



UNION UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL *of* SOCIAL WORK

Master of Social Work

Field Instruction Manual

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Greetings!

Welcome to the MSW Field Education Program in the School of Social Work at Union University.

The social work profession claims field education as its signature pedagogy. As such, field education is the context in which students are socialized to the social work profession and learn to function as social workers. Field instruction is designed to help students apply and integrate theoretical concepts and practical skills learned in the classroom. To that end and in addition to a field placement, students attend a concurrent field seminar where faculty facilitation encourages explicit connection between class and field.

The Council on Social Work Education requires MSW students to complete 900 hours in an agency placement under the supervision of an MSW field instructor who has at least two years post-graduate social work experience. In the foundation year, students complete 300 hours. Advanced year and Advanced Standing students entering Union's MSW Program after completing the BSW degree will complete 600 hours in the advanced generalist practice year.

This manual is the program's official reference and procedural guide for social work students, program faculty, agency field instructors, and agency task instructors. It is subject to periodic revisions to reflect program improvements. Your feedback on the program is welcome in the form of evaluations contained in this manual and as participants in the broader community of social workers.

As we strive to serve others, yours is a valued contribution to the quality and excellence of the social work program at Union University.

With warm regards,

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Associate Professor

Union University School of Social Work
MSW Field Instruction Manual

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I. Graduate Social Work Program Overview

The Mission of the MSW Social Work Program

The mission of the MSW Program is compatible with the overall mission of the University and is supported by the overall university administrative organization that enables its implementation.

The mission of the MSW Program is to prepare competent and effective professionals for leadership in advanced generalist practice. In a context of Christian higher education, the program fosters compassionate service, promotes social and economic justice, and equips students for excellence in social work practice.

The Master of Social Work Program is committed to preparing students for advanced generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Students are engaged in learning cognitively, affectively and behaviorally throughout the MSW curriculum so that their preparation ensures preparedness for advanced generalist practice. As they gain this preparedness for advanced generalist social work practice through graduate social work courses and fieldwork, they are in sync with the environment, mission, and goals of the university to prepare MSW students for competent advanced generalist practice. The university's mission is to provide "higher education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society." It is guided by principles of academic excellence, Christian values, developing the whole person, and personal attention. The Master of Social Work Program embraces this mission and these guiding principles through offering a high quality academic curriculum, assisting students through the curriculum and in personal relationships to understand a Christian worldview that promotes justice and values life and its diversity, aiming to create a community of learners who explore and strive for wholeness as persons, and by conducting a program that is attentive to the unique personal needs of each student, including fostering proficient use of technology in our hybrid classes (evenings, online and weekends) for working adult learners. Both the university as a whole and the Department of Social Work envision the task of graduate social work education as preparing competent professionals willing and ready to serve in the world as leaders to make a positive difference.

MSW Theoretical Orientations for Social Work Practice

Four concepts unify the MSW curriculum. These concepts, from which flow theory and practice in the profession of social work, are central to graduate social work education at Union University and undergird the unique context for advanced generalist practice in Jackson, Tennessee and the surrounding area. The four concepts are:

1. Social Justice
2. Strengths-Base Perspective
3. Evidence-Based
4. Ecological Perspective

Social Justice

Persons representing ethnic and racial minorities ethnic and racial minorities, experiencing impoverishment, disability, difficulties of aging, and the vulnerabilities of being young, are at-risk for the complications arising out of society's economic realities, whether times are steady or full of change. In its most basic meaning, pursuing social justice means restoring right relationships. Restoration involves advocacy for equal rights, opportunities, protection and fair treatment for all

people. Additionally, social workers who pursue social justice identify and work to change unfair laws and policies that affect clients. Pursuing social justice means recognizing the dignity and worth of all individuals and striving to “end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice” (NASW Code of Ethics, preamble).

The focus on social justice as one of four conceptual constructs ties the MSW program with the university’s mission to be Christ-centered. Social justice is a fundamental value of Christian faith, and followers of Christ are challenged to do justice, love kindness, and live with humility (Holy Bible, Micah 6:8). Students learn that social justice is part of every social work intervention. The MSW curriculum develops skills related to assessing for and intervening with social justice considerations in both direct and indirect practice settings.

Strengths-Based

The MSW program emphasizes social work practice that is consistent with the values and ethical standards of the profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of human experience. These emphases are evident through the program’s commitment to the strength’s perspective. A strengths-based approach represents a commitment to the view that all clients have strengths, strengths help clients claim and validate those capacities causing them to prevail over life’s obstacles, and strengths portend potentially limitless capacity for growth (Saleebey, 2006). Opposite to the approach used by human services systems operating from a deficit-oriented perspective, the strengths-based approach is a collaborative effort between the client (individual, family, group, community, etc) and the social worker that avoids hierarchy with the intent to help clients achieve full empowerment. The social worker aids the client(s) to act in their own best interest, without limiting the upper limits to which the client aspires (Saleebey, 2006). The role of the social worker is to facilitate the client's utilization of his or her strengths and resilience, enabling the client to mobilize his or her solutions to identified problems.

Evidence-Based

An evidence-base for social work inquiry is defined as “treatment based on the best available science” (McNeece & Thyer, 2004, p. 8). Evidence-based inquiry is distinguished by an emphasis on theoretically grounded analysis of personal and social needs and problems and testing and elaborating theory through the evaluation of social interventions, and the recognition of the interdependency among levels of analysis and intervention in planning and implementing social interventions. Utilizing evidence-based inquiry in the designing of social interventions is in accord with the mission and values of the social work profession. An important aspect of evidence-based inquiry is strengthening the level-of-fit between human needs and environmental and social resources and supports through empowerment and enablement within a value framework that respects the dignity and worth of all people. The program’s conceptualization of evidence-based practice is based upon the theoretical work done by scholars from many different disciplines.

Ecological Perspective

The ecological perspective requires social workers to maintain a holistic view of client systems and focuses on goodness of fit between clients - individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations - and their environments. “The ecological perspective functions as a metaphor that provides an understanding about the reciprocal transactions that take place between people and the social environment in which they function” (Ashford, LeCroy, & Lortie, 2006, p.116). From this perspective, the person-in-environment framework has emerged, providing a basis for analyzing and

intervening with the complex social, economic, and political realities facing diverse populations. The MSW program utilizes the ecological perspective to prepare professionals to assess complex social environments and clients' interactions with them. Furthermore, students are encouraged to develop interventions leading to healthy social functioning. An advanced generalist program will prepare social workers to recognize complexity and chaos in the clients' circumstances while functioning to effectively reduce stress between systems and advance goodness of fit, whether individuals or communities, and by demonstrating versatility in building resources at micro and macro levels.

II. MSW Field Education Program Overview

Educational Goals and Competencies for Field Instruction

Field instruction is the "signature pedagogy" (CSWE, 2008) of social work education. In community-based agency settings under the supervision of experienced and credentialed social workers, students synthesize and apply theoretical and practical learning gained in the classroom. Field placements are learning laboratories designed for students to practice various social work roles, increasing their competence as they deliver services to individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Field instruction activities and assignments are educationally directed and sequenced in such a way that students build successively upon tasks and learning experiences. Furthermore, assignments are designed so that the students' understanding and application of social work method is enhanced. The field placement is the context for students to explore and develop their professional identity, professional use of self and professional ethics. A substantial portion of program education occurs in the field setting.

Consistent with the primary goal of field instruction and the overall goals of the program, the competencies of the practicum are comprehensive, given the capstone nature of the field experience in the curriculum. Practicum competencies undergird the competencies of the program. Additionally, these competencies are reflected in the evaluation form used to assess each student's performance in the field experience.

MSW Program Goals

The MSW Program strives to achieve and maintain educational standards specified by the national accrediting organization for graduate social work education, The Council on Social Work Education.

The goals of the MSW Program at Union University are:

1. To equip students with knowledge, values, and skills for excellence in social work practice within the context of Christian higher education;
2. To foster compassionate service and promote social and economic justice;
3. To prepare social workers to be leaders in communities at state, national and international levels;
4. To increase the availability of competent master-level prepared social work professional leadership in the surrounding region; and
5. To prepare students to pursue advanced scholarship in education post-MSW education.

Generalist Practice Framework

The generalist year competencies are directly derived from the CSWE Educational Policy. The SSW added one competency to reflect the context of the program in a faith-based university. While recognizing and respecting diverse belief systems of all students, the program strives to help students understand a Christian perspective that values life, appreciates and respects diversity, and promotes social and economic justice. These identified practice behaviors provide specific, measurable means to assess competencies. Individual course competencies, assignments, field practicum experiences, and non-curricular programming, such as continuing education workshops and events, are built on an understanding and commitment to the development of these competencies.

Generalist Year Competencies

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior•

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
- demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice•

- advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels;
- engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice .

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

- demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels;
- demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

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

- apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs;
- identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

- use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human

rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice

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

- apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies;
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies

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

- apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies;
- demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

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

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals
- incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies

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

- select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Competency 10: Appreciate the context of Christian higher education for social work education

- Understand how Christian thought and practice supports the core values of the social work profession
- Understand how personal religious/spiritual beliefs and practices can be a resource for both the practitioner and the client
- Understand how personal religious/spiritual beliefs and practices can impede one's practice or well-being

Advanced Generalist Concentration Practice Framework

The advanced generalist competencies deepen the generalist foundation and prepare students for competent and effective social work practice. The program conceptualizes professional development and education as a continuum beginning with the BSW, or generalist year in the MSW program, progressing to advanced generalist practice in the second year of the MSW program, and beyond the MSW to include continuing education.

Building on the generalist year competencies and curriculum, the MSW program prepares students for advanced generalist practice in social work. The advanced generalist practitioner is a leader in direct service delivery with individuals, families, groups, and communities, and has indirect practice management capabilities in the areas of supervision, administration, program development, and

evaluation. The advanced generalist model at Union University builds on the four concepts adopted by the faculty - social justice, strengths-based perspective, evidence-based practice, and ecological perspective – for its framework. In the generalist year, students are grounded in these concepts and in direct and indirect practice skills so that in the advanced generalist year, they may prepare to effectively maximize opportunities to “encompass the full spectrum of direct and indirect services” (GlenMaye, Lewandowski, & Bolin, 2004, p. 127), regardless of the practice setting or client.

The complexities of ever-changing practice environments require direct practitioners who are also skilled in supervision and administration while fully committed to respecting and prioritizing client needs. Agency services struggle with limited resources while facing increased human needs requiring complex intervention modalities. The advanced generalist model assumes that human events represent multi-layered and multi-dimensional realities best addressed by social workers utilizing theoretically sound, empirically driven, culturally competent approaches to practice. These social workers recognize the characteristics of change at individual, community, and organizational levels and the elements of chaos that often accompany change. The advanced generalist practitioner tolerates and manages change amid the chaos of complex systems, valuing the process and envisioning the transformative potential. “The goal of advanced generalist practice is not to understand the complexity of the client system, but rather to understand the natural movement of systems through stable, bifurcated, and chaotic states and to help promote self-organization” (GlenMaye, Lewandowski, & Bolin, 2004, p. 128). As such the social work leader will bring together important roles of advocate, broker, counselor, presenter, listener, presence, supervisor, researcher, policy maker, fund raiser, problem-solver, and evaluator while conscious of process and its impact on outcomes.

Advanced Generalist Concentration Year Competencies

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- Engage in continuous self-reflection to assess the impact of personal biases, values, and emotional responses on professional decision-making, ensuring ethical, anti-oppressive, and justice-centered social work practice.
- Develop and implement comprehensive self-care strategies that promote professional sustainability, prevent burnout, and enhance the capacity to engage in ethical and effective social work practice across micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Use advanced critical analysis to examine and confront the profession’s historical and contemporary role in perpetuating oppression, advocating for policies, practices, and institutional reforms that promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
- Collaborate effectively across disciplines and professional sectors, applying advanced systems thinking to address complex social problems, advocate for marginalized communities, and create holistic, equity-driven solutions.
- Integrate emerging technologies into practice, research, and policy advocacy while ensuring ethical standards, client confidentiality, and equitable access to digital resources that enhance service delivery and community engagement.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- Demonstrate skills in culturally sensitive practice that combine self-awareness with knowledge gained from clients and relevant sources.
- Analyze socio-cultural structures, including issues and values related to human rights, race,

economics, and the environment, that may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or contribute to privilege and power.

- Work to influence legislation and policies that address systemic inequalities and protect human rights.
- Engage with communities to understand their rights, needs, strengths, resources, and challenges and encourage collective action to address identified challenges.
- Work to ensure the voices of marginalized and oppressed groups are heard and included in decision-making processes.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

- Utilize advanced critical thinking skills to assess and challenge institutional policies, organizational structures, and social systems that uphold White supremacy, privilege, and systemic oppression, advocating for transformative, anti-racist change in practice, research, and policy.
- Develop and implement interventions that are informed by intersectionality, cultural humility, and historical awareness, ensuring that social work practice at all levels—individual, family, group, organizational, and community—addresses systemic inequities and promotes social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
- Demonstrate leadership in fostering inclusive environments within organizations and communities by promoting policies and practices that center marginalized voices, dismantle systemic barriers, and create equitable access to resources and opportunities.

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

- Demonstrate the ability to discern between sources of information and evidence-based research and use sources in effective social work practice for specific populations, problems, policies, assessment and intervention practices.
- Demonstrate critical thinking for leadership by creating and using research tools to guide decision-making in organizations and programs (e.g. logic models for agency processes, organizational audits, stakeholder analysis, decisions about treatment with individual cases or groups, peer evaluation).
- Analyze and apply bio-psychological, cultural, and spiritual context (e.g. strengths-based, ecological, cognitive behavioral, interpersonal, family systems, life-span development, psychodynamic, solution focused, narrative, and trauma informed perspectives and approaches)
- Formulate, measure and disseminate to the community and client-systems ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

- Utilize multiple models of policy analysis, to judge how existing policies or policy vacuums are affecting client systems in complex practice contexts
- Propose agency or governmental policies that combat racism, increase equity, and broaden diversity and inclusion
- Formulate strategies for policy change advocacy that leverages multiple modalities and collaborative efforts
- Adapt to volatile policy practice contexts by reflecting how their values, beliefs, lived experiences, and emotion regulation skills shape their approach to policy practice

Competency 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

- Integrate advanced knowledge of human behavior theories and the person-in-environment perspective to develop and implement engagement strategies that are responsive to the diverse needs of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Continuously examine and address personal biases, power, privilege, and values to enhance culturally responsive and ethical engagement with diverse populations, ensuring inclusive and equitable practice.
- Utilize flexible, strengths-based, and trauma-informed approaches to maintain meaningful and ongoing engagement with clients, fostering trust, empowerment, and active participation in the change process.
- Engage in interdisciplinary collaboration, leveraging the expertise of other professionals to enhance engagement strategies, improve service coordination, and address complex social issues holistically.
- Develop and sustain collaborative relationships with marginalized and historically oppressed communities, using engagement as a tool for advocacy, systemic change, and the promotion of social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

- Employ theories of human behavior and person-in-environment with other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, relevant to understanding the behaviors of clients and constituencies.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment that includes mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges upholding the respect for client self-determination during the assessment process.
- Examine ongoing changes with the client and/or their environment for continual modifications to the client assessment with ongoing assessment of any bias, power, privilege, or personal values and experiences that may affect assessment.
- Reference appropriate evidence-based assessment tools for accurate measures of client behaviors or symptoms.

Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

- Develop with clients and constituencies appropriate and achievable goals and objectives that are culturally responsive and evidence informed.
- Identify, evaluate and propose effective strategies to negotiate, mediate, and advocate on behalf of clients and constituencies and propose effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed upon goals.
- Critically analyze the effectiveness of interventions using data driven methods, reflecting on practice and making necessary adjustments based on client feedback and outcomes.

Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

- Evaluate client system(s) progress and intervention effectiveness with culturally responsive methods (e.g. client self-assessment, surveys, needs assessments, collateral reports, behavioral outcome measures, single-subject designs).

- Use evaluation outcomes to provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery.
- Demonstrate flexibility and creativity in the context of change in advancing practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (Attitudinal changes- “I no longer fear and loath research” or “research can be my guide”)
- Design evaluation processes and methods relevant to practice including identification of measures, data collection, and data analysis processes.
- Analyze the complexity of the divergent agendas involved in the evaluation process, such as changing policy contexts, racism, white supremacy, and oppression.

Competency 10: Appreciate the context of Christian higher education for social work education

- Critically analyze how their Christian worldview, values, and lived experiences influence their approach to ethical decision-making and policy engagement, particularly in complex or contested areas of practice.
- Demonstrate the ability to ethically assess and integrate client spiritual and religious beliefs into assessment, intervention, and advocacy, using spiritually sensitive and evidence-informed methods.
- Engage in reflective practice by identifying how Christianity contributes to healing and harm in marginalized communities
- Apply spiritually grounded self-care strategies to support ethical, resilient, and sustainable professional functioning in emotionally and spiritually demanding environments.

III. Field Education Program Policies and Procedures

Field Practicum Structure

Field Practicum serves both as a time and place for content reinforcement and as a period of instruction and supervised “hands on” learning. Field is educationally directed and professionally supervised to provide students with opportunities for advanced generalist social work activities in social service settings.

The Social Work Program requires that all students complete an agency orientation prior to officially beginning the required hours of field instruction. Some agency guidelines may have specific orientation requirements in addition to Union’s requirement. If so, then students are expected to adhere to the agency policy for attending orientation.

Students enrolled in field instruction develop a schedule with the agency field instructor that ensures the completion of the required hours in field. Generalist year students are required to complete a minimum of 300 clock hours in the agency setting. Advanced Generalist year students, which include advanced standing students, must complete a minimum of 600 clock hours in the agency setting.

Field Instructor Orientation

The Field education faculty provide an online orientation annually for returning field instructors and will provide a face to face orientation for new field instructors. These sessions are designed to familiarize the agency representatives with the requirements of the MSW Field Education Program. The Field Instruction Manual is online and available to all Field Instructors and Field Liaisons.

The following topics are included in the orientation:

- Access of students to agency orientation
- Advanced Generalist Practice approach to social work education
- Conveyance of program's conceptual themes in field education
- Goals and objectives of field practicum
- Learning Contract and Evaluation
- Policies, procedures, and expectations – including problem-solving field difficulties
- Student evaluation process: mid-term and final for semester
- Training on the web-based data system (IPT system) that is used for all field related forms used by agencies and students
- Millennial Generation
- Ethical Obligations
- Field Instructor Roles

Field Practicum Learning Contract

The program competencies and associated practice behaviors for both generalist year and advanced generalist year are reflected in the evaluation instruments used to assess the student's performance at mid-term and at the conclusion of the practicum experience. The field practicum learning contract is developed based on the program competencies and practice behaviors. Students are expected to have learning tasks in their field placement related to each of the program competencies/practice behaviors over the course of the practicum. Within one month of the placement's start, the field instructor, task instructor, and the student are expected to jointly craft a comprehensive learning contract.

Specific Expectations for the Practicum

The field practicum must include a variety of activities to fulfill the program competencies/practice behaviors, the learning tasks of the practicum, and accreditation requirements. Although settings and individual students differ, basic requirements are as follows:

1. Generalist Year

- a. Comprehensive agency orientation
- b. Interviewing experiences
- c. Experience with individuals and families
- d. Experience with groups
- e. Experience in community activities and with organizations
- f. Experiences with data collection, assessment, intervention, evaluation, and termination
- g. Experience of working with clients who are different from the student. This includes assignments to work with clients of different races, genders, ethnic background, sexual orientations, ages, socioeconomic status, physical and mental abilities
- h. Documentation
- i. Professional Development

2. Advanced Generalist Year

- a. Comprehensive agency orientation
- b. Advanced assessment, intervention, and evaluation opportunities
- c. Advanced practice experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, including experiences with cultural diversity.
- d. Opportunities to evaluate programs and practice

- e. Professional development
- f. Leadership opportunities
- g. Experiences navigating ethical dilemmas

Employment-Based Field Placements Procedure

The Employment-Based Field Placement Application must be requested from the Director of Field Education. This application must be approved by the Director of Field Education and the field committee. The following guidelines **MUST** be met in order for the employment-based application to be approved.

1. All the required field hours must take place under the supervision of a MSW field instructor with at least 2 years post-graduation experience.
2. Field activities must be compatible with the expectations of course competencies and practice behaviors for the appropriate course level (generalist or advanced generalist year).
3. Field activities completed at a student's place of employment must provide new learning experiences that are distinct from the student's regular job duties. This may include working with a new population, using new treatment methods, or engaging in a different field of practice. All field activities must align with the student's level of practice (generalist or advanced generalist).
4. Students must understand that if they are terminated from their place of employment, and their field placement is integrated within that employment, they will also be terminated from their field placement. As a result, the student may receive a failing grade in field unless an alternative placement is secured and approved by the field director.
5. The Director of Field Education retains the right to grant an employment-based placement to students who demonstrate high standards of professional and ethical behavior and have a strong academic record.
6. Students may complete one employment-based field placement during their time in the MSW program. Exceptions to this policy, including cases where a student changes employment, may be granted at the discretion of the Director of Field Education.
7. **Employment-based placements are not guaranteed, they MUST meet the required level of learning based on the 10 competencies and level of practice (generalized or advanced generalized).**

Evaluations

Agency Evaluation of Practicum Students

The agency field instructor at the end of the practicum will evaluate students. The student and the field instructor will each complete the field evaluation, then meet to discuss the outcome. The MSW faculty liaison will be present at a joint meeting in closing the placement for the semester. The task instructor, where applicable, should be involved in the final evaluation meeting.

Any student disagreeing with the final evaluation has the right to submit a written statement to the agency instructor and the MSW field director explaining and/or defending any aspects of the evaluation with which he/she does not agree.

The field seminar instructor/faculty liaison assigns the student's final grade in consultation with the field instructor, based on the field evaluation. Students are made aware of the standards, expectations, and evaluation procedures at the beginning of field instruction.

Agency Evaluation of the Social Work Program

At the conclusion of each field practicum, the agency field instructor and the agency task instructor, where applicable, are asked to evaluate the Social Work Program, the field practicum component, and the effectiveness of the social work faculty liaison. All information obtained from the evaluations will be used to improve the program and practicum experience for both the agency and the student.

Student Evaluation of the Agency

At the conclusion of field practicum, all students have an opportunity to evaluate their placement experiences and the overall effectiveness of the agency as a practicum site. The information along with other evaluative standards may be used as a basis for evaluating further field placements in the agency.

Field Instruction Grievance Procedure

Student Grievance

Students are placed in a field agency for a period of 300 hours of field experience in the generalist year and 600 hours in the advanced generalist year. The conduct of each student is expected to be professional and ethical. Any student grievance or area of concern related to the agency setting should first be discussed with the agency field instructor. If the concern is not satisfactorily resolved at this level, then the following course of action is available to the student:

- a. The student should communicate the concern with the social work faculty liaison. The liaison may suggest ways for the student to readdress the issue with the field instructor.
- b. If the concern is not satisfactorily resolved, the social work faculty liaison and/or the student should communicate the concern to the field coordinator where applicable and if not applicable then the Director of Field Education.
- c. If these avenues fail, the student should submit, within 10 calendar days of the initial meeting with the field instructor, a written statement and appeal to the Director of Field Education describing the circumstances. The Director of Field will review the statement, confer with the field coordinator (where applicable), the field liaison and the student together, and make a decision as to next step (i.e. meet with the field instructor for more information, to deny the student's appeal, to accept the student's appeal, to consult with faculty members, or to table the matter pending outcome of the student's performance for the semester).

Agency Grievance

Any agency grievance or area of concern related to the field student should first be discussed with the student. If the concern is not resolved, then the field instructor should request a meeting with the faculty liaison and the student. If the concern is of a very serious nature, such as breach of confidentiality or other breach of the NASW Code of Ethics or agency policy, the faculty liaison should be notified immediately. The faculty liaison will discuss the concern with all parties involved

(individually and/or collectively) and may consult the field coordinator (where applicable), and the field director. If the concern is not resolved satisfactorily, then the student will be immediately removed from the placement. Depending on the nature of the grievance, the student may or may not be assigned to another agency.

An agency that feels it is necessary to “terminate” a student must first contact the faculty liaison that will then contact the Director of Field. A meeting with the student and faculty liaison must take place within one week of the termination. Agency personnel and field director will compile appropriate documentation of meeting outcome and reason for termination. This meeting is designed to give closure and understanding as to the reason behind the agency termination.

Termination Policy

A student enrolled in field practicum may be placed on probation or terminated from field experience and/or the Union University Social Work Program if, in the professional judgment of the social work faculty, violations of professional and/or ethical codes have occurred. Please refer to Suspension/Termination Policy in the MSW Student Handbook (page 44) for additional information.

Practicum Site Changes

Any changes in field placement after the agency assignment is made are the sole responsibility of the Director of Field Education. Only in extreme and exceptional cases may students be placed in a new agency during the semester. Prior to any change, the student and Director of Field must determine one of the following:

1. The agency is unable to provide learning experiences that will be conducive to continued student growth.
2. The student/field instructor relationship is such that continued learning will be difficult.
3. Unethical practice and/or exploitation of the student is occurring at the agency.

The director of field will meet with all parties involved to discuss the situation. All efforts will be made to rectify any problems before removing a student from an agency. In a situation where a student is removed from an agency the following process will be followed:

1. The director of field shall notify the field instructor regarding the removal.
2. The director of field and faculty liaison will meet with the student to notify him/her that removal from the placement is necessary.
3. A mutual decision regarding the student’s future plans, new placement, or other arrangement will be made between the field director, faculty liaison, and the student, with final approval from the MSW Program Director.
4. Documentation detailing the change of placement will be recorded in the student’s file and the agency file in the School of Social Work.

Field Program Evaluation

The MSW Program strives to maintain close relationships with the practice community in order to assess new knowledge and remain vital and progressive. This is accomplished by: supporting and encouraging faculty and student involvement in community organizations and projects; holding

meetings with the School of Social Work Advisory Council, field instructors, and student organizations; participating in professional social work organizations, conferences, and continuing education programs; and regularly soliciting feedback from student focus groups and surveys. These multiple means of assessing and renewing the MSW program help insure that the program is one of quality.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

In compliance with all applicable state and federal law, including provisions of the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Union University does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, age, disability, or military service in admissions; in the administration of its education policies, programs, or activities; or in employment. Under federal law. The University may discriminate on the basis of religion in order to fulfill its purposes. Persons who believe their rights under this policy have been violated should contact the Office of the President.

Transfer Credit

The School of Social Work will work closely with the Office of the Registrar in order to facilitate the transfer of credits for MSW students from other schools. Every attempt will be made to ensure that transferring students receive credit for any curriculum that they have already had in order that they do not repeat content.

Graduate credit earned in accredited graduate schools and carrying a grade of B or better will be transferable toward a graduate degree at Union University to the extent that the student can demonstrate correspondence to course(s) in the Union MSW degree program and pending approval by the MSW program. This correspondence can be demonstrated by students providing catalog course descriptions, course syllabi, and completed assignments for the course(s) being considered for transfer.

A maximum of 9 graduate credit hours, with a grade of “B” or higher, taken by students on a non-matriculated basis may be transferred toward the 60-credit MSW degree requirement. Transfer courses may be accepted for credit if they have been completed within 5 years from the time of acceptance into the MSW program.

Transfer credit is not accepted for credits earned following matriculation at Union University.

Applicants to the 2-year program may transfer up to one full year of credit from another CSWE-accredited MSW Program in which they were matriculated graduate students in good standing. A minimum of 30 credits of graduate coursework from Union University is required for those in the 2-year program.

Decisions regarding credit when entering the graduate program initially are made by the MSW Admissions Committee. Courses taken at another CSWE-accredited college or university will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Credit for Life Experience and Previous Work Experience

Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the graduate curriculum.

Professional Conduct

A student in field placement has the same professional responsibilities as an employed staff member of the agency. He or she is expected to follow agency policy and abide by rules and regulations. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Notifying the field instructor of any unavoidable absences or lateness in advance, if possible, and quickly informing him or her when prior notice is impossible.
2. Making up time lost due to absences and/or tardiness.
3. Being available, as appropriate, for client emergencies or crises, even though these may occur after regular hours.
4. Refraining from engaging in negative office politics.
5. Adhering to the agency dress code at all times.

Above all, if the student is unsure of something, ask the field instructor!

Confidentiality

Students should respect clients' rights to privacy and protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. During the formal agency orientation, students must take initiative and responsibility for knowing the confidentiality policy of the agency. All practicum students are required by the MSW Program to review and sign the agency's confidentiality form(s) during the orientation process, in addition to confidentiality agreements signed as part of the application to field placement.

Personal Liability Insurance

All Union University social work students are required to have liability insurance before starting Social Work field placement. Students are assessed a fee of \$25.00 per year for the cost of coverage under the university's liability insurance. This fee is assessed in the fall semester upon entering field seminar I and III. It is the responsibility of the director of field to inform the university's Business Office of students enrolled in field practicum and secure the necessary student liability insurance. The Director of Field will provide the practicum agency with students' proof of coverage.

Transportation

Students **SHOULD NOT** transport agency clients unless explicit consent has been given by the Director of Field Education.

Some agencies pay mileage for travel required to perform agency work. Students should ask the field instructor during the agency orientation about mileage reimbursement if required to travel.

Spring Break/Holidays

Students in field experiences are not entitled to university holidays that fall on practicum dates unless their agency field instructor has given prior approval. Students should remember that they must still

complete the required number of clock hours at the agency regardless of university holidays and/or breaks.

Length of Placement

The generalist year practicum requires 300 hours of field experience. The advanced generalist year practicum requires 600 hours of field experience. Students participate in field a minimum of 13 weeks. Advanced year students participate in field at least 30 weeks. Students are responsible for arranging their schedule with their field instructor so that the final week of placement occurs no sooner than the end of the first week of April. Students can schedule their placements to end as late as the 3rd week of April in the spring if this is valuable to client service, or if the student needs extra time.

Employment Offers from Field Agencies

Field Practicum offers heightened visibility and many exciting opportunities and experiences for social work students. Agencies often anticipate employment openings by the time student's complete placements. Occasionally, students are offered positions in their placement agencies. If the student is offered employment, then a plan should to be developed in order for the student's field experience and employment to be interwoven.

Personal Safety Guidelines

Students are encouraged to be aware that social work practice includes some potential for risk to personal safety. It is the responsibility of the student to assess the risk of environmental factors and to take precautions for personal safety. A discussion on safety in the agency is provided as part of the field seminar course. Additionally, students should request in-service training and orientation in the agency regarding the particular safety information in that setting. The student should review the personnel policies and safety guidelines before any work with the agency begins. Students are expected to follow the recommended safety guidelines rigorously, and to use discernment when making home visits or delivering services in the community. Students should always let someone in the agency know where s/he will be when working outside of the agency offices. Students have the right and the responsibility to report any unsafe situation to a supervisor and request an alternate assignment. They have the right and responsibility to appeal to the Field Liaison or the Field Directors if they have concerns about the response to their request. Finally, students are expected to follow the infection control guidelines to protect from contagious diseases.

Please note that Union University faculty, staff, and social work field directors are in compliance with Union's Title IX policies and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking and domestic/dating relationship violence. For more information go to <https://www.uu.edu/studentlife/accountability/title-IX.cfm> or contact the Title IX Coordinator.

In regard to personal safety, all students, whether participating in activities on the Jackson or Germantown campus or in internship/academic activities off-site, should plan carefully all aspects of their educational experience to maximize the academic experience and minimize any potential safety or health problems.

The following guidelines emphasize student responsibility for planning and for communicating during the program and in the event of any emergency.

1. Know how to obtain emergency health and law enforcement services on campus and off site (e.g., field practicum site).
2. Obtain, read and carefully consider materials related to any off-site location, particularly those materials relating to safety and health issues in the off-site program and locale.
3. Consider your health and personal circumstances when applying for or accepting field placements.
4. Make available to the field practicum site and Union University accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary to plan a safe and healthy field education program experience.
5. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for personal preparation for the campus and field practicum site.
6. Participate fully in any orientations by the field practicum site and the School of Social Work at Union University.
7. Obtain or maintain appropriate insurance coverage, particularly health insurance in the event of sickness or injury during the program. Students are provided with liability insurance while completing their field placement. (See Director of Field Education for a copy of the liability insurance coverage form).
8. Inform next of kin and others with a need to know about participation in the field practicum site.
9. Provide next of kin and the School of Social Work Field Director with emergency contact information and keep them informed on an ongoing basis.
10. Understand and comply with the field practicum site's terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures, as well as Union's terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures. (Union's codes of conduct apply off site.)
11. Be aware of local conditions that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the field practicum site and the School of Social Work at Union University.

In case of an emergency or threat to your safety while on the Union University campus, inform Safety and Security (731) 394-2922. In case of an emergency or threat to your safety while at your field practicum site, follow the safety procedures of your field placement agency and promptly notify the Director of Social Work Field Education.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities of Participants in Field Placement Experience

The success of the field instruction is dependent to a large extent upon the cooperative and collaborative relationships between the university, field agencies, and students. Mutual agreement and understanding of roles and functions are essential to the development of an atmosphere that fosters creative, educationally directed field instruction experiences. The following information delineates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of all individuals involved.

Field Director

The Field Director has primary responsibility for the practicum component of the MSW Program. This includes implementation of field processes and procedures and maintaining effective working relationships with placement sites, field coordinators, field instructors, faculty liaisons, and students.

Other responsibilities include:

1. Provide oversight and administration of the Field Education program for all students enrolled in the BSW and MSW programs, in-person (Jackson/Germantown) and online.
2. Oversee the identification and development of new field education sites as well as existing sites for all field students, including all that is required of this function.
3. Develop and conduct online orientation training for entering field students and field instructors.
4. Set high ethical standards and ensure guidelines and implementation for field students, instructors, and task liaisons.
5. Work with faculty, staff, and other internal stakeholders to develop strategies and key activities supporting field programs.
6. Perform faculty liaison duties for social work students in field placements.
7. Oversee and manage all databases involved with the field program in the SSW.
8. Edit and update the field manual on an annual basis and review with field instructors and faculty.
9. Oversee and maintain current Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with field placement agencies. Ensure the accuracy of current information on affiliated field agencies, field instructors, and other pertinent information.
10. Responsible for assuring that field education is congruent with Council on Social Work Education accreditation standards and the Union curriculum.
11. Represent the Union University Field Education program assigned by the Dean or Associate Dean of the School of Social Work and BSW and MSW Directors.
12. Oversee departmental recruitment efforts in the community and interview prospective students as needed.
13. Work collegially with all departmental field education personnel and faculty. Provide supervision to the field coordinator/s and field adjunct faculty.
14. Provide support for field coordinators and promote high performance.

15. Oversee field activity reports to the Dean/Associate Dean and monitor annual assessment data for the field education program.
16. Provides oversight of the development of all field policies, protocols and materials, including field manuals, forms, syllabi templates, course sites and website.
17. Problem-solving with Field Coordinators around handling concerns of students, field instructors and field liaisons in the field practicum.
18. Hiring and training of field liaisons.
19. Facilitation of partnership with TCPS for student background check packages

It is not the field director's responsibility to accommodate the student's work and family life schedule. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements regarding how they will be able to successfully complete the required field hours each semester.

Field Coordinator

1. Teach field classes as assigned by Field Director, MSW Program Director and Dean.
2. Placed students identified by Field Director
3. Find new placement opportunities and vet with input from Field Director.
4. Problem solve with student and agencies as needed to rectify difficulties
5. Keep Field Director updated on any problems with students in internship
6. Assist Field Director in updating Field Instructor Online Orientation

Field Liaison/Field Seminar Instructor

Concurrent with each semester that a student is in field, field seminars are a required component focused on integration of classroom and practicum experiences. Seminar classes are held asynchronously online, face to face weekly or bi-weekly and conducted by the university faculty liaison for the student.

The faculty liaison will:

1. Maintain regular telephone contact with the agency field instructor regarding the student's progress as needed, at least at mid-term and at close of the semester for evaluation.
2. Have conferences with the agency field instructor regarding the student's progress as deemed appropriate.
3. Meet with the student weekly in an integrated seminar if leading SW 590 Field Seminar I, or bi-weekly if leading SW 591 Field Seminar II, to discuss the placement and collect assignments and forms related to the field practicum experience, and to be available to the student if problems arise. SW 690 Field Seminar III and SW 691 Field Seminar IV is web-based, all discussions, and assignments will take place in Canvas. There will be practicum site visits that happen throughout the semesters and one on one office meetings can be held as needed.

4. Ensure that the field instructor completes appropriate evaluations of the student, attend a final evaluation conference with the student and the agency field placement instructor, and assign the final grade for the field practicum experience.
5. Meet with Field Director and field team at least twice a semester.
6. Work with agency and student with any difficulties
7. Keep Field Coordinator and Field Director updated on each student

Agency Field Instructor

The Agency will provide a staff member designated as the field instructor who will:

1. Provide the student with an orientation of the agency, promote the agency's understanding of the Union University Social Work Program and acceptance of the student, enable the student to feel a part of the agency, and provide the student and social work faculty liaison with a copy of the orientation.
2. Assist the student in identifying goals/desired outcomes and learning competencies for the field placement experience commensurate with the educational competencies of the Social Work Program.
3. Select and make appropriate agency assignments that take into consideration, as much as possible, the student's past experience, learning patterns, career expectations, and the Social Work Program's educational competencies.
4. Suggest written materials for the student to examine during the course of field experience.
5. Provide on-the-job instruction and supervision of the student.
6. Hold a regular one-hour weekly or bi-weekly conference with the student, sign student's monthly time sheet verifying the hours and tasks completed that week, and hold additional conferences with the student as deemed necessary.
7. Attend conferences with the social work field director and/or field coordinator as deemed appropriate.
8. Send an email update at mid-term of the student's performance thus far and note any problems requiring notifying the liaison.
9. Complete a written, formal, final evaluation of the student's performance, utilizing the Union University Practicum Evaluation Form.
10. Attend a final evaluation conference with the student, task instructor, and faculty liaison where the final evaluation will be discussed.
11. Contribute knowledge and suggestions to Union University's Social Work Program for upgrading the field instruction program as needed.
12. Immediately consult with the social work field director, field coordinator or faculty liaison regarding any problems or concerns noted with a particular field placement experience.

Agency Task Instructor

The term "Agency Task Instructor" is used to indicate an agency staff member who assumes certain responsibilities for the student's field education as delegated and monitored by the agency field instructor. The task instructor is required to accompany the agency field instructor to the yearly orientation for field instructor's conducted by the field education faculty. The agency task instructor should generally be well informed of the social work program's educational competencies, should understand that his/her instruction makes a contribution to the student's learning, and should be provided with any necessary resources to accomplish the educational task by the agency field

instructor and/or the School of Social Work. The task instructor is expected to collaborate and assist with the development of the student's learning contract. The task instructor may contribute information to the agency field instructor regarding the student's progress and completion of assignments for evaluation purposes, but the final written evaluation is the responsibility of the agency field instructor. The task instructor participates in the mid-semester and final evaluation conferences. The task instructor must sign all student forms, including the Learning Contract, Final Evaluation and monthly timecards. Agency Task Instructors are usually the person designated to oversee the student in the field, where the Field Instructor may be outside the agency, due to this reason the signatures of the task instructor are extremely important in verification of the hours the student works.

Field Practicum Student

Student responsibilities and expectations require he or she will:

Arrange to complete the required hours of field, recognizing that there are very few agencies that offer non-traditional hours and that you will be required to work out your schedule to meet the needs of your practicum.

1. Complete an application for field practicum and submit it, along with a resume, to the social work field director.
2. Schedule an in-person meeting with field director or field coordinator
4. Schedule and complete an interview with at least one community agency, as approved by the social work field director, and to submit appropriate forms by the designated dates.
5. Professional liability insurance, paid through a yearly fee charged by the university, to cover the period during which the practicum will be completed.
6. Fulfill the assignment schedule that he/she and the field instructor agree on, to contact the agency field instructor in case of absence, and to make up any missed time to insure the completion of the required clock hours of field experience.
7. Identify, in collaboration with the field instructor, learning tasks and competencies for the field placement experience commensurate with the educational competencies of the Social Work Program and to document these goals in the practicum-learning contract.
8. Complete all required forms for the field practicum and submit them to the appropriate persons by the designated dates.
9. Schedule, prepare, and attend for weekly conferences with the field instructor and take the initiative in raising questions for discussion and application of theoretical knowledge to practice.
10. Participate actively in agency staff meetings and in-service training.
11. Complete a weekly journal on the designated form that reflects the week's field experiences, integrating them with theoretical knowledge and demonstrating how the educational competencies and practice behaviors are being fulfilled, if required by the seminar class.
12. Engage actively in the evaluation process, seeking ongoing feedback from the field instructor and participating in the end-of-semester formal evaluation.
13. Attend field seminars at the university and complete assignments affiliated with this course.
14. Consult with the social work faculty liaison as needed regarding progress and/or problems in the field placement experience.
15. Avoid the use of agency time to complete classroom work.
16. Use the NASW Code of Ethics as a guideline in all agency activities and professional interpersonal relationships.
17. Bring to the field instructor any problems or dissatisfaction with the field experience and engage constructively in finding possible solutions.

V. Placement Process for Field Instruction

Selection of Settings for Field Placements

Field placement is essential to and an integral part of social work education. Once a student is accepted into the MSW program they receive information on how to go online to the field database so that they can complete the field practicum application. After they complete the application, the Field Education Director or Field Coordinator will be notified that the application is completed and will contact the student to set up a time to meet and discuss field options. Administrative responsibility for the practicum component rests with the Director of Field Education. However, the field director understands that the field practicum is a personal experience for each student. A pre-placement conference held between the Director of Field Education or Field Coordinator and the student explores the student's professional and educational goals, interests, and needs.

The School of Social Work maintains relationships with many social service agencies and institutions in West Tennessee and the surrounding areas. Each field placement setting must have a Memorandum of Understanding with Union University before a field placement may be arranged with any student. Generalist year students, regardless of concentration interests, are encouraged to gain experience in an agency setting that will socialize them into the field of social work and provide them with generalist practice skills. If possible, placements will be arranged in agencies offering educational experiences of interest to students, although limitations may exist related to students' professional development and readiness, as well as availability of social service agencies. Every effort will be made to provide advanced generalist year students with placements that will provide them with advanced social work skills in their area of interest.

Each student in the advance generalist year is expected to arrange a pre-placement interview with the field instructor of the agency. Students have the option to decline agencies, and agencies have the right to decline students. The final decision regarding a field placement is made in conjecture with the agency field instructor, the student, and the Director of Field Education/Field Coordinator and ultimately they makes the final decision. It must be understood that choices may be limited by availability of social service agencies. Requests for placements may originate from the MSW Director of Field Education/Field Coordinator, from social service agencies contacting the Director of Field/Field Coordinator directly, or MSW students may recommend potential field practicum sites to , who will follow up on the recommendation.

Criteria for Employment-Based Field Placements

Social work field placements are typically educationally focused and unpaid experiences. However, under some circumstances paid employment may be considered. Paid employment can present many complicating factors that limit students' full utilization of the field placement experience and should be weighed carefully by the student and the employer. Among the considerations that must be given are the following:

1. The agency must emphasize productivity of the student employee, rather than the student's own learning.

2. If job duties change, the position may no longer meet our criteria for social work activities for that student's concentration.

3. Both the student and the agency may be less willing to disclose problems that arise during the field placement, such as inadequate supervision, activities which are incongruent with placement expectations, and situations that threaten their employment status, and so forth.

Therefore, an additional application is required and must be requested from the MSW Field Director for students interested in an employment-based placement. The purpose of the additional application is to document conditions that provide for new learning opportunities in the agency. The following three conditions must be met:

1. the field placement experience constitutes new learning in tasks related to meeting the 10 competencies and appropriate level of practice (generalist or advanced generalist)
2. the student will have MSW supervision from an MSW with at least 2 years post graduation experience.
3. Student and employer must complete a separate application that they will be given upon request from the Director of Field Education.
4. Proposed field instructor, current supervisor, a task instructor (if applicable) and the student must sign the application
5. The application is returned to the Director of Field Education who reviews to determine it was fully completed and completed correctly. (if there is anything missing or needing correcting the field instructor will notify the student)
6. The application will be forwarded to the field committee who will review and determine if it should be approved or not and notify the Director of Field Education
7. The Director of Field Education will provide student with feedback from committee

Criteria for Selecting Field Agencies

1. The ethics and values of social work should be demonstrated through the policies, program design, and delivery of services of the agency. The agency should be legally established with adequate financial support and meet the approved criteria of appropriate governmental agencies, as well as local and national standard setting bodies.
2. The agency's student training program must be compatible with the MSW program's educational competencies. The agency's orientation and objectives must be educational rather than apprenticeship in nature.
3. There should be a correlation between the agency and the MSW Program's practice perspective so as to provide an integrated class-field curriculum and a consistent learning experience for the student.
4. The agency should provide a range of assignments on an ongoing basis that are appropriate to meet the student's educational needs as an MSW student. The student workload in the foundation year should reflect opportunity for involvement in varying modalities of service, as well as exposure to a

diversity of people and problems. Every effort will be made that the concentration year practicum, including advanced standing MSW placements, will provide a focus pertinent to the student's professional goals.

5. The agency must provide the necessary space and facilities, including privacy for interviewing, desk and file space, and clerical assistance.
6. The setting provides adequate field instruction with release time for field instructors to provide a minimum of 1 hour of bi-weekly supervision, to adequately prepare evaluations each semester and interact with the field liaison about the student, and to participate in orientation and training events conducted by the MSW Field Director. There should be a staff of sufficient size to administrate programs. Students will not be utilized to substitute for regularly needed staff.
7. The setting should agree to treat all field instruction information, especially evaluations of the student, as confidential, and refer all inquiries about the student to the Faculty Liaison and/or the MSW Director of Field Education.
8. The agency personnel recognition that the NASW is the standard-setting body for the profession and that the Council on Social Work Education is the standard-setting body for social work education.
9. The agency must provide necessary measures to protect students' safety. This may minimally include policies and procedures regarding conducting home visits, interacting with potentially difficult clients and handling emergencies.
10. Agency's policies recognize that professional social work field instruction is essential to academic instruction. Therefore, the agency should genuinely want to teach students and regard the practicum as an important part of its function. Further, there should be recognition that the educational relationship is mutually strengthening to the agency, the college, and the profession.

Criteria for Selecting Agency Field Instructors

Selecting an agency field instructor is the responsibility of the social work field director in consultation with the agency. A master of social work degree and postgraduate experience sufficient to have achieved autonomous practice are required. Prior supervisory experience is desirable. Field instructors are expected to have demonstrated a high level of practice, including sound communication skills, and the commitment and desire to participate in the education of students.

In consultation with the social work field director, an agency field instructor may delegate specified areas of instruction to another senior staff member, who is known as an agency task instructor. The agency task instructor must have a demonstrated capacity for facilitative relationships, maturity, a broad perspective of social work practice, and high standards of professional behavior. However, the field instructor is responsible for relating that instruction to the educational competencies of field practice, for monitoring and evaluating the student's performance, and for maintaining weekly conferences with the student.

The field instructor is the designated agency staff member who guides and supervises the student in acquiring knowledge and skills from the practicum experience. Field students and their instructors share a unique academic relationship. Instructors must be prepared to shift their roles from providing

services to clients to educating students. The quality of field instruction significantly determines the overall excellence of the student's practicum experience and the student's satisfaction in that experience. Meeting minimal criteria indicates that a field instructor:

1. Possesses a master in social work degree from a CSWE accredited program and at least two years post graduate practice experience, preferably with licensure commensurate with years and experience;
2. Possesses the ability:
 - a. To provide students with individualized learning experiences in a variety of social work practice roles through which they can achieve professional practice behavior by integration of social work knowledge, values and skills;
 - b. To place a teaching emphasis in the practicum on students' acquisition of generalist and advanced practice skills;
 - c. To enable students to use their sensitivities as well as their knowledge in a professional manner in all their relationships with people;
 - d. To evaluate (a) the student's potential capacity for social work; and (b) the methods by which the student's learning may be facilitated. Translate the evaluation into learning situations;
3. Willing:
 - a. To provide adequate time for supervisory activities including weekly one-hour student supervision and semester-based student evaluation. It is expected that the field instructor would be available for periodic conferences with Union's faculty liaison to discuss student performance, supervision and other concerns;
 - b. To attend seminars related to student supervision and other relevant social work topics. Field Instructors supervising for the first time will attend training seminars conducted by the MSW Program;
4. Is committed to the NASW Code of Ethics and understands current developments in the profession of social work;
5. Appreciates and respects all people, is sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity, and willing to challenge social injustice on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people in society.
6. Demonstrates:
 - a. Knowledge of the placement setting and the ability to involve the student in learning about its structural and administrative patterns, service delivery systems, populations served, linkages with related programs, and relevant socio-political factors;
 - b. Interest and competence in teaching practicum, based on the ability to gain satisfaction in the professional growth of other people. Possess the ability to develop a sensitive,

educationally oriented relationship with students, accepting them, their feelings, and their capacity for growth and change.

c. Understanding and acceptance of the partnership between the University and the placement in providing well-developed, graduate professional education.

Occasionally an agency can offer a valuable learning opportunity for practicum students because of their client population and service delivery system, but the prospective field instructor does not have an MSW degree. In such cases, the agency, in consultation with the MSW Field Director, must identify an MSW professional to work closely with the agency staff and the student to insure that the educational competencies of field are being met. If there are no MSW employees working at the agency, then the following guidelines would apply:

1. An MSW professional from the community or university will contract with the agency, student, or university to be the field instructor, as will be determined on a case by case basis.
2. The utilization of agencies as practicum sites that provide a social service benefit to the community but do not have professionally trained social workers on staff will be an exception rather than the rule of the Social Work Program.

Student Participation in Selection

In order to accomplish their goals and the agency's expectations of them in the field placement experience, MSW students are responsible to do the following:

1. **Are responsible for working out a schedule with their employment and their family life that allows them to complete their practicum hours. There are few practicums with non-traditional hours. Working a schedule to get the hours completed is NOT the School of Social Work's responsibility.**
2. Assume responsibility for making an appointment with the MSW Field Director to discuss Field Instruction placement plans.
3. Receive confirmation of the placement, after all pre-placement interviews, from the MSW Field Director.
4. Work with the Field Instructor in developing a written learning agreement identifying performance expectations based on the field education competencies.
5. Assume responsibility for following agency procedures, including the agency's time and holiday schedules.
6. Respect client and agency confidentiality and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession, based on the NASW Code of Ethics.
7. Assume responsibility for informing the agency field instructor and faculty liaison of any changes in schedules, including necessary absences from the agency for any reason, agreeing to make up the time to the satisfaction of the faculty liaison and field instructor.
8. Assume responsibility for the integration of theoretical knowledge with practice for evaluating the field experience and for being active seekers in the development of their professional capacities.

9. Discuss with the field instructor matters concerning the agency's responsibilities for the learning experience, field instruction, agency policies, conferences, and evaluations.

10. Meet standard responsibilities as outlined in this manual; including the fulfillment of all assigned responsibilities; exhibiting conduct in accordance with professional social work standards encompassing ethics, critical thinking, use of self/task management, self-awareness, professional relationships, and communication.

11. Make faculty liaison aware of actual or potential difficulties.

12. Participate in agency orientation and become familiar with the agency's policies and procedures. This includes information and procedures related to safety awareness.

Students Expectation of the Placement Agency:

1. Provision of the learning opportunities and educational supports outlined in this manual;
2. Adequate opportunities to test themselves and their skills, within limits;
3. Opportunity to express concerns about their assignments and to receive careful consideration of such concerns, although decisions about such matters will rest with the educational judgment of the faculty liaison and field instructor;
4. Development of a clear learning agreement with the field instructor concerning performance expectations, service responsibilities, agency routines, conferences, recording, attendance, and so forth.

APPENDIX A

FIELD PRACTICUM CONTRACT (MOU)



**Field Practicum Contract
Between**

**Union University School of Social Work
And**

Agency

This contractual agreement, entered into this ____ day of _____, 20____, establishes an agreement between Union University School of Social Work, hereinafter referred to as the University, and _____, hereinafter referred to as the Agency. It specifies the basis on which the Agency will serve as a field instruction placement for students and in which faculty personnel will provide educational direction of students assigned with said Agency. The purpose of this agreement is to specify the general activities planned and the assignment of responsibilities between the parties.

A. It is agreed and understood that:

The Agency will serve as a field instruction placement for the University students in such number and at such time as the parties hereto mutually agree. This agreement will remain in force as long as

both the University and the Agency mutually agree upon the terms of the contract or until this agreement will need to be updated.

The particular facilities/programs/services to be used, the number of students, and the particular instruction–consultation to be provided will be determined by mutual agreement of the parties as governed by the stated stipulations.

1. The students in this field instruction placement:

Will receive remuneration _____ (specify in addendum)

Will not receive remuneration _____

2. The University does not assume responsibility for or provide insurance against any physical or professional liability, which might be assessed due to injury to students or clients on the premises of the Agency.
3. The student is required to carry liability insurance to cover any malpractice involvement by error, negligence, or omission.
4. The representatives of the Agency and/or University, after consultation with the student, may suspend the participation of said student in the educational program if they find that the student's continued participation in the program is not in the best interests of the student, the Agency, and/or the University.
5. Agency regulations, policies, procedures, and goals will be applicable to the students while they are engaged in field education unless otherwise stated in writing by both parties. These policies, procedures, and goals will be described during orientation and will be reviewed periodically.
6. All days and hours for the student's participation in field instruction shall be arranged between the student and the Agency representative after consultation with the Field Director or Field Liaison in keeping with the University policy.

B. Scheduling of activities

The scheduling of activities of students in the field instruction program will be in accordance with the schedule of courses at the University and will be explored and planned with the appropriate faculty personnel of the University, the Agency in which field instruction is conducted, and the

student. Planning of the specifics of field instruction shall be a joint effort of the Agency representative and the student with the consultation from the Field Director.

C. The University will provide a faculty member designated as the Social Work Field Director who will:

1. Enable and expedite the field practicum curriculum.
2. Fulfill administrative responsibilities such as:
 - a. locates and assess new field agencies;
 - b. assigns students to placements;
 - c. maintains efficient reporting systems and records of field practicum activities;
 - d. participates in the preparation and maintenance of a current field placement manual; and
 - e. organizes a training session for Agency Field Instructors when necessary.
3. Initiate and respond to faculty, student, and Agency suggestions for the continuous upgrading of the field practicum curriculum.

D. The University will provide a faculty member designated as the Social Work Field Liaison who will: (the below responsibilities may be conducted by the Social Work Field Director instead of the Liaison)

1. Conduct periodic evaluations of practicum methodology and outcomes, and initiate appropriate changes.
2. Maintain regular telephone contact with the Agency Field Instructor regarding the student's progress on at least a monthly basis.
3. Have conferences with the Agency Field Instructor regarding the student's progress as deemed appropriate.

4. Meet with the student weekly in an integrated seminar to discuss the placement, collect assignments and forms related to the Field Practicum experience, and be available to the student if problems arise.
5. Assist the Agency Field Instructor in the designing of learning experiences for the student; assess with the Agency Instructor the adequacy of the student's field performance; and consult with and advise the Agency Field Instructor regarding learning problems which the student may have.
6. Ensure that the Agency Field Instructor completes appropriate evaluations of the student; attend a final evaluation conference with the student and the Agency Field Instructor; and assign the final grade for the Field Practicum.

E. The Agency will provide a staff member designated as the Agency Field Instructor who will:

1. Provide the student with a formal orientation of the agency, promote the Agency's understanding of the Union University School of Social Work and acceptance of the student, and enable the student to feel a part of the Agency. Provide a copy of the orientation schedule to the student and the Social Work Faculty Liaison at the beginning of the practicum.
2. Assist the student in identifying goals/desired outcome and learning tasks for the field placement experience commensurate with the educational competencies of the School of Social Work.
3. Select and make appropriate Agency assignments that take into consideration, as much as possible, the student's past experience, learning patterns, career expectations, and the social work program's educational competencies.
4. Suggest written materials for the student to examine during the course of field experience.
5. Provide on-the-job instruction and supervision of the student.
6. Hold a regular one-hour weekly conference with the student, sign the student's weekly time form verifying the hours and tasks completed that week, and hold additional conferences with the student as deemed necessary.

7. Attend conferences with the Field Director as deemed appropriate.
8. Complete a written, formal, final evaluation of the student's performance, utilizing the Union University Practicum Evaluation Form.
9. Attend a final evaluation conference with the student and Social Work Field Liaison, where the final evaluation will be discussed.
10. Contribute knowledge and suggestions to Union University's School of Social Work for upgrading the Field Instruction Program as needed.
11. Immediately consult with the Social Work Field Liaison regarding any problems or concerns noted with a particular field placement experience.

In testimony whereof witness the duly authorized signatures of the parties hereto:

_____ Agency Representative Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Director, Field Education	_____ Date
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Please make a signed copy for your records and return the original agreement to the to:

Union University School of Social Work

Ginny Schwindt, MSW Field Director – Jackson
1050 Union University Drive, Box 1843
Jackson, TN 38305

Union University School of Social Work
Jason Cox, MSW Field Director - Germantown
2745 Hacks Cross Rd
Germantown, Tennessee 38138

Office number: 731-661-5701

E-mail: vschwindt@uu.edu

Office: 901-312-1929

E-mail: jcox@uu.edu

APPENDIX B

Waiver of Liability



UNION UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL of SOCIAL WORK

Social Work Field Education Waiver of Liability

I, _____, affirm that I have read the Union University School of Social Work Student Handbook and Field Practicum Manual and understand the nature of social work practicum involving regular engagement in on-site, in-person field practicum activities in a social service setting.

(Please carefully read and then initial each of the following statements):

_____ I acknowledge that there are certain risks inherent in my participation in this practicum, including, but not limited to risks arising from:

- Driving to and from the field practicum site, or while in the course of field practicum activities;
- Unpredictable or violent behavior of certain client populations served by the field practicum site;
- Exposure to infectious diseases, including tuberculosis or other airborne pathogens (e.g., COVID-19), and hepatitis, HIV or other bloodborne pathogens.

_____ I acknowledge that these risks could result in my bodily injury, up to and including death, and agree to assume the liability for these risks.

_____ I waive my right to hold Union University, including the School of Social Work faculty and staff, responsible for any liability for injuries associated with my field practicum.

_____ I agree that it is my responsibility to understand and follow the field practicum site's policies and procedures designed to identify and control risks, including safety and security procedures and bloodborne pathogen policies, and to obtain any immunizations which the field practicum site and University may recommend and/or require.

_____ I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to bring to the University's and/or Social Work Department's attention any information regarding the field placement/field practicum site being unsafe or otherwise improper.

_____ Should I require emergency medical treatment as a result of accident or illness arising during the practicum, I consent to such treatment. I acknowledge that Union University does provide liability insurance. I agree to be financially responsible for any medical bills not covered by the liability insurance as a result of emergency or other medical treatments. I will notify my Agency Field Supervisor if I have medical conditions about which emergency personnel should be informed.

_____ I understand that it is my responsibility to follow safe practices as set by Union University, including the School of Social Work and my field practicum site, as well as those required by our state

and federal governments. Information specific to COVID-19 Control and Prevention can be found on the following website: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html>

_____ I acknowledge that the social work profession is not risk free and that by extension, practical training (field practicum) for the profession is not risk free either. I voluntarily participate in this field practicum in spite of these risks, with the understanding that successful completion of Field Practicum is a requirement to obtain a Social Work (BSW or MSW) degree.

_____ I acknowledge that if I have health issues or am not comfortable participating in field practicum at this time, I can request a virtual field placement, or elect to postpone my field practicum to a later date, knowing that it will affect my original projected graduation date.

_____ I understand if I have any question as to whether a physical or medical condition would prevent my full participation in a field practicum, I should contact the Union University Social Work Program Field Director or the Director for Disability Services who will discuss possible accommodations.

_____ I acknowledge that engaging in field practicum may require a degree of skill and knowledge different from other activities and that I have responsibilities as a participant. It has been explained to me, and I understand, that Union University Social Work field faculty are available to discuss any questions or concerns I have about the nature and physical demands of this field practicum activity and the inherent risks, hazards, and dangers associated with this activity. I represent that I am otherwise capable, with or without reasonable accommodation, to participate in field practicum.

Student Signature

Date

Social Work Field Director

Date

Social Work Program Director or Chair

Date