u>Core Competency 7</u></b>  <i>Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</i></p>	<p>23) Explore client strengths and motivational level for change;  24) Assess client coping strategies that help clients adjust to life circumstances while showing sensitivity to cultural, social, and ecological context;  25) Use a variety of theories to conduct assessments and employ differential diagnosis when appropriate using current DSM criteria; and  26) Demonstrate the ability to recognize and address personal biases that may negatively impact the assessment process.</p>
<p><b><u>Core Competency 8</u></b>  <i>Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</i></p>	<p>27) Research, critically analyze, select, and apply appropriate culturally sensitive evidence-based interventions;  28) Identify and apply culturally sensitive techniques and strategies that best assist clients; and  29) Engage with colleagues, agency staff, and other disciplines to coordinate client care; and  30) Demonstrate the ability to recognize and address personal biases that may negatively impact the intervention process.</p>
<p><b><u>Core Competency 9</u></b>  <i>Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</i></p>	<p>31) Evaluate qualitative and quantitative research methods of evaluation and apply the most appropriate method to the evaluation process;  32) Evaluate single subject designs and apply the most appropriate design and apply the most appropriate one to the intervention process; and  33) Utilize findings in practice to evaluate their impact on practice and policy.</p>

## PREPARING FOR FIELD

### Expectations of Field Education

The field education experience is an exciting time for students as you prepare to apply classroom knowledge to the actual practice of social work. Students have high expectations for their field placement and are enthusiastic about learning practice skills in the practicum setting. Students have invested considerable money and time into obtaining your MSW degree and want this to be a positive and challenging experience.

In addition to feeling excited about your field placement, as a student you may also feel nervous and anxious. These feelings are normal and common to all students beginning their field placements. These feelings can be discussed during field seminar and with your agency field supervisor during supervision. As your internship progresses, you will gradually build a sense of confidence in your ability to practice social work. Your anxiety will decrease as you interact with clients and practice social work as an active learner.

Many students are balancing school, internship and work. Please be mindful to practice self-care during this time. There are limited internships that provide some evening and weekend hours. Please note that the MSW program is under no obligation to provide evening (after 5pm) and weekend placements for students. These opportunities are very limited and sometimes not available at all. Students must be available to complete the majority of field hours during normal business hours.

The MSW program cannot guarantee flexible schedules, internships in specific geographic areas or client populations. Flexibility in terms of distance you are willing to drive does help with meeting

your goals under these circumstances. These issues will be discussed during the field placement process with the Director of Field Education.

## **Field Placement Process**

The field education placement process is a collaborative endeavor between the MSW Program, the student and community agencies. Under no circumstances can students plan for their own placements. Students are not allowed to contact any agency without coordination and referral from the MSW Field Education Director.

Students will be placed in appropriate and approved agencies by the Field Education Director after careful consideration of the student's educational needs, expressed interests, experience and career objectives. Therefore, to prevent confusion and misunderstandings, students are instructed not to contact field agency representatives without first discussing the situation with the Field Education Director. During the placement process, field agency representatives are contacted by the Field Education Director to determine the potential for student placement and to review specific learning opportunities required to meet program objectives.

Students are also restricted from field experiences in any agency where a dual relationship exists in a supervisory or authoritative position (i.e. agencies where a relative, friend etc. is in a position of authority) or where there is a potential for unclear boundaries. Students may not complete a field experience in an agency where they have been a client or where they may have access to family member's files.

For both generalist and specialization internships, all students must complete the MSW Field Education application and interview with the Field Education Director prior to being placed at an agency for field internship.

The Field Education Department strives to provide quality field education opportunities for students with agencies that contract with the Kennesaw State University. All approved agencies must have a properly executed MOU Agreement with the University prior to any student beginning a field experience with that agency. The agency field supervisor approved to provide agency field supervision must also meet the qualifications as outlined in this manual.

Communication between the student, field faculty instructor, and the Field Education Director is a critical factor in the successful completion of the field placement process.

## **Field Education Organizational Structure, Roles and Responsibilities**

The Office of Field Education is responsible for the overall administration of the field education program. The Field Education Director works under the supervision of the Director of the MSW program in collaboration with the Department Chair.

### **Role of the Field Education Director**

The Director of Field Education oversees the day-to-day operations of Field Education for the MSW program. The Director ensures that internship agencies provide learning opportunities that correspond with students' educational needs. Each student's learning is monitored by faculty members who serve as field faculty instructors. The field faculty instructors are liaisons between the social work program, the practicum agency and the student. Students' field learning is carefully planned and promoted by an individual supervisor from within the agency setting.

Additional responsibilities of the Field Education Director:

- Maintains a list of approved partnering agencies capable of providing MSW students with high quality learning experiences;

- Identifies openings for students at approved agency sites;
- Coordinates student placements with agency openings;
- Coordinates student agency interviews and conducts follow-up confirmation of placements;
- Provides agency and student information to faculty field mentors;
- Trains and orients agency supervisors prior to placing interns;
- Orients students to internship process;
- Provides and distributes field placement materials (i.e. applications, learning contracts, syllabi, evaluation forms, etc.);
- Provides consultation regarding all issues impacting the program-agency relationship and quality of students' learning experiences;
- Recruits new agencies and conducts agency evaluations for potential sites;
- Maintains file of professional student liability insurance policies and ensures insurance is current;
- Ensures that approved and established field standards, processes and protocols are accepted by all faculty involved in carrying out field responsibilities;
- Ensures that faculty and staff involved in the delivery services to students through the Office of Field Education receive the training, supervision, and support needed to carry out their responsibilities;
- Serves as a resource to Office of Field Education constituents including the dean, faculty, students, partnering agencies and community;
- Ensures that the Office of Field Education maintains at all times a sufficient number of trained and experienced faculty field mentors skilled in providing internship students with positive learning experiences;
- Develops long-range plans for the Office of Field Education; and
- Evaluates feedback from students, faculty field mentors and agency supervisors regarding field experiences and utilizes this information as a basis for recommending new program initiatives.

### **Role of Field Faculty Instructor**

The field faculty instructor is a faculty member within the Department of Social Work and Human Services that has two main functions: (1) liaison between a specific field placement agency, the SWHS Department, and the student; and (2) facilitator of the field seminar.

The field faculty instructor evaluates the quality of supervision students receive at their internship placement and also engages in problem-solving when there are difficulties. In addition, the instructor provides support to agency supervisors in their work with students and informs the Director of Field Education of any changes in agency policies. The faculty field mentor also keeps the Director of Field Education apprised of any problems within a student's field placement.

During the field placement, the faculty field instructor is the contact person when field performance difficulties arise. If indicated and as appropriate, the Director of Field Education may be contacted and advised of specific field problems. If difficulties are considered serious, the field faculty instructor, in collaboration with the agency supervisor, the Field Education Director, and the student, will devise a plan of action that the student must complete by a designated time. This process is monitored closely by the field faculty instructor and the Field Education Director. If the issue is not resolved, it will be referred to the MSW Program Director for resolution. If no resolution, the issue will be referred to the Field Work Professional Performance Committee.

The second function of the field faculty instructor is to teach generalist and specialization field seminar courses. The field seminars allow students to discuss the application of theory to practice and a range of issues experienced during the field placement. The faculty field instructor serves as a



consultant to the supervisor regarding students' learning styles and any issues that may occur between the supervisor and the student. Additionally, the field faculty instructor makes one contact each semester, one of which has to be a site visit or phone call to the agency supervisor to discuss the student's learning, areas of strength, and areas requiring improvement.

The field faculty instructor provides the student's final grade based on the agency supervisor's written evaluations, discussions with the student and supervisor during field visits, the extent to which the student has met his/her written goals that were approved by the supervisor, completion of field internship hours, completion of the various reports and forms required of the student by the Field Education Department, and the student's in class participation and grade for the Field Integrative Seminar (SW 7708 and SW 7709 for Generalist Year and SW 8712 and SW 8713 for the Specialization Year). The field faculty instructor is ultimately responsible for evaluating each student's field performance and for posting the student's final grade. Additional field faculty instructor's responsibilities are listed below:

- Participate in an orientation training session conducted by the Office of Field Education each year and other field faculty mentor meetings as needed;
- Facilitate the development of students' integration of academic knowledge with field experiences;
- Facilitate field integrative seminars;
- Meet with assigned students and their agency field supervisors for a minimum of one (1) face to face contact per semester and one (1) telephone or e-mail contact per semester;
- Assess students' progress at the end of each semester based on evaluations from the agency supervisor, students' self-evaluations, and student's performances in the Field Integrative Seminar;
- Report student internship concerns to the Field Education Director;
- Respond to requests and participate in decision-making processes regarding student internship placement withdrawals in collaboration with the Field Education Director;
- Serve as students' advocate in the field internship;
- Serve as consultant to the Office of Field Education concerning students' progress and learning during the internship; and
- Submit final student evaluation forms to the Field Education Director at the end of each semester.

### **Role of Agency Field Supervisor**

Based on the standards established by the Council on Social Work Education for field study, the agency staff member designated as Field Supervisor will have a MSW degree, demonstrated competence in practice, experience or training in supervision, and a capacity for teaching social work. Field Supervisors must have two years of practice experience post-MSW. However, KSU MSW Program requires all specialization year field supervisors have an LCSW.

Every field student is assigned a MSW Field Supervisor who has the responsibility for providing educational guidance to the student in meeting the learning objectives and other requirements for study. It is expected that the Field Supervisor will have an ability to organize and transmit understanding of social work practice beyond knowledge of the specific placement setting. The Field Supervisor should be willing to include or draw upon other qualified professional staff members for access to their knowledge and skills in specific areas of practice. In addition, based on the opinion of the agency and University, the Field Supervisor should have an ability to relate warmly and effectively to the student, to stimulate and support the student in the learning process, and to assist the student to incorporate the values and ethics of the social work profession. In performing this role, the Field Supervisor:

- Provides student with a general orientation to the field agency.
- Identifies and/or designs learning assignments for the student.
- Reviews, modifies (as needed), and signs the student's learning contract.
- Provides ongoing supervision to the student concerning field assignments.
- Schedules weekly supervisory conferences (minimum of 1 hour) with the student to assist them in relating assignments and theory to social work practice and to discuss other issues associated with the profession of social work.
- Provides ongoing feedback to the student concerning their performance in the field.
- Maintains contact with and meets with the Field Faculty Instructor to monitor student progress.
- Attends field workshops and meetings scheduled on campus before and during the placement semester.
- Completes mid-semester (fall semester only), and final semester evaluations of the student's performance).
- Review and sign the MSW Field Education timesheet on a WEEKLY basis as required by the MSW Program.

### **Role of the Task Supervisor**

The Task Supervisor is an agency staff member who may be assigned to supervise specific learning assignments given to the field student in the absence of or in conjunction with the agency field supervisor. The Task Supervisor (when assigned) should sign the timesheet and participate in the evaluation of the student with the Field Supervisor and student.

### **Role of Student Interns**

All students admitted to the MSW program have three general responsibilities: (1) to attain knowledge and skills in the social work profession, (2) to participate fully in the learning process, and (3) to act in accordance with the ethics, values and norms of the social work profession. To meet these responsibilities, students will also adhere to the following requirements:

1. Students will remain in the same field agency throughout the course of their internship.
2. Students will not complete an internship in the same field agency for the generalist and Specialization internships, except for special circumstances approved by the Field Education Director on an individual basis.
3. Students may not start their agency field education experience prior to the start of the semester except for mandated orientation with the field agency. A maximum of 16 hours of field hour credit will be given for orientation and/or training completed prior to the start of the semester. This does not include completion of requirements to be accepted as an intern such as background screening and immunizations.
4. Students may not continue their placement beyond the last date of the semester (including finals week) without prior approval of the agency field supervisor and field seminar instructor and Field Education Director.
5. Students generally follow the holiday schedule of the University. However, there are some exceptions. For example, if the agency is open on a day that is a holiday for the University, the student is expected to continue to work in the agency on that day. Therefore, students are expected to discuss holiday work schedules with the agency field supervisor to clarify expectations and this should be done in the beginning of the internship experience.
6. Lunch and dinner hours are not part of internship field hours unless students are required to remain with clients during mealtime.
7. Students should not plan vacation or other leave during their internship except during the time between semesters. Agencies may require students to work during spring break or during the semester break. Students cannot earn any hours of field education during the semester break (time off between fall and spring semesters) to carry forward.
8. Time missed for approved reasons must be made-up during the semester in which it was

- missed. Time missed for unapproved reasons may result in a failing grade for field seminar.
9. Professionalism is expected of students always including behaving in a professional manner, keeping commitments to the agency, agency field supervisor and clients. If students are unable to be on time or present when expected, it is critical to communicate your absence to your agency field supervisor immediately.
  10. Students are expected to take initiative in seeking advice, consultation or help from your agency field supervisor, field seminar instructor or the Field Education Director.
  11. Students may attend seminars and workshops offered by your agency or community agency if they pertain to your field education experience and if you have the prior approval and permission of your agency field supervisor. A maximum of 8 hours per semester is approved for attending seminars and workshops outside of the regular practice of the field placement.
  12. Students are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the field agency and field supervisor. Please contact field seminar instructor or field education office if you have concerns about expectations for you as a student.
  13. Site visits will be conducted at least once during your field placement. The field seminar instructor will visit you in your agency to discuss the progress you are making, goals for the remainder of the internship and the application of theory to practice. Students are present during the site visit along with the agency field supervisor. Students are encouraged to let the field seminar know if they wish to meet privately with the field faculty instructor during the site visit.
  14. Mid-semester and final semester evaluations are completed by the agency field supervisor for all students and discussed with the student. Students are strongly encouraged to keep a copy of the evaluations for their records.
  15. Grading for the field seminar for graduate students is on a letter grade basis. Students are expected to earn a "B" or above and ratings of "3" or above on all learning competencies/practice behaviors/specialization practice behaviors to be successfully in field education. Ratings of "2" and below will result in a corrective action plan and may result in a failing grade for field education.
  16. The MSW Program and the field agency will enter an MOU Agreement which outlines the conditions of the field placement.
  17. Students are covered for professional liability insurance by Kennesaw State University while enrolled in field seminar courses (SW 7708; SW 7709; SW 8712 & SW 8713).
  18. Students are not allowed to transport clients in their personal vehicle under any circumstances. Students also may not drive agency vehicles.
  19. Develop with the agency supervisor measurable learning tasks/activities, using the appropriate curriculum for the internship being completed.
  20. Complete the learning contract for the academic year at the start of the fall semester, review the learning contract in at the start of the spring semester, and make additions/changes as appropriate with advisement from the agency supervisor and field faculty instructor.
  21. Participate in activities assigned by the agency supervisor and offer services to client systems with increasing knowledge and autonomy and within the policies and practices of the agency setting.
  22. Students are expected to complete most hours during normal business hours.
  23. Students are expected to attend the field education orientation the first week of classes and cannot begin internship until it is completed.
  24. Student will sign an Internship Placement Agreement during MSW Program Orientation. Student cannot begin internship without a signed Internship Placement Agreement in their field education file.

It is expected that students will meet the required competencies and practice behaviors for the generalist and specialization year course work and field internships; follow the policies and procedures of the respective agency in which they are placed for their internship; and adhere to the standards for

professional performance and conduct as addressed in the NASW Code of Ethics. The *NASW Code of Ethics* is included in the Appendix of the MSW Field Manual & MSW Student Handbook.

### Professional and Ethical Behavior of MSW Students in Field Placements

Field Education in the community involves not only the social work program's educational objectives for the student and faculty, but also encompasses serious professional responsibilities to consumers/clients, social work agencies, and the public.

Field placements are serious business. This is a major component of your social work education. Field is where you get the opportunity to put into practice what you have been learning in your classes, and the beginning of the shift from student to professional. Because of that, you will be expected to display professional behaviors in field, similar to what would be expected of a regular employee.

As a social work student, you are also expected to display professional behavior consistent with the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), the *KSU University Graduate Catalog*, *MSW Student Handbook*, and *MSW Field Practicum Manual and KSU MSW Field Education's Professional Standards and Ethical behaviors*. When you are working at your field placement, not only do you represent yourself, but you represent the Department of Social Work and Human Services and every other student that will come after you.

Unfortunately, one student's poor professional behavior can result in the loss of a placement as an option for future students. Because of that, the MSW Program takes your professional behavior in the field very seriously.

Professional behavior is also a component of your supervisor's evaluation of your performance in field and therefore directly related to your advancement in/completion of the social work program.

It is therefore important to recognize early and respond quickly to problems in performance of students. When the student is performing poorly in field placement, service needs of consumers/clients must become the highest priority. Field Faculty Instructors and Agency Supervisors will take action to protect the needs of consumers/clients and ensure appropriate and ethical service delivery. Students who are assessed as providing inadequate performance in the field are subject to the following:

- provided with corrective and supportive services to assist them to improve their performance;
- dismissal from their field placement and potentially from the MSW program.

### Student Internship Interview Process

Following the interview with the Field Director, generalist and Specialization students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Prepare a current resume.
- The Field Education Director contacts the agency to which an individual student is referred for an interview. Note: Students **cannot** solicit their own internship or contact the agency prior to receiving information from the Field Education Director. All placements are arranged through Field Education.
- Students are required to coordinate and complete field internship interviews with the agency. Students will contact the agency to schedule an interview with the agency primary contact/field supervisor. All students must complete an interview before placement at agency for a possible internship
- If a student is denied a placement following an interview, a second agency referral is made

and the above process is repeated.

- After a maximum of two denied placements, the generalist internship candidate meets with the Field Education Director regarding interview challenges and next steps.
  - The Field Education Director will meet with the student to discuss feedback from agency supervisors. The purpose of the meeting will be to assess and address the issues identified by the field supervisors who interviewed the student and to assist the student in correcting or addressing such challenges. All students denied placements after two agency interviews will be referred to Career Services for additional assistance with preparing for an interview.
  - Students will be given two additional agency sites to complete the same interview process as above.
  - If the student is not accepted after four agencies interview the student must meet with the Director of Field Education to determine their readiness for the MSW Program and field internship. If the issue is not resolved, it will be referred to the MSW Program Director.
  - Additionally, students are not allowed to enroll in courses in the MSW Program without securing a field internship placement.
- All internships MUST be secured prior to the beginning of the Academic year.

### **Generalist Internship**

Generalist students are eligible for field internship placements upon admission to the MSW program. Generalist students are contacted by the Field Education Director approximately one month prior to the New Student Orientation. Students will receive an email with instruction on completing the Generalist Field Education Application. Students will submit the completed application to the Field Education Director at the New Student Orientation and schedule a virtual interview with the MSW Field Education Director to discuss the placement process, student interest and internship opportunities.

A referral to one agency is made after an interview with the field education director and consideration of work and educational background, interests, and availability of field placement agencies. The Office of Field Education cannot guarantee students are placed in one of their preferred agencies, all generalist internships are based on agencies that best corresponds with a student's learning needs.

Students are notified of their placement match via email to their KSU email account.

### **Generalist intern students will also adhere to the following guidelines:**

1. Students will attend new student orientation scheduled within one month of acceptance to the program.
2. Students will attend new student field internship orientation scheduled the first week of classes in the fall semester
3. Students are required to review the Field Education Manual
4. Students must complete any required agency orientation/trainings and submit all documentation prior to the beginning of the field placement.
5. If any problem arises in this process, immediately notify the Field Education Director.

### **Specialization Internship**

As a prerequisite for specialization internship placements, all students must **successfully complete** both the generalist course work and internship requirements, complete the Specialization Field Education application, and interview with the Field Education Director.

Students are contacted in November of the Generalist year during field seminar to discuss the process for specialization internship. Students are provided the Specialization Field Education application and

informed of the deadline to submit their field education application. At that time, students will sign up for spring semester interviews with the Field Education Director to discuss 2<sup>nd</sup> year field internship opportunities.

At the meeting the Field Education Director will provide leadership to and guiding the student through the specialization internship placement process. The student will discuss their three top choices identified on the Specialization Year Field Education Application. The Field Education Director will review how well the student's choices match with the learning opportunities available in the field placement and the "goodness of fit" with the field supervisor and agency, including the style of supervision needed.

Referrals to two different agencies are made after an interview with the field education director and consideration of work and educational background, interests, and availability of field placement agencies. The Office of Field Education cannot guarantee students are placed in one of their top three choices, all specialization year internships are based on agencies that best corresponds with student learning. Students are notified of their placement match via email to their KSU email account.

***Specialization intern students will also adhere to the following guidelines:***

1. The student will complete and return the Agency Interview Feedback Choice Form to the Field Education Director within 5 days of the completing both interviews
2. Students will attend specialization year student field internship orientation scheduled the first week of classes in the fall semester
3. Students will review the Field Education Manual
4. Students must complete any required agency orientation/trainings and submit all documentation prior to the beginning of the field placement.
5. If any problem arises in this process, immediately notify the Field Education Director.

**Preparing for the Agency Interview**

Prior to the agency interview, the Director of Field Education meets with students to discuss the agency interview process. Students can request a meeting with a representative from the KSU Career Services Center to discuss interviewing techniques and other relevant issues. The Director of Field Education engages the students in discussion about the NASW Code of Ethics, NASW Standards and Indicators on Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice in an effort to begin the process of recognizing, understanding, and managing personal biases that may affect their therapeutic relationships with clients.

***Prior to the Interview***

1. Research the organization to review the agency mission, goals, and services.
2. Review the MSW Field Education Manual
3. Review the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>)
4. Review the NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice (<https://www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/NASWCulturalStandards.pdf>)
5. Students schedule the interview after receiving the agency contact information from the Office of Field Education. If the designated contact person cannot be reached, students find out that person's availability and call back accordingly. A student should also leave his/her name, a return telephone number, and the best time to be reached when leaving phone messages. Students are to indicate that they are a potential KSU MSW intern
6. Once the appointment with the potential agency is confirmed, the placement interview should be conducted as a job interview, which requires appropriate professional attire and behavior.

### At the Interview

1. Present in a professional manner during the interview
2. Bring copies of your resume
3. During the interview, students learn the educational requirements and opportunities available at the agency. The interview is a two-way process. Students must have clear goals and learning priorities and be prepared to ask specific questions about:
  - Role of MSW student intern (inquire about student tasks during internship)
  - Learning experiences student can expect; how gradual assignment of professional tasks will likely proceed; skills that can be developed
  - Service delivery; clients served, type of setting (structured vs. unstructured),
  - Your responsibility for any orientation or pre-placement activities prior to interning (such as background checks, insurance coverage, immunizations, specialized trainings)
  - Weekly supervisory meetings with field supervisor, who might it be with, what that might look like; methods of supervision, and supervisory expectations, etc.
4. Students must be prepared to discuss their background, educational and career goals, and why they are interested in the agency and answer questions about:
  - **What is your level of social work experience to date? Experience?**
  - **What do you hope to get out of a field placement in this agency?**
  - **What are your strengths and weaknesses in dealing with people?**
  - **What type and field of social work job will you be seeking upon graduation?**
  - **What type of supervision do you prefer?**
  - **What are your time availability and constraints?**
  - **What is your interest in the target groups served by this agency?**
  - **What is your level of knowledge about the needs of certain vulnerable groups, such as minorities, youngsters and women (i.e. what barriers do they face)?**
  - **What is your ability to work both independently and in teams?**
5. Agency supervisor/primary contact person assess students' level of interests and suitability for the learning experiences available at the agency. If there are clear reservations about the "goodness of fit" between the agency and the student, the agency informs the Director of Field Education via the Agency Intern Interview Feedback form.

### After the Interview

It is strongly recommended to send a thank you letter after your interview. The student should not contact the agency to inquire if they have been accepted by the agency. The student will be notified by the Field Education Director of their internship placement acceptance. Students will be notified of their *generalist internship placements by the 15<sup>th</sup> of July* and *specialization internship placements by the 30<sup>th</sup> of April*.

Occasionally, there could be potential delays in notification of internship placements.

### Confirming Internship Placement

Generalist year students are automatically placed at internships in which they are accepted by the agency supervisor. However, specialization year students are placed at internship sites based on their choice and acceptance by the agency supervisor. On occasions, specialization students may not be placed at their top choices due to not being accepted by the agency field supervisor. No student will be placed at an agency in which the agency supervisor did not accept the student.

A student cannot decline a placement in which they have been accepted to obtain additional agency referrals. If the Field Education Director has determined that an agency offered to a student is the best available match for the student, the student **may not** refuse that placement assignment for non-educational reasons.

Once the student receives the field education internship placement letter from the Field Education Director, they must contact the assigned agency supervisor to confirm acceptance. Once students have made a commitment to their respective agencies, students are expected to complete their field placement in that agency.

If there is an identified problem at the agency before the field internship begins, the student and/or agency supervisor must contact the Field Education Director immediately.

### **Criteria for Agency Selection and Agency Supervisor Approval**

Prior to a student being placed with any agency or organization for internship, the agency must subscribe to the following guidelines, which are derived from the Council on Social Work Education, NASW Code of Ethics and KSU:

#### *Prerequisites for Agency Selection and Approval*

- The agency does not discriminate in hiring or service delivery on the basis of race, creed, gender, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam era veteran, and the selection, assignment and education of students.
- The agency is defined as an organization that is:
  - Public agency
  - Governmental agencies (city, state, and/or federal)
  - Non-profit
  - For-profit
  - LLC private group agency
- The agency is not defined as a solo practitioner in private practice.
- The agency will provide appropriate opportunities for students to work with diverse client populations.
- The agency should be able to assure the availability of an appropriate variety, quality and quantity of practice learning experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Whenever possible, the agency will assure that students will be given the opportunity to work with people of color, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender, other oppressed populations and/or rural communities.
- The agency interviews and approves students' proposals for placement consistent with agency and KSU policies regarding nondiscrimination.
- The agency allows students to practice within the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The agency provides necessary office space, telephone, and other office support to allow students to function effectively in the internship and agrees to reimburse students for expenses incurred on agency business.
- The agency provides an orientation for students, KSU faculty field mentors and/or the Director of Field Education that addresses agency rules, regulations, procedures, facilities and equipment.
- The agency provides meaningful and challenging learning activities respective to the course objectives for generalist and specialization internships.
- The agency will assign a MSW or LCSW agency supervisor responsible for providing a minimum of one hour of face-to-face or virtual (only if the supervisor has completed all required training) supervision per week.
- The agency must notify the field faculty instructor and/or Field Education Director when there is a change with the designated agency supervisors.
- The agency consents to students leaving the agency, if necessary, to obtain learning experiences unavailable in the agency.



- The agency gives students time off to attend internship related meetings with the understanding that the internship hours are made up.
- The agency allows students to work with staff members within the agency and with outside resources significant to the agency's services.
- The agency will provide an increase in the complexity of tasks as students gain confidence and competency.
- The agency will only bill third-party payee for services rendered by student intern(s) that are legally allowable in the state of GA. Also, in accordance with GA Composite Board and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. (Please see: <https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/2014-02-25AnnouncementreDOLandField-EF.pdf.aspx>)
- Whenever possible, the agency may provide students with financial support in the practicum placement. Although it is not required, it is strongly encouraged that agencies provide financial support to student intern(s) in which the agency bill third-party payee for student (intern(s) services rendered. Internships that provide financial support are subject to the following guidelines/restrictions/requirements:
  - The agency will not hire the student intern(s) as an employee while the student intern(s) is actively enrolled in the KSU MSW Field Internship course.
  - Planning and prior approval are required. Requests for financially supported placements are made to the Field Education Director.
  - Student fieldwork must be educationally oriented, designed to meet the educational needs of the student and the educational objectives of the Social Work Department, as outlined for field instruction.
  - The decision to offer financial support, and the amount offered, is entirely up to individual agencies. These funds should be paid directly to students as a stipend.
  - Agencies' ability to offer, or not offer, financial support, will not affect their standing with the Social Work Department as a field placement site. Agencies approved as placement sites need to continue to meet the criteria established for field instruction.
  - Students in financially supported field experience, and agencies providing the support, must conform to all policies, procedures, and expectations outlined for students in field internship placements.
  - The student's learning plan is used throughout the internship as an educational tool as well as for any issues that may require clarification or problem solving related to student performance or the tasks and assignments given to the students during field work.
  - Whether an internship must be paid or unpaid is a decision for the agency. For information on that question, please see the GA Composite Board and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Also: <https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/2014-02-25AnnouncementreDOLandField-EF.pdf.aspx>

#### *Prerequisites for Agency Supervisor Selection and Approval*

The person designated as the agency supervisor by the approved agency serves as a key partner in the field education program to prepare students to become competent social work practitioners. The essential role and responsibility of the agency supervisor is to collaborate with the field faculty field instructor to provide students with vital on-site learning experiences and opportunities for professional growth and development. Most importantly, the agency supervisor is to exemplify the values, ethics, knowledge and skills of the social work profession.

At minimum, agency supervisors are expected to hold a MSW degree with a minimum of two years of post MSW experience. The minimum requirements for specialization year student interns' agency

supervisor is an LCSW.

### *Process for Becoming an Agency Supervisor for MSW Student Interns*

- The agency completes application for approval as internship site.
- Upon agency approval, interested staff who meet the criteria to become an agency supervisor submit a Credentials Form or resume to the Office of Field Education and attend an orientation for agency supervisors prior to providing supervision to any graduate MSW interns.
- The potential supervisor must exhibit a willingness to mentor challenging as well as exceptional graduate interns.
- The potential supervisor understands the importance of social work education and the MSW curriculum at KSU.
- The potential supervisor understands of the role of agency supervisor as an opportunity to learn and grow professionally and personally.
- The potential supervisor shows a willingness to examine his/her own supervisory styles and approaches, handle day-to-day situations with the student, and his/her commitment to the standards of social work education and practice.
- The potential supervisor maintains cordial working relationships with colleagues.
- The potential supervisor manages his/her current workload at a satisfactory level while providing a minimum of one hour of supervision per week to each intern as well as group supervision when appropriate.
- All **generalist year intern(s)** supervisors must have a MSW/LMSW with two-year post MSW experience. Other graduate level disciplines such as LPC's or LMFT's, may provide daily/task supervision.
- All **specialization year intern(s)** supervisors must have an LCSW. Other graduate level disciplines such as LPC's or LMFT's, may provide daily/task supervision.

### *Agency Supervisor Responsibilities*

- Attend the required Supervisor Field Program-sponsored training for supervisors each year in the fall.
- Meet weekly with the intern for a minimum of one (1) hour of supervision for both generalist and specialization interns
- The agency supervisor will orient students to the administrative structure, policies, purposes and services of the agency.
- The agency supervisor will identify tasks and learning opportunities within and outside the agency setting.
- The agency supervisor will support and encourage students to interact both formally and informally with other members of the agency and to attend community workshops of special interest to individual students and the placement agency.
- The agency supervisor will monitor all assignments by offering appropriate direction and coordination.
- The agency supervisor will provide consultation sessions designed to enhance students' learning and performance.
- The agency supervisor will require accountability for practice behaviors while in the field placement.
- The agency will not hire any student while the student intern is actively enrolled in the KSU MSW Field Internship course and interning at the agency.
- The agency supervisor will assess students' competence by completing written evaluations for each student.

The agency supervisor will complete and submit all required field education documentation on time (i.e., timesheet, supervisor expectations, student placement agreement). If serious concerns about a

student's ability to meet professional expectations are identified, document such concerns and follow protocol in developing an intervention plan to seek remediation of the concerns.

### Employment-Based Internships

Students seeking a field internship experience in their place of employment must receive approval by the Field Education department. While this is not always the ideal situation, there are times when a field practicum assignment in places of employment can be beneficial for the student. Therefore, field internship assignments in places of employment must be educationally focused and structured appropriately to achieve the goals and objectives of the field internship course.

Students interested in worksite internships must submit in writing to the Field Education Director their request for Employment-based Internship by November 30<sup>th</sup> for specialization year placements and immediately upon acceptance into the MSW Program for generalist year placements. Submitting this request does not guarantee approval of the request. All requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. Final approval will require completion of additional forms. Students may have their internship located within their employing agency if the following conditions are met and approved by the MSW Field Director:

- The agency is currently an approved internship agency.
- The intended agency placement is administered in accordance with the same guidelines established for all other students.
- The student assigned field faculty field instructor, and the Office of Field Education are assured that the student and the agency supervisor will have release time for academic and field supervision respectively.
- Field placement assignments and instruction are educationally focused field internship.
- The activities and assignments for fieldwork are specifically related to the internship course objectives.
- The agency must be able to provide a placement experience that meet the requirements for generalist and/or Specialization field internships.
- The agency supervisor meets the criteria established for field agency supervisors.
- The activities and assignments for the internship are clearly delineated and separate from other work assignments:
  - Consisting of a different set of tasks
  - Located in a different work unit or division; and
  - Field Agency Supervisor is different that the student's current employment supervisor
- The agency must be willing to allow the field supervisor to attend field education training and have sufficient time to provide the minimum of at least one hour/week supervision for the student.
- The agency and student will sign a Release of Information from the student with their place of employment. Additionally, if the student is terminated as an employee the student must understand this is an automatic termination as MSW student intern.
- If the above criteria are met, final approval will require completion of additional forms. All forms must be received by the deadline. Once the application is submitted to the Office of Field Education, it will be reviewed and a response will be given as soon as possible to indicate whether the placement has been approved. A site visit may be required as part of the application review process prior to determining approval.
- Students must complete a Release of Information from their employer to KSU.
- Each proposal that meets the above criteria is examined on its own merits.

**Exclusions from Employment-Based Placement include:**

- Agencies that are very small or are highly specialized private practice settings;
- Agencies owned and/or operated by student's relatives (marriage or birth);
- Students who are in a position of authority (CEO, Director, etc.) or are self-employed;
- Agencies that have existed for less than 1 year and/or have not yet developed or implemented formal operating policies and procedures; and
- Agencies under investigation or that have been sanctioned for fraudulent or unethical activities.

**Credit for Work Experience**

In accordance with the Council for Social Work Education standards, **no credit is given for prior work or life experiences.**

**National and International Field Internships**

Currently, the field education program does not allow students to complete international internships. There are no approved internship placements located out of state or internationally. Therefore, students are not allowed to complete internships out of state or internationally.

**Criminal Background**

Due to accreditation standards and/or agency policies, many field placement agencies require one or more of the following: criminal history check, drug screening, and verification of health status. Students will not be allowed to participate in their field education practicum in agencies that require these checks/screenings unless the student consents to and completes the required check, screening, or health care verification before beginning the field placement. In addition, some agencies might choose to complete random checks and screenings throughout the course of a placement. To continue in the placement, the student must consent to a check/screening on the schedule requested by the agency.

A criminal history could be grounds for an agency declining to accept or terminate a student. As a result, the Field Education Office may be unable to identify a field placement for a student with a criminal history. If a field placement cannot be identified, completion of degree requirements is not possible, and the student will not receive the MSW. **Additionally, students with criminal histories may not be able to obtain social work licensure in Georgia or other states post-graduation. For guidance on this matter, students are advised to check the appropriate board of the state in which they are seeking licensure/certification.**

Field placement agencies may or may not require students to pay for the criminal record check and/or other fees associated with these requirements. In this case, the student will not be reimbursed by the University.

❖ *Please see Criminal Background Policy*

A student must immediately notify their agency supervisor if they are arrested and/or convicted of any crime while completing their internship at the agency. Disciplinary action, including termination of a field placement and/or removal from the social work program may be the outcome if a student is arrested and/or convicted while completing their internship. Additionally, failure to report such behavior to their field supervisor may result in disciplinary action, including termination of a field placement and/or removal from the social work program.

**Drug Screening**

Some field placement agencies require drug screening of students placed with their agency. It is the student's responsibility to inquire about drug screening requirements **during the placement interview with the field instructor.** Of the agencies that require screening, some conduct the drug

screening themselves and some agencies require that the student obtain their own screening and provide the agency and/or the field office with the results. Students may be able to have a drug screen done by their personal physician. Other vendors may also be used for drug screening; however, the student should first confirm with the agency/field instructor whether the proposed vendor meets the agency's requirements. Unless the field placement conducts the screening itself or chooses to pay for the screening, the student is responsible for the cost of the drug screen and will not be reimbursed by the Department of Social Work and Human Services or the University.

Should an agency refuse to accept a student for placement or retain a student intern (in the case of a random screen) due to the results of a drug screen, and such drug screen has been verified by the drug-screening vendor's medical review officer, the student must contact the Field Education Director who will refer to the Field Performance Committee (FPC) for review. The FPC will determine a plan of action for the student and consult with the MSW Program Director and/or Department Chair. The Field Education Director and MSW Program Director will make a plan with the student regarding continued matriculation in the MSW Program. Only on completion of this plan may the student once again be referred for a field placement. Given the time required to complete this lengthy process, students need to be aware that their matriculation in the program might be delayed.

In addition, any criminal charges because of drug or alcohol use that occur while a student is interning at an agency as a student at KSU may result in disciplinary action, including termination of a field placement and removal from the social work program.

## Insurance

**Professional Liability** – KSU MSW program provides a blanket professional liability insurance policy for all students through the National Association of Social Workers who are completing an internship at an approved site. All students must be enrolled in SW 7708, SW 7709, SW 8712, and SW 8713 and are not covered for tasks they agree to perform outside of or after they have received the grade for the course. Students may also purchase additional professional liability insurance.

**Automobile Liability** – Students are not covered by the University's automobile insurance policies. Students are expected to purchase their own auto insurance. Additionally, students are not allowed to transport clients. Therefore, the student is responsible for any expenses incurred while performing field duties.

**Medical/Mental Health Coverage** – Students have the option of medical coverage by the University. However, all enrolled students have free access to the University's Counseling and Psychological Services. Please contact KSU Counseling and Psychological Services for more information.

## Agency Conflict of Interest

The MSW Program believes it is not in the student's, agency's or the clients' best interests to allow a student to complete an internship at an agency where the student or family members currently work (See Employed-based internships) and/or have been a consumer of services. Therefore, a student is not permitted to complete their field internship at an agency where they or family members were former/current consumers of services or family members are currently employed. Some exceptions may apply and will be considered on a case by case basis.

Additionally, students are not permitted to complete their field education work in an agency or institution owned by a family member. Therefore, a student's family member may not serve as a field and/or task supervisor for the student. Students are obligated to notify the field education office if a family member is employed in any capacity with the placement agency, organization, or

institution.

### **Agency Assignment Procedure for Students with Disabilities**

As required by federal and state law and KSU policy, internship placements must be accessible to students with disabilities. This requirement means that students with disabilities should have the same kinds of educational opportunities - including field placements. However, given the wide range of disabilities, it is possible that not every placement will have the capability to accommodate every student. It may not be feasible, for example, for a site to accommodate students who use wheelchairs because of the site's location and existing architecture, but this same site could easily accommodate students with visual or hearing impairments. Every effort is made by the Office of Field Education to ensure equal access to internship opportunities.

Students with special needs must contact KSU Student Disability Services and the Director of Field Education after being accepted into the MSW program to discuss accommodations that may be necessary in the internship site. It is the student's responsibility to present the accommodation letter to the Director of Field Education. This should be done prior to or during the time period in which the field director is selecting a field placement for the student so that accommodations can be arranged. Please note that your accommodations cannot be activated unless they are filed with the Field Office. If the field education director has questions or concerns about the special arrangements or accommodations, he/she will consult with Student Disability Services and/or the MSW Program Director. No student will be denied accommodations noted in the letter from ODS.

Student Disability Services Kennesaw Hall, Room 1209  
(470) 578-3197  
8:00 am to 5:00 pm (Monday – Friday)

Please visit the Student Disabilities Services website at <http://sds.kennesaw.edu/index.php> for more information.

***If a MSW student registers with KSU Student Disability Services (SDS), The Office of Field Education will not disclose any information to the field agencies. It is the students' responsibility to disclose any information regarding their disability and request accommodations.***

### **Title IX**

Pregnant students may contact the Title IX Office 440 Bartow Avenue NW, English Building, Suite 202, Kennesaw, GA 30144 (470) 578-6057 to request assistance with accommodations. Examples of accommodations include, but are not limited to, rescheduling tests or exams, excusing absences, submitting work after a deadline, providing alternatives to make up missed work, or retaking a semester. The Title IX Office may facilitate communications with the student's professors or assist with other University resources. Visit here: <https://equity.kennesaw.edu/titleix/title-ix.php> for frequently asked questions and their answers about the University's compliance with this aspect of Title IX. In addition, the field office will submit information to the Title IX office when requested.

### **Additional Field Placements**

The Social Work Program does not allow for additional field placements for students in the program who are on track to complete the 60 credit hours required for graduation. Students interested in additional training are encouraged to volunteer (agency other than field internship agency) and/or apply for post-graduate fellowships.

## DURING THE FIELD PLACEMENT

### Required Paperwork

Students and Field Supervisors will be asked to complete and submit the following forms during field placement. Blank forms can be found on the Department of Social Work and Human Services website; please ensure that you download the version appropriate to the student's level (Generalist or Specialization.)

- **Field Supervisor Expectations and Guidelines Form:** This agreement outlines the general expectations of the Field Supervisor, and Task Supervisor (if applicable). *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Field Placement Agreement Form:** This agreement outlines the general expectations of the student, Field Supervisor, and Task Supervisor (if applicable) including the start and end dates and required number of hours for the field placement. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Field Internship Waiver:** This form outlines the general risks associated with participating in a field practicum. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor*
- **Field Internship COVID-19 Acknowledgment Form:** This form outlines the risks associated with participating in a field practicum due to COVID-19 and other safety concerns. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Learning Contract:** This form is a living document which defines the scope and focus of each student's individual field experience. At the beginning of the field placement, the student and Field Supervisor list the tasks, activities, and projects in which the student will engage, and relate each to the CSWE competencies and behaviors. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Mid-Semester Evaluation (Fall semester only):** Mid-way through the field placement, the student and Field Supervisor complete a mid-term evaluation to rate how the students is acclimating to the field placement. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Time Sheets:** All students are required complete a timesheet to document their hours at the field internship. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Field Evaluation Form (Final Semester Evaluation: Fall & Spring):** At the end of the field placement, the Field Supervisor provides an evaluation of the student's development based on the activities/task identified to meet the practice behaviors based on the 9 competencies. The student's scores are based on their continued learning and development. The Field Supervisor should meet with the student to discuss the evaluation. Additionally, the field supervisor is asked to recommend a grade for the student's field placement. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Additional Evaluation (students):** At the end of the field placement, students will complete an evaluation of the Field Education Program, including the performance of the Director of Field Education, the field supervisor, and the field agency in which the student was placed. This evaluation is in addition to the standard KSU course evaluation, which is sent to all students University-wide. *Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*
- **Additional Evaluation (Field Supervisors):** At the end of the field placement, Field Supervisors will complete an online evaluation of the Field Education Program and the Field Faculty Instructor with whom they worked and will provide feedback about the process for placing students with the agency and communicating with the MSW Program. A link to this evaluation will be provided via email from the Director of Field Education.

*Please see field education calendar for the due date to the field faculty instructor.*

### **Field Education General Policies and Procedures**

The MSW Program expects students to have a thorough orientation to their field agency before becoming involved in direct or indirect practice activities. It is also expected that students will be provided with a variety of micro, mezzo, and macro practice activities that reflect the nine CSWE competencies outlined in this manual. In addition, students should be given workloads that allow for the regular processing of their experiences, both through regular supervision and at other times as appropriate.

### **Performance Standards for Students in Field Education**

In addition to agency policies and procedures, students are expected to adhere to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice and the KSU MSW Field Education's Professional Standards and Ethical behaviors. The NASW Code of Ethics & Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence are located at:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

<https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=PonPTDEBrn4%3D&portalid=0>

### **Student Impairments**

The NASW Code of Ethics explicitly states “social workers should not allow their personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance use, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgement and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.” Therefore, if a student is experiencing any personal problems that places themselves, the agency and/or the clients at risk the student will be required to discontinue their activities at their internship until the problem is resolved. Additionally, the student will not be allowed to “attend” internship to only complete hours until the problem is resolved. Prior to returning to their field internship and resuming field activities, the student will be referred to the Field Performance Committee to develop a plan of action. Only on completion of this plan may the student once again return to field placement. Given the time required to complete this process, students need to be aware that their matriculation in the program might be delayed.

### **Field Faculty-Student Relationships**

The *NASW Code of Ethics* is clear regarding the character of professional relationships. In keeping with the spirit of the Code of our profession and in recognition of the power faculty potentially have over the academic careers of students, intimate relations between faculty and social work students are unacceptable.

Students who experience discomfort when observing or being subjected to a field faculty member's (1) personally directed sexually oriented remarks in or outside of the classroom or (2) inappropriate behaviors of a sexual nature, (i.e. intimate touching, kissing, caressing) are experiencing sexual harassment.

Further, field faculty are cautioned against behaviors that create the perception of sexual harassment. Under no circumstances is it acceptable for a faculty member to date a social work student. It is the belief of the Department of Social Work and Human Services that amorous relationships between faculty and their students, due to the natural power imbalance between faculty and students, could be potentially damaging to the student. Just as social work practitioners should not date their clients; field faculty should not date their students.



Students should follow the University's policy on sexual harassment to report any inappropriate behaviors.

### **Agency Staff-Student Relationships**

While in field placement, agency staff serve as Field Supervisors, Task Supervisors, and agency colleagues. As such, sexual harassment of a student by field agency staff is strictly prohibited. Field agency staff are to conduct themselves in a professional manner in all their dealings with KSU social work students. Dating between agency staff and students is not acceptable. Allegations by students regarding sexual harassment by agency staff should be reported to the student's Field Faculty Instructor, Field Education Director, and to the MSW Program Director.

### **Student-Client Relationships**

The *Code of Ethics of the NASW* urges social workers to avoid dual relationships with clients whenever possible and 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 clients' family members. Therefore, non-professional relations between social work students and agency clients or family members are unacceptable. Any student that violates this policy will be referred to the Field Performance Committee for a plan of action.

### **Freedom of Information**

The MSW Program takes a collaborative approach to student learning. In the educational interest of the student, it is sometimes necessary to confer with faculty, staff, agency supervisors, and other agents of the University regarding the student's academic progress and professional development. The purpose of these consultations is to support and assist the student in their educational endeavors. For more information, please refer to the KSU Policies and Procedures under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

### **Disclosure of Student Trainee Status**

In accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics, social work students must identify themselves as student trainees to patients/clients either verbally or through the use of nametags and in signing notes in records or charts and all other documents produced by student trainees for or on behalf of the field agency.

### **Georgia HB 280, Campus Carry**

In 2017, the Georgia legislation passed HB 220, allowing anyone who is properly licensed in the State of Georgia to carry a handgun in a concealed manner on property owned or leased by public colleges and universities, with some exceptions. This right is not extended for students in their field placements. Students in off-site agencies will abide by the agencies' policies regarding the right to carry firearms on the agency site or on the property of agency clients.

### **Field Education Time Requirements**

During the generalist year, students are expected to complete two full days per week on Mondays and Tuesdays (16 clock hours per week) for a minimum of 240 hours (Total 480) at the internship placement each semester. ***Due to COVID-19 there are changes to the fall 2020 field internship hour requirement. (See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 ONLY)***

- Generalist Internship (fall semester): minimum 240 hours (two 8-hour days per week for 15 weeks)
- Generalist Internship (spring semester): minimum 240 hours (two 8-hour days per week for 15 weeks)

During the Specialization year, students are expected to complete three full days per week on

Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (24 clock hours per week) for a minimum of 360 hours (Total 720) at the internship placement each semester.

- Specialization Internship (fall semester): minimum 360 hours (three 8-hour days per week for 15 weeks)
- Specialization Internship (spring semester): minimum 360 hours (three 8-hour days per week for 15 weeks)

Students may not carry field hours forward to the next semester. Students may not “bank” hours to complete the internship early. Therefore, students must remain at the agency until the end of the semester. Students are not allowed to work from home/telecommute. However, students may complete a maximum of 16 hours of online/webinar trainings per academic year. Otherwise, all hours must be completed at the approved internship site. *(See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 ONLY)*

All students are required complete a timesheet to document their hours at the field internship. The documentation of hours is utilized in monitoring advancement toward the completion of the prescribed hours in the field experience. At the end of each semester, students are required to submit the field faculty instructor the original timesheet signed by the student and agency supervisor and task supervisor. All students are required to submit a timesheet to pass the field seminar course.

### ***Falsification of Field Hours***

Falsification of field hours will result in a failing grade for the field seminar course and a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. All hours earned during the semester will be forfeited by the student. Approval to move forward in the MSW Program will be made by the MSW Professional Performance Committee.

### ***Student Schedules and Attendance***

The student and the field supervisor should work out the daily schedule for assignment to the agency during placement. The regular schedule established should allow the student opportunities to be actively involved in the agency's services, to participate in agency functions, and to attend campus seminars. Any needed variations in the regular, established schedule (e.g., attending night meetings, occasional weekend work, using compensatory time, etc.) must be planned and agreed upon in advance by the student and the field supervisor. Agency orientation should include procedures regarding student absences, arrangements for making up missed time, and requesting time off. **The faculty of the Field Faculty Instructor and/or Field Education Director must be contacted if a student does not report to the agency as scheduled in the beginning of the semester and if there are frequent absences.**

The majority of available agencies provide services during the typical work week of Monday-Friday, 8:00 – 5:00 pm. It is important for students to be in agencies when there are maximum opportunities for interaction with other professional staff to facilitate student participation in professional decision making and collaborative work.

Lunch breaks are not counted as field hours unless they are an agency-required “working” luncheon meeting. Likewise, time spent commuting to and from the agency at the beginning and end of each scheduled work session may not be counted as field hours.

Students are expected to remain in the assigned agency from the beginning date of the semester until the ending date of that semester, for both fall and spring semesters. Under no circumstances are students allowed to shorten their internship.

**The field faculty instructor must be notified by the student of any extended absences (more than 3 days).**

A conference will be arranged with assigned agency personnel, the Field Faculty Instructor, and the student in cases where there is significant concern about the ability of a student to function in an agency due to absences, illness, or other problem situations that may arise during placement.

### ***Holidays, Vacations, and Religious Holidays***

KSU has an established calendar of holidays and break periods. Students are expected to follow the official KSU holidays and breaks (Labor Day, Thanksgiving break, winter break, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and spring break). However, there are exceptions, when agencies require students to attend their field placements during school break periods so that the client and agency relationships are maintained. This will be addressed on a case by case basis. It is expected that the student and agency supervisor will create a plan to address this issue. All parties should consult with the field faculty instructor for final approval of any alternative plans.

Vacations should be scheduled during university and internship site holidays. Student vacations scheduled during an academic semester may result in drop in grade and/or termination from the internship. However, any missed time during the semester must be made-up during the semester in which they were missed.

Students are authorized up to one excused absence each semester for religious observances. Students who wish to request more than one excused absence in a semester for religious observances will need to discuss with their field faculty instructor and field supervisor to request the additional absence; additional absences can be granted only by the student's assigned field faculty instructor and the student will be required to make up the hours in the semester in which they were absent. Students should notify their agency if they will not be in the agency on a day the student is participating in a religious observance required by their faith. Primary holy days for religious observance are noted on a Web-based interfaith calendar site at [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org).

### ***Sick Leave and Personal Emergencies***

The MSW Program does not excuse students from the field experience for personal reasons (e.g., personal time, sick leave, bereavement, family crisis, weddings, or special events). Therefore, any missed time due to any sick leave or personal emergencies must be made up. Students requesting leave due to illness or family bereavement are expected to notify their field faculty instructor and agency supervisor before or on the day leave is used. Each agency supervisor determines what constitutes sufficient notice for a request of leave. Excessive absences due to leave time must be reported to the assigned field faculty instructor.

Students should discuss the requirements for make-up during supervision with the agency supervisor and with the field faculty seminar instructor if they have concerns regarding this requirement.

Generalist year students have every Friday (days not in class or field placements) to make up time due to illness or emergencies and are expected to work with their agency supervisor to make up any time missed during their field practicum. The MSW program recognizes that specialization year students do not have as much flexibility to make up days missed during the semester. Therefore, planning make up days with their field agency supervisor and field faculty instructor should be discussed and agreed upon prior to the end of the semester.

It is very important that every effort be made to treat **all students** (generalist and specialization) equitably regarding requests for an alteration in field time. Agency supervisors are requested not to make unilateral decisions about unusual requests for time off in the field even though it is understood that the student must make it up later. The agency supervisor should discuss such a request with the field faculty instructor who has a better overview of the total student group. Also,

when any long absence is anticipated due to medical treatment, surgery, etc. this must be discussed with the field faculty instructor, with further planning carried on between the field faculty instructor, student, and the field supervisor.

### ***Study Abroad***

Students planning to participate in Study Abroad programs must notify their agency supervisor at the start of the semester of these plans. While classes may be excused absences, field hours are **NOT** excused absences while participating in Study Abroad. Students must discuss with their agency supervisor how missed field internship hours will be made up in the semester in which they are absent. Students must notify the field faculty instructor of the plan to make-up field hours.

### ***Other Absences from the Internship***

In addition to their regularly scheduled class sessions, students may be absent from the practicum in order to register and to be present at a final examination class session, which is often scheduled (by the University) at a time different from the regularly scheduled class time. Students are expected to inform their field supervisors of these dates as soon as possible and to make appropriate plans for their professional responsibilities. Occasionally, a class instructor will make special plans for an activity that is not on a regularly scheduled class day; in that case, the student and field supervisor must assess whether the student can be absent from the field placement at that time, and appropriate plans must be made by the student for professional attention to agency responsibilities to make-up any missed hours in the field internship.

Student attendance at assigned instructional activities (classroom and field education) is expected, in accordance with University policy. No systematic exception to this general University policy can be made. Therefore, any permission for attendance at a non-assigned activity (i.e., attendance at committee meetings, professional conferences, etc.) must be obtained from the classroom instructor(s) and/or field supervisor whose class(es) and/or field work would be missed to attend other activities, as based on their judgment relative to the educational value of both the classroom and the field education activities. Students are required to make-up any hours missed at the field internship for activities that are not field related activities. Students must also discuss with their field faculty instructor.

### ***Conferences, Trainings, and Webinars***

Students are expected to attend orientation training if the agency provides this type of activity. Students can attend orientation training before the first day of placement. The student must notify the Field Director in writing, specifying dates in attendance and hours to be completed. The field office will allow up to one week of orientation hours (16 or 24) before placement to count toward field hour requirements. Field education placement orientation does not constitute an automatic excused absence from other classes. Students must consult with their instructors if orientations conflict with other classes.

Students may be asked to participate in other trainings, conferences, and webinars. In order for this type of activity to count toward field hours, the student must get prior approval from both his/her field agency supervisor and his/her field faculty instructor. The field department will allow up to 16 hours of conferences and trainings and only 8 of the 16 hours can be webinars, if such activities are approved. Students should maintain documentation of conferences, trainings, and webinars (e.g., completion certificates for webinars) and attach them to student logs. Please note that the educational activities must directly relate to your field placement, as noted in your learning contract. *(See COVID-19 Addendum for Fall 2020 ONLY)*

### ***On-Call Hours for Field Placement***

Some agencies will require students to rotate being on-call for the agency. If you are in an agency

that requires on-call, the on-call schedule must be during your regular internship hours and with supervision. Students are not allowed to be on-call after-hours.

### ***Student Continuation in the Agency and/or with Clients of the Agency after the End of the Placement***

Occasionally, agencies seek to employ a student with whom they have worked in the field placement. Agencies are not allowed to employ a student while an intern. Agencies can hire a student after termination of the student's internship. This process will assure that the necessary safeguards are in place to protect the integrity of the learning experience of the student.

Following the end of a student's field placement, it is strongly recommended that the student not continue to provide service in the agency as a volunteer. A student should not continue to render professional services to a client to whom he/she was assigned as part of the practicum.

Continuation of service to clients of the agency after the completion of the practicum, will be considered a breach of professional social work ethics.

### ***Inclement Weather/Breaks***

If the assigned field site is closed during inclement weather, students are not required to make up any missed field hours, up to a maximum of 8 hours per semester. If the agency is open during inclement weather, students **should consider personal safety first** when making decisions to travel to and from their agency. As always, your agency supervisor should be contacted as soon as possible if you find yourself in this situation. If a student chooses **not** to travel, the student must make up the missed hours by the end of the semester. You will be required to make up any hours missed if the University is open. Field supervisors are strongly encouraged to be flexible with students in planning for activities that would make up the hours. Questions about individual circumstances should be directed to the student's assigned field faculty instructor.

### ***Dress Code***

Students must follow the same dress code required of agency employees. Students must adhere to the placement agency's policies regarding appearance such as professional dress, tattoos, or body piercings.

### ***Agency Reassignment Process***

If the agency supervisor, student and/or field faculty instructor believe that the agency is not appropriately meeting the educational needs of the student, a student may be reassigned to another agency. This action is taken only if it is documented that all efforts have been made by all parties to correct the problem.

A meeting with the student, field faculty field instructor, agency field supervisor, and the Field Education Director must be held to discuss the concerns. Any change of placement is coordinated with the Field Education Director (Reassignment is only approved for educational reasons). The placement site for students under these circumstances is selected solely by the Field Education Director. If a student is reassigned to a new agency, there will be a delay in securing another placement for the student. The timing of the delay is dependent upon the time that it takes to secure the new placement and may be several weeks. Student must make-up all hours missed during this process. For reassignment to a new agency a new Learning Plan must be completed within the first month of placement. An evaluation is also required from the initial placement agency.

Students terminated by a field agency due to performance do not follow under these guidelines. In addition, under no circumstances is a student allowed to quit an internship assignment before consulting with their field faculty instructor and/or the Field Education Director. Reassignment to

another agency will be made on cases by cases basis.

### ***Repeating Placements***

Students are discouraged from completing their field placement in one agency setting/department for two year-long placements. A special written request must be made to the Field Education Director outlining the rationale for completing field requirements in the same agency twice, specifically explaining how specialization year learning objectives will be achieved and what new learning opportunities will be available. Students are required to use different MSW/LCSW supervisors for their generalist year and Specialization year field placements. Submitting this request does not guarantee approval of the request. All requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. The request must be submitted to the Field Education Director by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Injury While in Field Placement***

Medical services that may be required by a student due to injury occurring while performing field duties are usually not covered by the agency (unless the student is employed by the agency and covered by Workman's Compensation), and not covered by Kennesaw State University. The student's own medical insurance may or may not cover the medical treatment depending on the insurance plan.

### ***Procedures for Reporting an Incident***

If an incident occurs in which a student is threatened or hurt, the student threatens or hurt a client or agency staff, the agency field supervisor must contact the student's field faculty instructor and/or the Field Education Director immediately to discuss what actions the agency and MSW Program must take to address the issue.

All parties involved should document accordingly and submit the documentation to the Field Faculty Instructor. The documentation must include the incident and the steps taken to address it. The Field Education Director will meet with the student, field faculty instructor, and agency field supervisor to discuss the situation, assess the immediate and ongoing risk, and find a resolution that promotes the student's sense of well-being and the learning process.

### ***Communicable Diseases & Exposure Incidents***

If a student is diagnosed with a contagious disease and a physician informs the student that this illness could be spread by casual contact and could seriously endanger the health of others, including staff or clients at the field agency, the student is required to report this information to the Field Faculty Instructor and Field Education Director and to cease attending the field placement. Subsequently, the student should ensure that a written report from the physician is sent to the Field Faculty Instructor and Field Education Director explaining the issues regarding the illness and public contact.

The Field Education Director, in consultation with the assigned field faculty instructor, and student, will develop a plan to determine whether the student can or cannot continue in the field placement based on the nature and severity of the illness. If the student is temporarily unable to continue in their field placement, a plan will be developed to determine how the student can complete the required hours when no longer contagious.

Before returning to the field placement, it is the student's responsibility to provide the field faculty and Field Education Director with documentation from a physician stating that the student is no longer contagious or presents a health risk to others.

### ***Safety Issues***

The MSW Program is aware of risk to agency staff and students in situations regarding contact with

the public and in the field of social work. These risks are reviewed during field orientation with students. Students need to be aware of the need for personal safety to act in a manner to minimize risks whenever possible.

Agency supervisors must include a discussion of safety issues and steps that students can take to minimize risk within their organization as part of the student orientation to the agency.

Students are not permitted to transport clients in their personal vehicles under any circumstances. If a situation should occur where a student or client experiences a safety issue, it should be reported immediately to the field faculty instructor and/or the Field Education Director and written documentation should be submitted by the student and agency supervisor within 48 hours of the incident. The Field Education Director will notify the Director of the MSW Program.

### ***Transportation***

Students are responsible for transportation to and from the agency. However, unless prevented by law or agency policy, it is expected that the student assumes the expenses for all agency-delegated activities that include travel. The Social Work Department does not reimburse students for field travel expenses. Students are not allowed to transport clients in their own automobiles or drive agency vehicles to transport clients.

### ***TeleMental Health***

Students are allowed to provide virtual services via encrypted HIPPA compliant technology devices. All students are encouraged to complete a training prior to providing any telehealth services at their field internship.

### ***Home Visits***

Students in Field Education are to perform duties and tasks expected of a professional social worker including, but not limited to, home visits, community-based meetings, staff development, and documentation as they represent valuable learning opportunities. Students are not allowed to complete home visits alone; they must always be accompanied by an agency staff member. However, when completing a home visit, the student is expected to follow agency guidelines on home visits like those followed by agency staff members. To guide the student and the agency, the following safety principles are strongly suggested:

1. All home visits must be made with the full knowledge of the agency.
2. The supervisor should be aware of time of departure, time of return, and other activities on the trip.
3. Students should know how to access a supervisor always while conducting a home visit.
4. Students should not conduct a home visit if they feel threatened or if they detect the presence of drugs or alcohol.
5. Students should be aware of dogs or other household pets which may be a threat.
6. Students should know whom to call and what steps to take if they should experience a vehicle breakdown.
7. **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT TAKE RISKS.**

Students who feel they are being asked to conduct home visits that do not follow these guidelines are urged to discuss the situation with their agency field supervisor. If the situation cannot be resolved, then students should consult their field faculty instructor. If an agency is unable to accommodate the safety of a field student, the field placement may be terminated.

### ***Sexual Harassment Reporting Procedure***

Any individual who believes they have been sexually harassed by their agency field supervisor or any agency staff should report their complaint to the Field Education Director and/or MSW Program

Director and/or their field faculty instructor. However, in cases where the accusation is made against the Field Faculty Instructor, Field Education Director, MSW Program Director or Field Faculty Instructor, the Chair of the Department of Social Work and Human Services and/or the Dean should be contacted. All complaints regarding sexual harassment will be reported per the University's policy.

### ***Mandated Reporting & Training***

The State of Georgia has laws that cover mandatory reporting of suspected child or elder abuse and the duty to warn if a client is harmful to self or others. Field agency supervisors are responsible for educating all students regarding their agency's policy and procedures related to these laws.

Students should not be required to be the primary mandated reporter without the assistance of a staff at the agency while functioning as an intern in a field placement. This role is reserved for field site personnel who are responsible for ensuring that all field placement policies, regulations, laws, and ethical obligations are followed. (Students who have concerns about how these policies are being carried out in the agency, on a case-by-case basis, should contact their assigned field faculty instructor.) When possible, the student can assist and should have exposure to situations that involve mandatory reporting and duty to warn.

All students enrolled into the MSW Program are required to complete a mandated reporting training in the fall of their generalist year in the field seminar course. All information regarding this training will be provided in the SW 7708 course.

### ***Coronavirus (COVID-19)***

All students enrolled into the MSW Program are required to complete COVID-19 training in the Fall 2020 in the field seminar course. All information regarding this training will be provided in the SW 7708 & SW 8712 course. See COVID-19 Addendum for details regarding COVID-19 policies and procedures.

### ***Trauma-Informed Care Training***

All students enrolled into the MSW Program are required to complete the trauma-informed care training in the fall of their generalist year in the field seminar course. All information regarding this training will be provided in the SW 7708 course.

### ***Night and Weekend Placements***

There are minimal approved sites that offer night and weekend hours. These agencies are few and under no circumstance will the educational objectives of the curriculum be compromised to allow students to secure non-traditional placements. Agency supervisors must be available to provide weekly supervision for the students.

### ***Title IV-E Child Welfare Placement Requirements***

Title IV-E students must complete at least one field placement at a State of Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) site that is approved by the KSU MSW Program and DFCS. This placement must be completed in the generalist year of field internship (SW 7708 and SW 7709).

Under no circumstances are students allowed to meet the Title IV-E field internship requirements in the Specialization year field internship (SW 8712 and SW 8713) placements.

### ***School Social Work Placements***

Students completing internship placements in school settings adhere to the school district's calendar and must take their breaks on the school's (internship site) and not the university's schedule.



However, the total number of clock hours for internship must still be met.

### ***Hospital/Medical Center Placements***

Increasingly, hospitals and medical centers are requiring that student interns provide proof of liability/malpractice insurance before a placement can begin. In addition, they usually need a completed background check, proof of certain immunizations and specialized training to be completed. During the field placement interview, students need to inquire about required liability coverage, background checks and specialized training (e.g., airborne pathogens, universal precautions). Students who accept internship positions at agencies that require immunizations, specialized training, background checks, proof of health insurance, or any other trainings/documents are financially responsible for obtaining those required documents, unless the agency is willing to do so. Students who are placed at hospital settings are not allowed to provide direct services to patients who have tested positive for COVID-19.

### ***Social Media and Technology Guidelines in Social Work Practice***

Social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, and various blog sites are just a few examples of new and exciting ways to connect with others and share information. Likewise, technology has broadened social workers' capacity to assess and manage information about clients, influence policy, address social justice issues, and receive supervision. However, the rapid growth of social media communication tools and their ease of accessibility can also have unintended and potentially damaging consequences if basic guidelines are ignored. Students are expected to adhere to social work values, ethics, and engage in professional conduct as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics. In addition, NASW, ASWB, CSWE, CSWA recently released the Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice (hereafter referred to as Technology Standards) when using social media communication tools and related technology. These two sources provide guidance to students and practitioners regarding the use of social media and technology. The Technology Standards address many issues, including accurate representation of self, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, conflicts of interest and dual relationships, separation of personal and professional communications, use of search engines, and accessing client records remotely, to name just a few. Utilizing technology and social media as a social work professional requires ongoing attention to numerous ethical challenges.

As a social work professional, it is important to consider whether you are using social media channels and technology for professional activities such as advancing social justice issues, advocating for vulnerable populations and promoting your professional identity versus using these sites to maintain contact with friends and family. Your **professional image**, that is, the professional self you develop that is guided by social work values and ethical standards, extends beyond the field agency and physical setting of an office. As social workers, we must be cognizant that the legal, ethical and clinical responsibilities we have as professionals and that those obligations extend to the virtual world of the Internet and include the use of social media communication tools. As with the Hippocratic oath to "first do no harm," it is imperative to consider how to be connected within the context of social media along with unrestricted access to information on the Internet, and while protecting yourself, your field site, your clients, the Department of Social Work and Human Services, and the profession.

***As you get started in your field placement, it may be helpful to explore the following questions with your field instructor and/or task supervisor.***

1. Does your field site have a policy on the use of social media and technology? If so, review the policy with your field instructor. If not, what expectation does the agency have regarding the use of social media and technology during field hours?
2. How much personal information is shared with clients and former clients as well as agency

staff and professional colleagues?

3. What are the most common ethical concerns you should be aware of when using social media and technology as a professional social worker?

To help facilitate these conversations, consider the following topics for discussion with your field instructor and/or task supervisor.

***What are the agency guidelines regarding the use of Facebook and who can you friend?***

Managing friend requests and maintaining privacy settings is critical regardless of whether you use social media for personal and/or professional reasons. Allowing clients, former clients, or others in your professional circle to cross into your personal life may complicate and blur your professional boundaries. This is particularly tricky when managing Facebook accounts. As a professional, you must fully consider the extent of your privacy settings, how you will manage friend requests, your level of self-disclosure, and how you will monitor wall posts or other interactions on your site. Be aware that if you do not employ any privacy settings on your social media site, your profile is public and anyone can see what is on your page. Additionally, people can see when you are tagged in photos, view comments made by others, note your status updates and see who you've friended. All professionals must evaluate the scope of their social media connections. Since this is still an emerging professional topic, some professionals may be cautious and guarded in their use of social media while others may be more open and exposed. It is your responsibility as a professional social worker to abide by the Code of Ethics and Technology Standards, including your virtual communications and use social work values and principles to guide your interactions.

***What privacy and confidentiality concerns should I consider when texting, emailing and/or using Twitter or Snapchat?***

With the proliferation of handheld devices, accessing the Internet and connecting with others is literally in the palm of our hands. Text, email, Twitter, and Snapchat are quick and effective ways to communicate with others however many ethical, legal, and clinical issues must be addressed when using these communication tools. There is a huge potential for unintentionally sharing protected information so always use good ethical judgment. Be cautious about discussing information about your field placement, classroom work, or agency staff on your cell phone. Do not discuss confidential or private information about clients, colleagues, or agency practices even if you are disguising the information. In general, consider the security, privacy and confidentiality of all communication methods and when in doubt, seek consultation and supervision before embarking into unfamiliar or uncertain areas.

***Can I check my personal social media accounts during field hours?***

In general, your time in field and the resources provided to you in your field placement are to be used for field related matters. Before using social media communication tools on behalf of your agency, be sure to seek approval of any messages or posts. Be careful not to endorse or promote a product, cause or position without prior approval. If you have personal sites, it is best to maintain them on your own time using your own computer.

***I can't find anything in the Code of Ethics that specifically mentions social media, so does that mean the Code of Ethics does not apply?***

**Absolutely Not!** The NASW Code of Ethics provides a variety of standards that social workers should consider when engaging in the use of social media.

While the Code of Ethics may not explicitly mention social media, the recently released Technology

Standards address many issues not discussed in the Code of Ethics or these brief guidelines. The Technology Standards contain fifty-five specific standards, along with an interpretation of each standard.

It is the expectation of the Kennesaw State's Department of Social Work and Human Services MSW Program that all students become familiar with and adhere to the NASW's Code of Ethics when using social media and NASW and ASWB Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice for the use of technology before placement at their internship. Please review the following:

- <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- [https://www.socialworkers.org/includes/newIncludes/homepage/PRA-BRO-33617.TechStandards\\_FINAL\\_POSTING.pdf](https://www.socialworkers.org/includes/newIncludes/homepage/PRA-BRO-33617.TechStandards_FINAL_POSTING.pdf)

Take some time to review these guidelines with your agency field supervisor and seek to identify other ethical standards that are applicable in your practice setting. As a social work student, you are continually developing a professional identity and you must be cognizant that your private world has a greater likelihood of becoming public when using social media and other forms of technology. Field supervisors, colleagues, and even clients may have access to information via the Internet that you would otherwise limit to your friends and families so we encourage you to consider the personal versus professional role of social media in your life and your field setting.

*Adapted from (2017) School of Social Work, University of North Carolina, Field Manual, p. 234.*

## Field Internship Activities

This section describes the essential activities involved in the field internship experience, the development of the Learning Agreement document, field placement evaluation, and the Field Performance Committee (FPC) process. The Field Education Program's approach to the practicum experience is grounded in theories of adult and applied learning. The process of field instruction emphasizes experiential learning that begins with the student's knowledge and experience, builds on that base by adding new information (theory), and proceeds to the immediate application of that learning. Instrumental to this cycle of learning is evaluative feedback and self-evaluation. A supportive teacher-learner partnership is critical to these processes. Effective learning also requires students and field supervisors to actively question theory and practice through critical analysis.

### Orientation to Field Education

Graduate students are required to attend a field education orientation meeting the first week of classes and before reporting to their assigned agencies for the generalist internship. MSW Field Orientation is mandatory for all MSW students entering field. Students must contact the Field Education Director in advance if they are unable to attend mandatory field orientation due to a documented excused absence. In the event of an excused absence, students will be assigned to make-up field orientation session.

Students who miss both the mandatory field orientation and make-up orientation will be deferred for field until the orientation is completed. Students may not begin their field placement until they have attended orientation. Any hours completed by a student prior to attending field orientation will not be counted.

### Field Seminar/Integrative Internship Course Grade

A grade for the field seminar course is assigned by the student's field faculty instructor and based on review of the agency supervisor's written evaluation, timesheets, and other class assignments required for the course. Field seminar course grades are based on letter grades of A, B, C, D, or F, and is assigned at the end of each semester in which the student has registered for field seminar course. See MSW Program in the graduate college catalog for more details.

### **Assign a grade of “F” for the Field Education course:**

A student will be assigned a grade of “F” for the field seminar course when there are especially egregious circumstances that would seriously jeopardize the integrity of the social work program, the educational standards of the Department of Social Work and Human Services and the University, the field agency and/or the profession, or be considered potentially harmful to the clients with whom the student would be working. Please see the MSW Student Handbook and graduate college catalog for details when a student receives a grade of “F” in any field seminar.

### **The Learning Contract**

The Learning Contract is a collaborative document produced by the student and the field agency supervisor. Due dates for the learning agreement are established by the Field Education Director. The student has primary responsibility for writing and designing the learning activities, which are a product of self-assessment, careful planning, and extensive discussion with the agency field supervisor and the student’s field faculty instructor. This process requires students to take an active part in articulating assignments and tasks they plan to complete in field to aid them in accomplishing the internship outcomes. The Learning Contract provides a focus for student learning throughout the year, establishes and clarifies mutual expectations, and describes the means for evaluation of student competency.

The student Learning Contract marks an important step in building the collaborative relationship between the student, the agency field supervisor, and the assigned field faculty instructor. Developing the Learning Contract provides students with an opportunity to structure their field experience in the way that will be most beneficial to their own educational needs and interests. Throughout the field placement, the student and the field supervisor should review the student’s current Learning Contract to assess the relevance of identified activities. Over the course of a field placement, new opportunities will arise, different interests will develop, and students will have a more realistic idea of what can be accomplished during the hours they are in the field, leading many students to desire changes to their Learning Contract. Modifications to the Learning Contract must be approved by the agency field supervisor and submitted to the field faculty instructor for final approval.

### **Competency Evaluation in Field Education**

Evaluation is a continuous process that encourages active student participation and input. It is based on education related criteria that are openly shared with the student. It takes situational factors into consideration, is tentative and is concerned both with student strengths as well as areas for potential growth. It is enacted in the content of a positive relationship.

Evaluation is an integral part of social work education and social work practice. The continual assessment and evaluation of one’s own practice and awareness of one’s use of self are basic to social work. Evaluation is a beginning place for a process that will continue throughout one’s professional social work career. Comprehensive evaluation includes the following considerations:

- Recognition of evaluation as a continuous process encouraging active (student) participation and input;
- Students are expected to be familiar with the content of the written evaluation and have the opportunity to read and sign it;
- Signature means the student has read the evaluation but not necessarily agrees with the content;
- When a student disagrees with any part of the evaluation, the student is expected to address concerns with the agency supervisor to resolve the matter;
- If disagreement is still unresolved, the student is to put in writing his/her concerns which become part of the evaluation report turned in to the field faculty instructor;
- All internship evaluations become part of the student’s permanent record and become

- property of the student's Field Education files;
- Records are only open to students and faculty or staff in the MSW program;
- Evaluation may not be used for reference letters or any other purpose; and
- Material cannot be taken from the file without written consent from the student.

Evaluation of the student's performance and assessment of the agency as a placement setting are ongoing activities during the placement year. Evaluation is an inherent and ongoing process that enables students and their Field Supervisors to maintain their focus and commitment to the learning objectives of the social work field internship. Opportunities for such evaluation occur on a regular basis in both formal meetings at the agency and University, as well as during informal contacts between Field Faculty Instructors, Field Supervisors, and students. A clear understanding of the evaluation criteria should be agreed upon in the first semester of the placement. If there are problems with the student's performance during placement, the Agency Field Supervisor should pursue resolution of the problems with the student. If resolution is not successful, the Field Supervisor should immediately notify the Field Faculty Instructor.

### ***Agency Field Supervisor's Evaluation of Student***

Each Agency Field Supervisor should review with the student the learning goals and objectives specified in the student's learning contract and the field evaluation forms. Sources of information used to assess the student's performance during a placement term include observations by the Agency Supervisor, input from others, and review of written materials. The Agency Field Supervisor is responsible for providing close supervision of the student's work and evaluating assignments. Students are responsible for continually assessing their own learning needs and progress.

The Agency Field Supervisor in collaboration with the task supervisor (if applicable) completes a mid- semester (fall only), and end of semester evaluations. All completed evaluations must be reviewed with student. Grades are assigned for field seminar by the Field Faculty Instructor based on the semester evaluation, completion of field hours and completion of the field seminar course assignments. **Students will not receive a grade for field seminar course (SW 7708, SW 7709, SW 8712, or SW 8713) without submitting a signed evaluation and all the other required documents.**

Evaluation of the student's performance in the field is a collaborative process between the agency supervisor and the field faculty instructor. The agency field supervisor is responsible for providing to the field faculty instructor two evaluations for the fall semester: at mid-term and at the end of the semester and one for the spring semester (end of semester evaluation). The student has the right to read and countersign the evaluation and may add an addendum should they wish to do so. The final grade for a given semester is assigned by the field faculty instructor based on a review of the mid-year and final evaluations by the agency field supervisor, observations and visits to the agency by the field faculty instructor, completing and submitting all field seminar assignments and field internship documents. Each field faculty instructor provides a copy of each student's grade to the Director of Field Education.

## **Field Internship Concerns, Reassignment of Placement, and Termination**

### ***Field Internship Concerns***

If a student, agency field supervisor, or task supervisor has a concern about any aspect of field education, the issue should be first reported to the assigned field faculty instructor. Then, if not resolved, a report should be made to the Director of Field Education.

If the concern occurs after the placement has begun, in most circumstances, the assigned field

faculty instructor will schedule a joint meeting with the student and the field/task supervisor. The purpose of the conference is to explore in-depth the concerns of all involved parties and the agency and to determine an action plan.

During the joint meeting, an action plan will be developed that includes:

- A clear identification of problems in learning/teaching;
- Specification of the expected behavior changes;
- Necessary actions and procedures to be taken; and
- A time to review the progress made on the action plan.

When the issue involves agency field/task supervisor concerns about student performance, agency field/task supervisors are expected to provide the student with behaviorally specific feedback prior to placement termination (unless there is an egregious incident or behavior). Likewise, students who have concerns about their field placement are expected to directly discuss those concerns with their field supervisor either prior to or during the joint conference.

### **Reassignment of Placement and Termination**

It is expected that most placement concerns can be resolved through a joint meeting process. Due to the Program's multiple obligations including the interests and needs of the student, the field agency, the agency field/task supervisor and the agency's clients, serious consideration must always be given to the decision to change a field placement. However, if there is a decision to remove the student from the assigned placement, the following policies will apply.

#### **Agency Field/Task Supervisor concerns about the student:**

If the agency field/task supervisor determines that termination of the student from the field placement is the only option, then the placement will end, and an alternative plan will be developed for the student. Agency field/task supervisors voluntarily supervise students, they have the right to terminate an internship if they can no longer work with the student.

#### **Student concerns about the placement:**

Decisions regarding placement reassignment based on student concerns or challenges at the agency are made by the assigned field faculty instructor with the approval of the Director of Field Education. Any student who prematurely terminates a field placement without the prior approval of the Director of Field Education risks permanent denial of reassignment into a field placement setting.

*Student field placement reassignments are taken into consideration when an agency is unable to meet the student's learning needs. Reassignments are not allowed due to a student's personal circumstances.*

Regardless of the reason for the termination from the field placement, the agency field/task supervisor, in consultation with the field faculty instructor, should determine the best way for the student to end the field placement in a professional manner.

When a student leaves the field placement mid semester, the agency field/task supervisor should complete the mid-semester evaluation. If a student leaves the placement after mid-semester, the agency field/task supervisor must also evaluate the fieldwork performance using the end of semester Supervisor Evaluation of Student form appropriate to the student's program level.

### **Steps Following Termination of Placement**

In consultation with the Director of Field Education and depending on the circumstances, alternate

plans for the student can include one or more of the following:

- Reassign the student to a new field placement;
- Reassign the student to a new field placement with conditions;
- Referral the student to the Field Professional Performance Committee;
- Assign a grade of F for the associated field education course.

Students who are approved for reassignment of their field placement must also be accepted at the new agency. During the interview, the student must be prepared to discuss the reason for their reassignment with the prospective field/task supervisor. Once the student has been accepted into the new agency, the prospective agency field/task supervisor may need to know information regarding the student's previous placement experience. It's the student's responsibility to share information regarding the status of the student's social work competencies and practice behaviors and conditions of the field placement (if applicable).

The student who is reassigned will be required to make up any missed field hours in order to fully meet the required number of field hours. Additionally, the student will be required to participate in additional orientation hours at the new placement, which will be counted toward the required number of field hours. The length and scheduling of this time is to be negotiated with the Field Education program and the agency to which the student is reassigned. All generalist field hours must be completed prior to matriculating to the specialization year.

When applicable, only one reassignment will be made when the reassignment of the student has been made due to poor performance.

### ***Tips for General Problem-Solving in Field Placements:***

- Identify problems early. Discuss concerns of any type with the individuals involved and work towards resolving problems before they increase in size or scope.
- Keep supervision notes. Students and Field Supervisors can benefit from having written records of issues or concerns discussed in weekly supervision meetings.
- Communicate clearly. Written and verbal communication should be professional, thoughtful, and strengths based.
- Keep everyone in the loop. The student, Field Supervisor, and Field Faculty Instructor should all be aware of any concerns and attempts to address concerns at all times.
- Make the evaluation process transparent. While problems should be documented on mid-term and final evaluations, the evaluation should not be the student's first notification of the problem.
- Use the Director of Field Education for consultation, reflection, and advice. Students, Field Supervisors, and Field Faculty Instructors all have access to the Director of Field Education as a problem-solving resource at all times.
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### **Field Performance Committee Problem Resolution Policy**

#### **The Field Performance Committee (FPC)**

It is expected that students will meet the required competencies and practice behaviors for the generalist and Specialization year course work and field internships; follow the policies and procedures of the respective agency in which they are placed for their internship; and adhere to the standards for professional performance and conduct as addressed in the NASW Code of Ethics. The *NASW Code of Ethics* is included in the Appendix of the MSW Field Manual & MSW Student Handbook.

The Field Performance Committee (FPC) serves as both a consultation resource and a performance review committee. The committee consist of the MSW Field Education Director (committee chair), Field Faculty Instructor, Agency Field Supervisor and/or Task Supervisor (if applicable), and a student representative (Department of Social Work and Human Services faculty) selected by the student.

Any party to the fieldwork process or any party questioning a student's deficiencies in field internship, violation of agency policies and procedures or professional performance as it relates to violation of the NASW Code of Ethics (supervisor, faculty field instructor, faculty member), may request consultation or initiate a request for review by the FPC. The MSW program attempts to approach student's field work and professional performance matters in a preemptive fashion, to the extent possible.

An important issue for students during the field internship is that of confidentiality of case records and recordings. Students are expected to review their work with clients to include tapes, written materials to include supervisory sessions with **their supervisors, appropriate agency personnel during case conferences and staff meetings and/or field faculty instructors**. The student cannot discuss or share client records or information with parties outside the agency unless given permission to do so by the agency supervisor with appropriate permission from the client. If students use case materials for written or verbal classroom assignments/presentations, to include bio-psychosocial-spiritual assessments, they must inform the agency supervisor and ensure that the materials exclude names or other identifying client information to ensure confidentiality.

Each student must carefully read the NASW Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics is discussed with students in Field Seminar and in various classes. A student's failure to meet first and second year competencies and practice behaviors, adhere to agency policies and/or follow standards of professional performance and ethical conduct, as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics, will be considered grounds for a performance improvement plan. If the performance improvement plan is not appropriately followed by the student, they may receive a failing grade, and be terminated from the program.

### ***Concerns Regarding Students' Performance in Field Placements***

At times, concerns may arise regarding a student's professional performance, and or his/her overall compatibility with the field of social work. Such concerns often originate from Field Instructors, Task Supervisors and/or Field Seminar Instructors, but may also come from faculty members or faculty advisors, as well as the MSW Program Director or the Field Education Director. Specific concerns may include professional behavior and demeanor, as well as fulfillment of professional standards and/or requirements in the field (e.g., completing all required hours, process/journal recordings, learning contract, etc.).

When such concerns arise, the first step is to resolve the situation informally. This may include a meeting between the student and the initiating party (e.g., Field Supervisor, Task Supervisor, Field Seminar Instructor) to discuss the concerns and provide suggestions for remediation. If the attempt to informally resolve the issue is unsuccessful, or if the issue is serious enough to require an immediate response, a formal meeting will be held by the Field Performance Committee (FPC) which consists of the Field Agency Supervisor, Task Supervisor, if applicable, Field Faculty Instructor, and Director of Field Education. Upon deliberation, a plan will be developed together with the student who will be asked to modify their behavior in some way, and/or seek professional help to address the concerns at hand within a specified time frame. This performance improvement plan will be completed in writing and signed by all relevant parties. A copy will be provided to the MSW Program Director.



If the identified concerns are not addressed sufficiently, and within the designated time frame, the student will be subject to possible dismissal from the program. A formal meeting of the Professional Performance Committee (PPC), consisting of the Field Director and Field Faculty if field related, MSW Program Director, a faculty member of the student's choosing, and other individuals as deemed appropriate, is required. Student will also participate in the PPC meeting to present their side of the issue. The student then leaves the meeting. The PPC makes a decision about what is next for the student, including possible dismissal. The student will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision within three days of the meeting.

### ***Performance Improvement Plan***

In certain circumstances, a performance improvement plan will be established to ensure that the student addresses any identified performance concerns. This is an action plan intended to clearly identify behavior-related or performance problems and provide an opportunity for the student to succeed in their field placement. Discussion regarding the need for a performance improvement plan may be initiated by the Field Supervisor, Task Supervisor, Field Seminar Instructor or the MSW program faculty. Note that this plan is not intended to address academic performance issues – it is focused solely on addressing the student's professional performance or challenging behaviors in the classroom or field.

If a student struggles to exhibit professional behaviors expected from a social work intern and there has been demonstrated sustained professional performance or behavioral issues, either in the Field Seminar classroom or in the field after informal resolution has not solved the issue, the student will be required to complete a written performance improvement plan. The implementation of the plan will be considered if the following have been determined:

- The student has not satisfactorily completed the required number of field hours, or the required number of process/journal recordings.
- The student has not satisfactorily participated in all Field Education Seminar discussions.
- The student has received adequate training for and/or information about specific field-related tasks prior to their expected completion, but still exhibits performance difficulties.
- The issue(s) is likely to be successfully addressed through a performance improvement plan and does not constitute a serious ethical violation.

When the Field Supervisor and/or Task Supervisor identifies deficient performance, the Field Supervisor may consult with the Field Faculty and/or the Field Education Director to determine next steps. First an informal resolution is applied where the student, the Field Supervisor, and the Field Faculty Instructor discuss the issue and try to solve it. If the behavior continues, a Performance Improvement Plan is created by the FPC together with the student.

Once it is determined that a performance improvement plan is necessary, the initiating party (e.g., Field Supervisor, Task Supervisor, Field Seminar Instructor), in collaboration with the student and other relevant individuals, develop a concrete action plan. The plan must include goals that clearly outline the expected improvement in performance, with concrete timeline for achievement. The plan must be approved by the Field Seminar Instructor and the Field Education Director and placed in the student file. A copy of the plan will be provided to the MSW Program Director. If the student fails to improve their performance and fails to meet expectations detailed in the plan in a timely manner, a recommendation will be issued by the FPC to the PPC. Final recommendations regarding actions, including possible dismissal from the agency, will be made by the PPC and communicated to the student in writing within three days of the PPC meeting.

### **Stepwise Process for Resolution of Field Concerns**

Overall, behavior-related or performance issues in the field will generally be addressed as following:

1. **Step 1: The Informal Resolution:** The issues are clearly identified by the appropriate parties. The Field Supervisor /Task Supervisor will contact the Field Faculty Instructor and/or Field Education Director for consultation. The Field Faculty Instructor and/or Field Education Director will offer guidance to the agency personnel and the student by telephone or in person. A site visit will be conducted if necessary. Specific recommendations for improvement are made and consequences for failure to meet expectations are clearly communicated to the student. Specific feedback is provided to the student by the Field Supervisor, Task Supervisor and/or Field Faculty Instructor (depending on the issue at hand), including examples of problem behaviors and strategies to improve performance.
2. **Step 2: The Performance Improvement Plan:** If the issues persist or are serious and warrant a formal intervention, a written performance improvement plan will be established in accordance with the procedures described in the previous section. If the recommended changes do not occur by the dates listed on the performance improvement plan, the student will be informed that failure to meet performance standards may result in dismissal from the agency and/or a failing grade in the field seminar course. The performance improvement plan will be signed by all parties involved and a copy provided to the MSW Program Director.
3. **Step 3: The Dismissal Phase:** If performance issues continue despite establishing a performance improvement plan, or if an extremely serious one-time event occurs (e.g., unprofessional or unethical behavior placing the student, clients, agency or University at risk), the Field Supervisor /Task Supervisor /Field Faculty Instructor or Field Director (as appropriate) will write a summary of the problem and recommendations to the PPC. A copy of the summary will be provided to the student and the MSW Program Director. The PPC will make final decisions regarding the student's possible dismissal from the MSW program. The student may appeal the decision of the PPC by following the grievance/appeal process listed in the KSU Graduate Catalog.

### **Managing Problems in Field**

Managing problems in field placement is considered to be a part of students' professional development.

The expected informal problem-solving steps are:

1. Student shares concerns directly with the field supervisor to discuss how problems/concerns can be managed or resolved. A follow-up email from the student to the field supervisor documenting discussions is recommended.
2. If the collaboration with the field supervisor in Step 1 does not adequately manage the problem, the student should notify the assigned field faculty or field director so that a problem-solving meeting between the student, the field supervisor, and the field faculty can be convened.
3. If concerns continue following a meeting with the field faculty, then the field director will meet with the student, field supervisor, and field faculty for additional collaboration and solution finding. If concerns are not resolved, next step will be the formal process of a meeting with the FPC to address the concerns.

Please note: If a student is uncertain about how to best begin addressing a problem/concern, the student may first request a consultation with the field faculty prior to Step 1. If desired, the Field Faculty may consult the Field Education Director. Following this preliminary consultation, the student is expected to engage in each of the steps outlined above as necessary to manage the problems/concerns.

If the student refuses to address placement concerns with the field supervisor using the process described above, the field director will request a meeting of the PPC. Refusal to engage in the problem-solving process could result in dismissal from field.

### ***Requests to Terminate a Placement***

A student may request to terminate a placement if problems/concerns interfere with learning. However, the decision to terminate a placement is only made after all reasonable efforts to resolve the concerns have been exhausted. Students are not permitted to resign from a field placement without prior approval from the Field Director.

Any student who wants to request termination of placement must first engage in the problem-solving process described in the Managing Problems in Field. Following that, a student may submit a written request for placement termination to the field faculty instructor. The request should include in detail the student's concerns about the placement experience and all efforts that have been made to resolve the issues. The field faculty instructor, field supervisor, and field director should be copied on the request for termination. The field faculty instructor will review the student's request and may consult with the field supervisor and/or the field director. The decision to terminate a placement is made by the field director in the collaboration with the field faculty instructor.

Termination of a placement may result in a change in the student's graduation date. The field faculty instructor in collaboration with the Field Education Director will review the hours and activities completed by the student in the initial placement to determine whether any of these hours may be carried over to a new placement. However, a new placement agency may require the student to complete the full-term hours as a condition of placement. The student may need to complete additional hours at a new field placement so that adequate orientation and learning opportunities can be ensured.

### ***Unsatisfactory Progress in Field***

If a student does not demonstrate satisfactory progress toward competency in field, a field supervisor has the right to terminate the student's placement at any time. If this happens, the PPC will convene together with the student and the Field Supervisor. If students have demonstrated some commitment to their own learning, field supervisors may be willing to give students the opportunity to achieve satisfactory performance. The following process is followed when a student's performance or progress in field is unsatisfactory, and the field supervisor is willing to continue to work with the student.

- The field supervisor should first discuss the concern(s) with the student and give the student the opportunity to respond to feedback and improve performance. The field supervisor is asked to document discussions with students regarding problems with performance or conduct and provide a copy to the field faculty.
- If the student's performance does not improve, the program asks that field supervisor contact their field faculty to discuss concerns regarding student performance. If the field faculty instructor is not available, field supervisors are to contact the field director. The field faculty instructor and field director will discuss the situation and make a decision about how to respond including a written performance improvement plan. A deadline will be set for demonstrating performance improvement. The student will be informed

that failure to meet performance standards may result in dismissal from the agency and/or a failing grade in the field seminar course. The field supervisor will document the plan on the appropriate form. The plan will be signed by the student, field supervisor, field faculty instructor, and field director. A copy will be provided to the MSW Program Director. If the student does not agree to the plan, the student's placement at the agency will be terminated.

- If the plan is not met within specified time, or the field supervisor has decided to terminate the student's placement, or if there are serious concerns that the student may not succeed in placement, the FPC will meet to make a recommendation to the PPC which will then meet to review the concerns to discuss recommendations and what actions to pursue. Student will participate in the PPC meeting to present the issue from their viewpoint, then leave the meeting. If the field supervisor decides to terminate the student's placement, the field supervisor should contact the Field Faculty Instructor.

If the student does not achieve mastery of the competencies and performance standards of the field practicum, a grade of "F" will be assigned.

### ***Dismissal from Placement and Appeal Procedure***

Every field agency must sign an agreement for student placement with the University. The agreements stipulate that the Agency may dismiss from placement any student whose performance or conduct does not justify continuance in field placement at the Agency. Consequently, any field agency that determines that a student's continuation in placement jeopardizes the quality of client services or agency reputation, or disrupts normal agency operations, may elect to immediately terminate the student's placement. Whenever possible, field supervisors are asked to contact the field faculty instructor and/or the field director before making a decision to dismiss the student to proactively address any concerns about student performance that might lead to termination of placement.

Upon notification by the agency of a student's dismissal, the field faculty instructor will provide the Dismissal Form to the field supervisor to complete. The field supervisor is to complete the form detailing the reason(s) for dismissal. The field faculty instructor may contact the agency for additional information and will review all documentation of cause for dismissal. The field faculty instructor will also meet with the student to get the student's perspective on the situation. The FPC will make a decision as to whether the student is eligible for placement in another setting.

**If the FPC determines that the student is eligible for another placement**, it is highly unlikely that the student will be able to begin placement at another agency before the start of the following semester. Consequently, the FPC determines a plan and next course of action and the following procedure will be implemented:

- The student is to schedule a meeting with the field director to initiate placement planning. The field director will work with the student to evaluate appropriate options for placement.
- The field director will request that the student sign a *Release of Information* form so that information about the student's prior field experience and learning needs can be shared with prospective field supervisors, if necessary.
- The field director will provide at least one agency for the student to interview for another placement. The MSW Program cannot guarantee that the student will be accepted by an organization for another placement. It is the student's responsibility to secure the placement through a successful interview.

If a student's placement is terminated by the agency due to poor student performance, ethics violations, violation of agency policy, or professional misconduct, the FPC may recommend that the student is not eligible for placement and receive a grade of "F" for the course and will refer the student to the PPC for a final decision. The PPC will notify the student of their decision in writing within three (3) days of meeting.

**If the PPC determines that the student is *not eligible to interview for another placement*, the student will receive an "F" for the course at the end of the semester. If the student elects to appeal the grade of "F", the student must follow the grade appeals procedure in the MSW Student Handbook.**

### ***Termination of a Field Placement and Dismissal from the Program***

Students may be terminated from a field placement due to a variety of performance-related problems described above. These problems generally include a lack of compliance with established policies and procedures, as well as ethical and/or work performance issues that violate established expectations. Additionally, students may be terminated from a field placement if they receive a failing grade in the Field Education Seminar due to failure to meet the course's expectations. Termination from a field placement due to professional performance issues may result in termination from the MSW program if not remediated according to the written remediation plan. Exceptions to this rule will be made in extenuating circumstances only. Please see the MSW Student Handbook for details regarding dismissal from the program. If a student is dismissed from the program, he/she is entitled to appeal the dismissal in accordance with policies and procedures set by the Graduate School.

### ***Appeal Procedures***

Students may appeal any decision made by the PPC regarding their academic or professional performance, including dismissal recommendations. The appeal must be made in writing to the Department Chair, within two weeks of the written recommendation of the PCC. The Chair will review the relevant materials and may meet with the student and any involved parties prior to issuing a decision. If the matter is still unresolved, additional steps will be initiated (i.e., involving the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services, who may forward the grievance to the Graduate College, if necessary). Specific steps for the appeal process are described in detail in the MSW Student Handbook and can be found on the University's website.

### ***Field Evaluations***

At the end of each semester, a field evaluation is completed for every student. The evaluation is initially completed by the Field Supervisor, with input from the student and the Task Supervisor, if applicable. There are separate evaluation forms for the generalist practice and the specialized practice years, as distinct competencies are addressed in these two types of field placements. The evaluation is based on these required competencies, as well as the specific assignments detailed in the Learning Contract. The completed evaluation form is forwarded to the Field Faculty Instructor, and a copy is provided to the student. The Field Faculty Instructor then conducts an independent rating of the student's progress and determines the final grade for the seminar based on the components detailed in the syllabus. The student has the opportunity to address any areas of concern prior to the assignment of the final grade. If the student is in jeopardy of failing, the student, field supervisor, or field faculty instructor can request a formal meeting with the Field Supervisor and Task Supervisor (if applicable) and the Field Faculty Instructor to discuss the student's performance.

### ***Student Leave of Absence (Academic and Field Education)***

A leave of absence may be requested in writing by a student who is in good standing, in both his/her academic and field work. Please see the MSW Handbook and the Graduate College policies for

more information. Field internships will automatically terminate for any student approved for a leave of absence. Student will resume and complete all incomplete hours when he/she return to the program. Please see the MSW Handbook and the Graduate College policies for more information.

### **Readmission Policy**

Students, who withdraw from the program prior to completing the degree requirements, may submit a letter to the Director of the MSW Program indicating an interest in reapplying to the program. The letter must be written within a five-year period from the date of withdrawal from the program. The Director of the MSW Program will consult with appropriate faculty and subsequently notify graduate admissions if the student is to be readmitted. The Director of the MSW Program has the final decision.

## **Forms**

**Form A: NASW Code of Ethics**

**Form B: Criminal Background Policy**

**Form C: Standards of Professional and Ethical Behavior in Field Education**

**Form D: CSWE Statement on Department of Labor Regulations for Internships**

**Form E: MSW Field Education Application (Generalist)**

**Form F: MSW Field Education Application (Specialization)**

**Form G: Learning Contract Form (Generalist)**

**Form H: Learning Contract Form (Specialization)**

**Form I: Acknowledgements & Signatures**

**Form J: Time Sheet Form**

**Form K: Field Placement Agreement (Generalist)**

**Form L: Field Placement Agreement (Specialization)**

**Form M: Student Self-Evaluation (Generalist)**

**Form N: Student Self-Evaluation (Specialization)**

**Form O: Field Supervisor Evaluation of Student Mid-Term (Fall only)**

**Form P: Field Supervisor End of Semester Evaluation of Student (Generalist)**

**Form Q: Field Supervisor End of Semester Evaluation of Student (Specialization)**

**Form R: Student Evaluation of Field Placement and Field Supervisor (Spring Only)**

**Form S: MSW Field Education Incident Report – Student Form**

**Form T: Field Performance Improvement Plan**

## Frequently Asked Questions

The following information provides a summary of the KSU MSW Program's Field Education Program. More extensive information can be found in the *MSW Student Handbook* and the *Field Education Program Manual*.

### 1. What is the purpose of field education?

*Field education is an integral part of both the Generalist and Specialization Curricula. Classroom learning focuses on discrete knowledge and theoretical background whereas the field curriculum exposes students to a wide range of real-world problems and possibilities. Field education teaches students to assess these situations and to develop, implement, and evaluate social interventions for various client systems, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.*

### 2. What types of agencies are selected as field sites?

*There are a wide range of cooperating agencies in over 10 Georgia counties. Each year, more than 75 students are placed in a variety of agencies and programs. All students complete their practicum in Georgia. Placement sites represent the broad scope of social work practice in public and private, not-for-profit, and for-profit agencies. Typical practicum sites include county-level departments of social services, community providers of mental health services, substance abuse agencies, medical facilities such as hospitals and hospices, domestic violence agencies, homeless shelters, and public schools. Students are also placed in agencies involved in program and policy development, advocacy, and regional and statewide planning such as private nonprofit agencies, family resource centers, and others.*

### 3. What kind of training is available to a practitioner who wishes to serve as a field instructor?

*First-time field supervisors are asked to participate in the **New Field Supervisor Orientation**. Each field supervisor is assigned a **field education faculty instructor** who is available to interpret the program's goals and objectives for field education and who advocates for both the student and the field supervisor. The New Field Instructor Orientation is offered every August of the academic year. Field supervisors are also invited to participate in continuing education opportunities offered by the Department of Social Work and Human Services.*

### 4. Does the school pay field instructors to work with students?

*No. Most field supervisors tell us the greatest reward comes from helping others develop professional knowledge and skill. Although we can never fully compensate field supervisors for their teaching and expertise, they are offered reduced or no cost trainings offered by the Department of Social Work and Human Services, many of which offer CEU credits. available.*

**5. What are the goals of the first (Generalist) internship?**

*The Generalist Internship is designed to help the student acquire and improve basic social work practice skills in work with individuals, families, and small groups (direct practice) as well as with work units, organizations, and communities (community, management, and policy practice). Therefore, students are expected to carry a caseload where they can practice assessment, engagement, and intervention skills. Generalist placement students are also expected to participate in tasks that can improve a work unit, an organization, or some aspect of the community. In both kinds of activities, students should be able to demonstrate a beginning ability to evaluate their social work practice.*

**6. What are the goals of the second (Specialization) internship?**

*In their second year, students select a placement in their **area of interest**. Students are expected to develop a depth of social work practice knowledge and skills sufficient for competent, self-evaluative, accountable, and ultimately, autonomous practice.*

**7. What will the prospective field instructor know about the student before the pre- placement interview?**

*After a placement is recommended by the director of field education, the student must schedule a pre-placement interview with the field supervisor and other relevant agency or program staff. The prospective field supervisor is only provided the student's name before the interview. In some cases, prospective field supervisors call the Field Education Program to clarify information.*

**8. What is the purpose of the pre-placement interview?**

*The pre-placement interview gives the student and field supervisor an opportunity to get acquainted and explore each other's expectations about the placement. The goal of this interview is to determine if the match of student/agency/field supervisor is appropriate. The interview helps the student and field supervisor clarify and adjust their expectations and prepare for the internship experience. If the match of student and agency does not seem appropriate, the field supervisor will immediately notify the Field Education Office so that an alternate placement option can be explored.*

*The placement assignment process is not complete until the potential field supervisor and the student have met, and the Field Education Office has received confirmation of placement acceptance from the field supervisor.*

**9. Can a student do a field placement in their current place of employment?**

*Employer-based field placements are one option that can be developed for students to fulfill their field education requirements while retaining a connection to their employing agency. Employer-based field placements can provide students with the opportunity to continue employment with their agency while completing their Generalist and/or Specialization Internship. Field placement assignments must be educationally appropriate to social work and engage students in new learning related to social work practice. An employer-based placement is possible only if the employing agency agrees to the placement and is willing and able to make accommodations to meet the student's learning needs. Students requesting approval for placement in their employing agency must submit an Employer-Based Placement Proposal.*

**10. Who needs to be involved in setting up an employer-based placement?**

*Setting up placements in employing agencies requires more effort than placement in non-employing agencies. This extra attention is necessary to ensure that the planned placement experience meets all program requirements, required competencies and behaviors, and does not duplicate learning that the student/employee has already mastered as part of their current or past*



*job duties. Arrangement and approval of the placement plan requires involvement of the following individuals: Student/ employee, job supervisor, an agency executive or administrator, potential field supervisor, task supervisor (if applicable), and a field education faculty instructor. In most instances, the director of field education will visit the agency and meet with those listed above to determine if the proposed plan meets field placement requirements and to answer any questions. The Director of Field Education makes the final decision regarding approval of requests for employer-based placements on a case-by-case basis.*

**11. What are the benefits of an employer-based field placement?**

*Because the student/employee already knows and is oriented to the agency, he or she might initially have a less steep learning curve relative to others placed in a new agency. The student/ employee also brings new learning back to the agency, which can enhance agency practice. The agency demonstrates its commitment to the student/employee's professional development and education. The agency also retains a quality employee and protects its investment in the employee.*

**12. What are the challenges of an employer-based field placement?**

*Clearly separating student and employee roles can be difficult for both the student and other staff within the agency. It also can be challenging to ensure appropriate division of workload to accommodate student learning activities. As a result, the student role may be neglected or forgotten at times. The student/employee's work colleagues also may feel confused or even resentful of the employee in a student role. In addition, employer-based placements can sometimes create sensitive situations in the workplace because students/employees might have greater access to agency leadership, meetings, and information than they had in their previous role in the agency.*

*Additionally, when a student is terminated as an employee they will also be terminated as an intern. The student's internship placement is automatically suspended, and the student is referred to the FWPPC for review and a final recommendation for field internship placement. Please see the FWPPC process in the manual.*

**13. Do students need to have a car?**

*Students are responsible for securing transportation to their field placements regardless of location. It is to the student's advantage to have a personal vehicle. Many of our local communities are small and have few resources for field placements.*

**14. Do students need insurance?**

*The Department of Social Work and Human Services carries a blanket professional liability insurance policy for students. Coverage is limited to \$2 million per incident, and \$4 million aggregate.*

**15. What if the placement doesn't work?**

*Occasionally it is necessary to terminate placements based on factors related to the agency, field instructor, or student intern. Termination requires as much planning as placement. The reasons for terminating the placement should be thoroughly discussed by the student and their field instructor, and in consultation with the field education faculty. Students are not relieved of their field responsibilities until the termination of the placement is approved by the Director of Field Education. See the Field Education Program Manual for specific procedures and guidelines.*

**16. Do I inform all clients that I have contact with that I am a student Intern?**

*Yes, it is part of their rights under informed consent.*

**17. Should I continue to work at my field placement during school breaks or holidays?**

*Many agencies do not require students to work during school breaks holidays. However, there are some agencies that do require students to continue their internship obligations during school breaks and holidays. It is the student's responsibility to obtain this information during the interview process before the start of the internship. If the student and the field supervisor are unable to make arrangements the student must immediately notify their field faculty instructor for resolution.*

**18. Does it matter how many hours you work each day as long as you make 16 hours a week?**

*No, it is okay to have a variation of hours. This may be the case depending on the need of the internship site.*

**19. How do we make up hours if we miss days?**

*This should be negotiated with the agency supervisor, and you are responsible to complete all the hours of internship in semester in which the hours were missed.*

**20. If I have issues with my agency supervisor or another employee at my internship site, what are the steps I should take to resolve this issue?**

*Notify your field faculty instructor to discuss a plan of action.*

**21. If I am having an issue that is not being resolved through my field faculty instructor, who should I talk to next?**

*If you have met with your field faculty instructor and was unable to resolve the field internship issue you will contact the Director of Field Education for assistance.*

**22. What if I witness something, I am uncomfortable with at my internship site?**

*Please immediately notify your agency supervisor and then your field faculty instructor.*

**23. Can I socialize with my supervisor and co-workers outside of the office?**

*Professional boundaries should be considered when assessing if it is appropriate to socialize outside of the work setting.*

**24. What if my internship asks me to use my own vehicle for agency business?**

*You can NEVER transport clients using your own vehicle. If you use the vehicle for agency business (trainings, errands, etc.) you can ask to be reimbursed for the mileage.*

**25. Do I get a gas stipend if my internship site is far away?**

*No, the MSW program does not reimburse students for any travel expenses related to the field internship placement.*

**26. Can I also shadow other professionals at the agency, such as, nurses, LPC's, case managers, etc.?**

*Yes, you may shadow other professionals to gain a better understanding of the agency and other professions. The majority of your internship hours, however, should be spent with a graduate level social worker with at least 2 years of post MSW experience for generalist students and an LCSW for Specialization students.*

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Association of Social Work Boards

<https://www.aswb.org>

Council on Social Work Education

<https://www.cswe.org>

Georgia Society of Clinical Social Work

<https://www.gscsw.org>

International Federation of Social Workers

<https://www.ifsw.org>

Latino Social Workers Organization

<https://lsw.org>

National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW)

<https://nabsw.site-ym.com>

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

<https://www.socialworkers.org>

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) – Georgia Chapter

<https://www.naswga.org>

School Social Workers Association of Georgia

<https://www.sswag.org>

Society for Social Work and Research

<http://www.sswr.org>