

Department of Social Work  
Field Education Handbook

20

## Table of Contents

Introduction

Empathy.....	17
Self-Care.....	17
Ethical Behavior.....	17
Privacy and Confidentiality.....	17
Sexual Relationships and Physical Contact.....	17
Social Media Guidelines.....	18
Addressing Difficulties and Challenges in Field.....	18
Concerns of a Student about the Agency Field Instructor or Agency.....	18
Concerns of the Agency Field Instructor About the Student.....	19
Immediate Suspension/Termination of Field Placement.....	19
Concerns of the Faculty Field Liaison About the Student.....	20
Concerns of the Faculty Field Liaison About the Agency.....	20
Termination of Students from Field Placement.....	20
Resources for Students.....	21
Guidelines for Field Instructors.....	21
Acknowledgments.....	24



## Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of Detroit Mercy prohibits discrimination in educational and employment opportunities, services, and benefits on the basis of race, color, religion, age, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, income, protected veteran status, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws.

## Overview of Field Education

Field Instruction I and II (SWK 4700/4750) and Social Work Seminar I and II (SWK 4710/4760) are the capstone courses of the social work curriculum.

The field practicum is organized into two academic courses: SWK 4700 (Field Instruction I), taken in the fall semester of the student's senior year, and SWK 4750 (Field Instruction II), taken in the winter semester. Each field instruction course accounts for 5 credit hours. Students are in field for approximately 16 hours per week to reach a total of 400 required hours, 200 h

2. Articulate a framework or frameworks for the differential use of these intervention methods and techniques with at least two social-system levels (individual, family, small groups, organization, neighborhood, and community).

The program includes the core knowledge, values and skills, and the professional foundation for social work practice. Field education is an integral part of the BSW degree program and is

coordinator. The following role descriptions are offered for clarification: The Faculty Field Liaison and the Field Instructor are two roles related to a student's field placement (or internship, as the field placement is called in some agencies/schools). These roles are distinguished from an academic advisor as noted.

### Faculty Field Liaison

The Faculty Field Liaison is a full-time or part-time faculty member in the Department who serves as the liaison between the student, the Field Instructor, and the agency. The Faculty Field Liaison meets with the Field Instructor and student a \_\_\_\_\_ to specify and clarify, student assignments in the field placement, read the student records, address field education performance issues and, as necessary, develop a corrective action plan, review a student evaluation with the student and the field instructor, and is available to discuss any issues about the field placement with the student.

The Faculty Field Liaison is responsible for obtaining the field placement evaluation and submitting the evaluation to the Field Education Coordinator. The Faculty Field Liaison must complete a supporting memorandum along with the field placement evaluation form whenever an unsatisfactory grade is recommended (C- or below, Incomplete). The student must receive a copy of the memorandum along with a copy placed in the student's academic file.

The Faculty Field Liaison shall:

- < Meet at least once each semester with the individual Field Instructor and student.
- < Act as liaison between the agency and the college.
- < Submit all evaluative materials to the Field Education Coordinator and Chair at the end of the semester.
- < Counsel students regarding problems or concerns related to field instruction.
- < Advise other faculty of concerns in-field instruction.

### Field Instructor

The Field Instructor is the agency employee who guides assignments in the field placement, provides instruction at the field placement, and evaluates the student's performance with the student and the faculty advisor. In addition to the Field Instructor, some students are assigned a task supervisor, an agency employee who works directly in the program area where a student is placed and assists the student with tasks related to their assignments in field education. They also report to the Field Instructor on the student's progress in tasks. The Field Instructor and the task supervisor are not paid by the University for their work in this capacity but are performing valuable professional volunteer service.





- < Follow up on potential sites for field instruction provided by the Field Education Coordinator by initiating a meeting with the designated contact person and informing the Field Education Coordinator of his/her perceptions of the meetings.
- < Practice and observe field instruction site procedures for promptness, attendance, work completion, and appropriate dress.
- < Complete assignments of Field Instructor.
- < Meet with the Field Instructor weekly for supervision.
- < Participate in agency-sponsored in-service training, where possible, and other related professional meetings.
- < Meet any health or general requirements of the field instruction site, such as physical examination, drug screens, TB tests, or criminal background checks.
- < Complete all academic assignments for field instruction.

### Selection of Field Instruction Sites

The Department of Social Work is acutely aware of the importance of the field instruction agency as an opportunity for the student to integrate their theoretical learning into a practice model. To be effective, a field instruction agency must meet the following guidelines:

- < The agency philosophy of social service shall be compatible with the educational objectives of the social work profession.
- < The agency's

## Field Placement Process

Students are expected to follow the field placement process detailed below to secure a field placement. Students do not develop their own placements. All field placements must be approved by the Field Education Coordinator to ensure they meet the requirements of the program. The University of Detroit Mercy, Department of Social Work cannot guarantee that all students will secure a placement. If students are not able to successfully secure a placement by the 5th week of

## Field Education Policies and Procedures

### Placement

The Field Education Coordinator has primary responsibility for selecting agencies that can provide appropriate field education experiences for students. Students do not develop their own placement opportunities, but rather work directly with the Field Education Coordinator in identifying appropriate placements.

### Challenges Securing Field Placement

Occasionally students may interview at multiple agencies and not be offered a field placement. The Department of Social Work cannot and does not guarantee that students will successfully secure a field placement. If a student is not offered placement after three interviews, it is the student's responsibility to schedule a field advising appointment to discuss barriers to placement with the Field Education Coordinator. If no match is found after three interviews, a review of the student's appropriateness for placement will be conducted by the department faculty. Students that are repeatedly experiencing unsuccessful interviews may not be allowed to continue with the placement process. They may be offered the opportunity to delay placement until the following academic year. Students shall not continue in their seminar coursework, as field instruction and seminar must be taken concurrently.

### Dual Relationships

Students are not permitted to be placed at agencies where family members are employed or are receiving services. The Department of Social Work discourages and, in most situations, will not approve placement of students in agencies where they have been employed, or where they have previously received services as a client. These recommendations exist to protect students, agency employees, and clients from conflicts that may arise due to dual relationships. If a student wishes to complete their field placement at their place of employment, refer to the Guidelines for Students Considering Field Practicum at Student's Place of Employment

### Guidelines for Students Considering Field Practicum at Student's Place of Employment

Placement at an agency where the student is employed may be proposed by the student. Evaluation and approval of the proposal, to use the agency where the student is employed for a field practicum placement, is the responsibility of the Department of Social Work. The agency official with the authority to grant permission for release time for the field placement should be contacted before submitting proposals to the Field Education Coordinator for approval. The final proposal must be approved by both the student's proposed agency Field Instructor and the Field Education Coordinator.

## Criteria for Approval of Field Placement at Student's Place of Employment

Practicum experience may not include or in any way duplicate the roles, tasks, or responsibilities for which the student is employed by the agency. Any roles, tasks, or responsibilities performed by the student for practicum purposes must be separate and additional to any roles, tasks, or responsibilities for which the student is employed by the agency, including clientele and caseload. Practicum hours must be completed outside the scope of employment hours. Any roles, tasks, or responsibilities performed by the student for practicum purposes must be under the direction of a separate supervisor from that who oversees the roles, tasks, or responsibilities for which the student is employed by the agency. University liability insurance and professional insurance will cover the student only during field placement hours.

The following considerations are made when evaluating a student's request for field placement at their place of employment:

- ◁ The student shall have worked as a member of the service delivery staff in the agency for at least one full year before entering into a field instruction experience.
- ◁ An employee agency selected for field instruction must be a recognized social work agency. In all respects, agencies used must meet the regular criteria for field instruction.
- ◁ The student must have a field instructor for the educational experience who is different from the regular work superior. The field instructor must meet the regular criteria used in other field instruction settings.
- ◁ At least one full day (8 hours) of the two days of field instruction each week shall be designated exclusively for field instruction. Two additional half-day schedules (4 hours) may complement the educational focus for a total of 16 hours a week.
- ◁ The agency designated field instructor must schedule an hour every week for a direct one-to-one supervisory conference.
- ◁ The responsibilities and commitments of the student, the Department of Social Work, and the employing agency in which the student proposes to engage in field instruction will be clearly defined. In every other respect, field instruction must conform to the Department's standards, policies, and procedures as specified in the current manual.
- ◁ The agency must recognize the role transition that is expected of its employees who attend the Social Work Program under these arrangements. When engaged in practicum assignments, this includes a change from a worker-supervisor relation to a learner-teacher relationship. It also implies a sincere effort to avoid creating work responsibilities that might jeopardize the student's opportunity to use the learning experiences that have been selected for practicum purposes.

Students should be aware that consequences may arise from a change in employment status or management at their agency. If a student's employment is terminated by an agency, it could jeopardize the ability to complete field requirements. In the case of termination, the Department of Social Work shall investigate the reason for termination before the student

could be reassigned to a new field placement. Reassignment and continuation of field placement is not guaranteed. The approval and acceptance of the agency field instructor rest with the Department of Social Work. The agency must agree to comply with all practicum policies delineated in the University of Detroit Mercy Department of Social Work field manual and affiliation agreement.

#### Academic Credit for Life/Work Experience



does not mean that the conduct was welcome. In some situations, a person may not be able to complain about unwelcome behaviors because of a power imbalance.

Title IX requires the University of Detroit Mercy to respond to certain harassment on the basis of sex which it knows about or reasonably should have known about. Specifically, the University must:

- ◁ Investigate what happened.
- ◁ Take appropriate steps to resolve the matter – the University must do its best to eliminate the harassment, prevent recurrence, and remedy effects even if no formal complaint has been made or when a person making a complaint does not wish to further participate in the process.
- ◁ Take interim measures during the investigation to prevent potential further harassment.

If you feel you have been discriminated against on the basis of sex in your field placement, the University of Detroit Mercy has a responsibility to investigate your concern and provide you with support. Students should report discrimination on the basis of sex to their Faculty Field Liaison. Additionally, students may report the incident(s) to the Title IX Coordinator and Equity and Compliance Specialist at (313) 993-1802.

### Student Professional Liability Insurance

Students are expected to have malpractice/professional liability insurance at the time they begin their field internship. The university provides liability insurance under a large umbrella policy for all students in the field internship.

### Student Professional Conduct and Standards

Students are expected to follow agency rules and policies. They are expected to be punctual and dependable. They are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in their interactions with clients, agency staff, and the University of Detroit Mercy faculty and staff. Students should provide services to clients that are based on relevant social work knowledge and research. Students must demonstrate an ability to prioritize responsibilities and complete assignments.

### Interpersonal Skills

Social work students demonstrate the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals. These include showing respect for and consideration of others, listening skills, and the ability to communicate effectively both verbally and non-verbally. Students take appropriate responsibility for their actions and consider the impact on others. They work effectively with others, regardless of the level of authority.





## Social Media Guidelines

Social media channels, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, and various blog sites are just a few examples of new and exciting ways to connect with others and share information. Like any technology, it has broadened social workers' capacity to assess and manage information about clients, influence policy, address social justice issues, and receive supervision. However, the rapid growth of social media communication tools and their ease of accessibility can also have unintended and potentially damaging consequences to users if basic guidelines are ignored. Students are expected to adhere to social work values, ethics and engage in professional conduct as outlined in the NASW *Code of Ethics* when using social media communication tools, whether using a personal site(s), agency site(s), or University site(s).

## Addressing Difficulties and Challenges in Field

The Department of Social Work is committed to assisting students to maximize their learning opportunities and experiences in a field placement. Issues, concerns,

4.

6. If appropriate, the Field Education Coordinator will work with the Faculty Field Liaison and the student to identify other placement options. The Department of Social Work cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.
7. Termination from a field placement may result in a grade of F in field, which would disallow the student to continue in the program.

#### Concerns of the Faculty Field Liaison About the Student

1. The Faculty Field Liaison will address any concerns with the student and see if the issues or concerns can be directly worked out.
2. If the issue at hand cannot be resolved directly with the student, the Faculty Field Liaison will notify the agency and the Field Education Coordinator of their concerns and a meeting will be arranged to address the Faculty Field Liaison's concerns.
3. If appropriate, the Field Education Coordinator will work with the Faculty Field Liaison and the student to identify other placement options. The Department of Social Work cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.
4. If indicated, a student may be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students to address any concerns.

#### Concerns of the Faculty Field Liaison About the Agency

1. (If)-4()-2(in)5(d)4(ic)7l-8(ns)-9()-2l.≥2Fd9Cy4(ef)-9(e()-2l.≥2k 0 Oi6)-2(of)8(f1 05lld)5()-2(L)3(iais)-2(o)6



Develop a student work schedule that should include a minimum of 16 hours per week. Student's time in field instruction should total 200 clock hours per semester.

◁ Pre-learning specifics:

Clarify the goal and objectives of the agency and in what roles/capacity client contact is made.

Work with the student to develop learning objectives for the semester.

Jointly review with the student the University of Detroit Mercy field evaluation form the instrument used at the end of the semester to assess progress.

Inform the student of various experiences, projects, programs within the agency.

◁ General expectations of the University:

The student must be allowed contact with clients, client groups, or client systems

The student is expected to have contact with clients, client groups, or client systems

The focus should be on learning rather than the number of clients seen/served.

The student is expected to attend in-service training activities which are available to regular staff members.

The agency is expected to provide the student with adequate office space, telephone availability, and any other essentials related to the performance of professional responsibilities.

◁ Communications between Field Instructor, Student, and Faculty Field Liaison:

The Field Instructor should consult with the Faculty Field Liaison when there is some question regarding the appropriateness of any agency assignment.

If the Field Instructor and a student are having communication issues, the Faculty Field Liaison should be contacted if the problem is unable to be worked out between them.

Any inappropriate behavior on the part of the student should first be approached in the conference between student and Field Instructor. If

At the end of the second semester, the student must turn in an Evaluation of Field Placement which should be used in considering that agency for future placements.

## Acknowledgments

Resources from the North American Network of the International Association of Agricultural and Fisheries Economists (IAAFE) - Network of Agricultural and Fisheries Economists (NAFEE) - Network of Agricultural and Fisheries Economists (NAFEE)