

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
AT
NEW ORLEANS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

FIELD PROGRAM ONLINE

ESSENTIAL FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES IN BRIEF



IN APPRECIATION

Southern University at New Orleans School of Social Work Field Education Department would like to thank the faculty and staff, who have been involved in the development of this field manual. The enthusiasm shown in creating a document that is both user-friendly and valuable is appreciated.

We would also like to take this opportunity to recognize our agency-based field supervisors for their interest and dedication to field education. Field supervisors' function as our "faculty in the field" and are teachers and mentors to our students. Field education is one of the most important and influential aspects of social work education. The willingness shown by field supervisors to partner with the School of Social Work to provide students with high quality learning experiences is appreciated. As our students learn to become social work practitioners, we hope that the relationships that are developed can be lifelong in nature and rewarding for all.

Without our field agency supervisor's time, effort and expertise, our students would not receive that crucial part of their social work education. Thank you for your valuable contribution to all of our students, to our programs, to our School and most of all to the profession of social work.

INTRODUCTION

To Social Work Student, Field Faculty and Field Supervisor:

Welcome to the Field Education Manual of the Social Work Online Program at Southern University at New Orleans. The field education process involves the active collaboration of three parties, the students preparing for and doing internship or field experience, the field faculty from the social work department who teach and monitor the students' progress during placement, and field supervisors who provide supervision to students at the agency. The goal is to provide a positive and educational experience for everyone involved.

Field Practicum is a critical component of Southern University at New Orleans' School of Social Work's BSW and MSW programs. The Council on Social Work Education emphasizes that fieldwork is the "signature pedagogy" of social work education:

Field Education Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline—to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice.

Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program - Council on Social Work Education (EPAS 2.2) Through field education students develop social work competencies and practice behaviors under the supervision of an experienced social worker. The ideal field placement offers students a focus on the methods of direct practice, policy development and implementation, and other social work special projects and research activities. It is expected that students will experience a diversity of client populations and intervention issues, relying upon a range of theoretical concepts and models to develop breadth of learning and to establish a broad base for practice.

Students are encouraged to read the entire Field manual and to keep it handy as a reference throughout their time in the Field Education Program. Current and prospective Agency Field Supervisors and their organizations will find the material in this manual helpful in understanding social work education at Southern University at New Orleans, roles and expectations of parties involved in field education, and relevant policies and procedures. Hopefully this manual will assist you and give clarification to your roles and responsibilities and facilitate a successful outcome.

The Social Work faculty at SUNO wishes all of you a very rewarding field education experience.

Sincerely,

Tina T. Smith
Director of Field Education

Dr. Rebecca Chaisson
Dean

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION & GOALS

The SUNO School of Social Work embraces the mission and goals of Southern University at New Orleans, a historically Black university. Part of its mission is to provide an environment conducive to learning and growth with one of its goals as preparing the student to demonstrate interest in and commitment to resolving civic and social community issues and problems. The Mission of Southern University at New Orleans School of Social Work is to prepare competent and effective social workers committed to address the strengths and challenges of a diverse population in a changing and evolving global community. Quality educational experiences, undergirded by the School's themes of advocacy, empowerment and transformation, prepare baccalaureate students for agency-based generalist practice and master students for agency based advanced social work practice. Such practice is further guided by the School's dedication to critical practice knowledge and skills and the essential values of the profession: service, social and economic justice, the dignity and worth of the individual, and the importance of human relationships.

Teaching

1. To use learning approaches that prepare students to integrate the values, ethics, knowledge, and skill base of the social work profession with systems of all sizes and with respect for all people aimed toward social change and promotion of social and economic justice.
2. To anchor social work knowledge in our program's themes of advocacy, empowerment and transformation.

Service

3. To provide leadership to the university, the community, and the profession.
4. To serve the local, national and international areas by preparing students to fill the dynamic social welfare resource needs for generalist and advanced practitioners.
5. To foster the commitment of students and faculty to active involvement in improving the quality of life in the community in which they live.

Scholarship

6. To effectively assist the process of professional development among faculty and students.
7. To contribute to the knowledge base of the strengths of diverse client population

MSW FIELD EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES /PROGRAMMATIC STRUCTURES

Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. The field placement experience offers students an opportunity for learning about social problems, social welfare, organizations, and diverse client groups, communities and resources, and issues that are psychosocial in nature. This occurs in an agency-based setting with supervision by an approved and credentialed social work field supervisor. The field placement is an opportunity for students to add breadth and depth to their previous experience and also a time to explore a new area or field of study.

SUNO's Field Education program utilizes a concurrent field education model. Students attend once a week on campus field seminar course as well as being placed at an approved agency site under the teaching social work field supervisor. Students must register for both Seminar and Practicum the same semester, and each seminar and practicum should be the same section. The practicum may be completed in traditional social work agencies or innovative nontraditional settings. The field placement is an integral part of the MSW program and has strict standards from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) that must be adhered to.

Field Education Practicum Hours Requirements

BSW students begin field placement in their senior year. The field placement courses, Field Instruction and Seminar I (Social Work 481) and Field Instruction and Seminar II (Social Work 482) are expected to be taken in the fall and Spring Semester. Students receive three (3) credits for each field course. Students must complete 225 hours each semester, totaling 450 field hours.

	Class hours	Agency Hours	Total
Field I Fall	35 (2.5 hrs x 14 wks)	190.0 (~13.6 hrs x 14 weeks) =	225.0
Field II Spring	30 (2.5 hrs x 12 wks)	195.0 (~16.25 hrs x 12 weeks) =	<u>225.0</u>
		Total Hours =	450.0

Advanced Standing students must complete 450 field hours. Students are required to take field practicum and seminar (2) semesters of their first year.

TOTAL NEEDED	CLASS HOURS	AGENCY HOURS
Field III Fall = 259	35 (2.5 hrs x 14 weeks)	224 (~16 hrs x 14 weeks)
Field IV Spring = 192	30 (2.5 hrs x 12 weeks)	162 (~13.5 hrs x 12 weeks)

SUNO – SSW FIELD HOURS FOR FULL and PART-TIME STUDENTS

Full and Part-time students must earn 900 hours across four semesters. Below is the proposed distribution of hours across four semesters: Spring, Summer, Fall and Spring.

Full-Time students must complete a totaling 900 field hours over four semesters. Students take Field I & II in year one, and Field III & IV in year two of the program. The experience is concurrent with course work commencing field education in Foundation Field I in the Spring and Field II in the Summer. If students do not take Field I & II in the first year of the program, the student will not be able to graduate in two years.

Part-Time students must complete totaling 900 field hours over the four semesters. Students are required to take field I & II in the second year of the program, and Field III & IV in the third year of the programs. This means the part-time program require 3 years to graduate.

Please note that students earn Field hours in two ways: 1) 2.5 hours for every seminar class attended and 2) hours earned in the Agency. *See the distribution of hours below.*

TOTAL NEEDED	CLASS HOURS	AGENCY HOURS
Field I Spring = 259	35 (2.5 hrs x 14 weeks)	224 (~16 hrs x 14 weeks)
Field II Summer = 192	40 (2.5 hrs x 8 weeks x 2x/wks)	152 (~19 hrs x 8 weeks)
Field III Fall = 259	35 (2.5 hrs x 14 weeks)	224 (~16 hrs x 14 weeks)
Field IV Spring = 192	30 (2.5 hrs x 12 weeks)	162 (~13.5 hrs x 12 weeks)

NOTE: Not adhering to the Curriculum Guide for the program a student enters may delay in matriculating through the program. Taking additional courses will not affect the field schedule. By policy, students may not take two field courses concurrently. The field experience is concurrent with course work commencing his/her field education in Advance Field Seminar III and IV. This only applies to students accepted in the Advanced Standing Program. Students are required to complete their field internship requirements per their respective program Curriculum Guides. Failure to complete field internships per the Curriculum Guide precludes graduation from the MSW Program.

Generalist Field Experience Generalist (foundation year) field internships provide students with the opportunity to learn the general practice of professional social work.

- Students should have experiences working with all the following: individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Among the social work roles for students are advocate, broker, networker, educator, case manager, mediator, and researcher.
- Potential types of agencies include
 - Nonprofit agencies (shelters, crisis centers, senior services, adoption agencies, family resource centers);
 - Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, home health agencies, group homes;
 - Hospitals, nursing homes; and
 - Day treatment facilities.
- Generalist tasks include
 - Micro tasks (assessments, interviewing, intake, general case management);
 - Mezzo tasks (educational groups, multidisciplinary meetings); and
 - Macro tasks (volunteer recruitment, develop professional training, agency meetings).

Note: Advanced Standing students do not have a generalist year placement.

Advanced Practice Field Experience: All students have an advanced practice field placement. This placement is focused on advanced social work practice. This field experience advances the skills and knowledge used during the generalist field placement. During the advanced practice year, students use advanced skills and theories as they are expected to have a more advanced use of ethics and professionalism, resulting from the application of theories and skills demonstrated and learned in other courses in the advanced year.

Field Practicum Time Guidelines and Recording Requirements

- Students are required to be present at the assigned field agency as scheduled.
- No students can continue participating at the field agency during the fall and spring academic break. Students are only allowed at a field site if they are officially enrolled.
- If a field agency has a holiday on which the student is expected to be at the field agency, the student is not required to report, nor do they need to make up the time. Please indicate this on your timesheet by writing **HOLIDAY** in the appropriate area.
- Students are encouraged to attend relevant professional conferences and workshops, which will be credited toward field hours. Students must have a written statement between the agency supervisor and the field seminar instructor. The written agreement permitting you to attend should be attached to the time sheet.
- If applicable, students must notify the field supervisor at least two weeks before their planned absence from their field placement.
- Students are not expected to be at their agency placement during their final exam week.
- Students **are not allowed to** use hours accumulated during semester breaks.
- If a student is absent from the agency for a sick or personal emergency, he/she must devise a plan with the agency supervisor to make up the missed time.
- Students are expected to report to their field agency on time as scheduled. If a student is going to be late, a courtesy call to the field supervisor is expected. Attendance is important. Excessive absence and tardiness, as determined by the field supervisor, may negatively impact the student's grade.
- Students must maintain a time sheet reflecting the hours earned at the field agency. All field practicum time sheets must be signed by the field supervisor weekly.

- Students are required to submit their signed time sheets to their field instructor. The field instructor will notify the student of the due date.

Locating an Agency (For students approximately 45 miles from the main campus)

To be successful in the field of social work, it is important for students to become familiar with various service providers in their community. Social work is a broad profession and can be applied in various settings. It is important to do a complete community search to become familiar with the services provided in your community. Once students begin exploring their community, they should make a list of agencies of interest and begin to learn more about those agencies and whether they accept MSW interns. Keeping track of this information will be helpful when working with the Internship Department so that we can understand which agencies have been explored if you ever need assistance. It is required to submit your top 3 agencies of choice from your community search on the Internship Agency Placement Data (IAPD) Form ~

<https://forms.office.com/r/vPzPPWR5L9?origin=lprLink>.

Students do NOT need to be accepted by the agency to submit the agency's information on IAPD Form. Once the student has submitted their 3 agencies of choice by the deadline, the department will reach out to ensure that the site can provide the appropriate tasks and supervision. All agencies and internship supervisors must be approved by the Internship Director. If any of the 3 sites chosen does not meet the learning requirements, the student will be asked to provide additional agency options.

Early Outreach Requests

Some students may discover that certain agencies internship placement process may begin earlier than the timeline set by the Internship Department. When this occurs, the Internship Director will evaluate these situations on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate course of action. If a student identifies an agency with an early placement process, they should promptly contact the Internship Department for further guidance.

Agency Onboarding Requirements

To become an approved field/internship placement site for social work students, agencies must have a social worker on staff to provide supervision to students with an educational focus per the Council of Social Work Education.

- To supervise BSW students, the supervisor must have a BSW or MSW with 2 years of post-graduate experience.
- To supervise MSW students, the supervisor must have an MSW degree with 2 years of post-graduate experience.

Beside the CSWE requirements for becoming an approved agency, each agency is different and may require additional requirements for students to become eligible and accepted as an intern.

PLEASE NOTE: To move forward with any additional onboarding steps, an affiliation agreement must already be established between the agency and Southern University at New Orleans ~ Millie M. Charles ~ School of Social Work ~ MSW Online Program.

Employed Students

Students who are employed need to be particularly aware that they must be able to commit the requisite number of field hours per work week to their field placement. Completing the field placement is a big commitment and requires upfront planning by the student and their employer. Students should start working with their employers early on to develop a plan to change their work schedule by either modifying their schedule during the week or utilizing vacation time to accomplish the field hours during the work week. Field placement agencies that can provide learning opportunities and supervision for students in the evenings and on the weekends are limited.

NOTE: Students employed at a human service organization may be able to use their agency as a Field site. **Please see the policy related to this below.**

Limited Agencies with Non-Tradition Hours

The Field Department cannot ***guarantee evening and weekend availability for field placements***. Students are required to be available for field placements during weekday hours. Most social service programs do not have qualified supervisorial staff or operational hours during evenings and weekends for field placements. A few agencies have nontraditional hours, but that is very limited.

Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening

Many agencies require that students complete a criminal background check and/or a drug screening before beginning placement with their agency. If the agency does not adsorb the cost of the background check/drug screening as a component of the interviewing and acceptance process, then the students will be responsible for the cost of the criminal background check/drug screening. A positive return on a background check or a positive result of a drug screening could result in a loss of placement options and could pose a problem in securing a field placement for students.

Difficulty Securing Placement

Southern University School of Social Work cannot guarantee that students will successfully secure a placement. The School of Social Work will reasonably try to work with a student to find a suitable internship. During that time, students will get at least three internship referrals.

Students should reach out to those leads and, if applicable, accept one. Suppose a student refuses or is not offered placement after three interviews. In that case, the student must schedule a Field Advising appointment to discuss barriers to placement with the Director of Field Education and field liaison. Students repeatedly experiencing unsuccessful interviews or refusing agency placement may not be allowed to continue with the placement process. Please keep in mind that this will delay placement until the following academic year, and they will not be able to continue their seminar coursework. Remember, to satisfy the part of the program, students must take the field practicum class and seminar course concurrently in the same semester. Therefore, if a student does not secure placement timely, the student will be asked to withdraw or administratively removed from the social work field course.

Consistent Care of Clients and Disruptions in the field placement

Consistent care of clients means providing for clients continuously without abandon or malfeasance. Client care must be carried out dependably. Student interns must understand the commitment they make when entering fieldwork at an agency. The continuous and consistent care of clients is of utmost importance, and students must be responsible and committed to client care above all. Therefore, students must not abandon their duties at their field placements. Doing so may result in termination from field placement (which means the student fails the Practicum). Students will not be placed in another agency if their disruption was due to their negligence, willful misconduct, or after being placed at another agency within one academic year.

Placement for students will be terminated immediately and permanently if:

- The student fails to show up or call off to the agency.
- The student blatantly disrespected clients, their field supervisor, or staff at the agency
- The student terminates their placement without permission or consultation from the field seminar instructor and the field department.
- The student behaves grossly inappropriately/unprofessionally.
- The student engages in personal relationships with clients or staff at field agencies.
- The students conduct themselves in an immature and unprofessional manner regarding the use of social media by the agency's clients, staff, and the agency.

Please refer to the code of ethics and the problems in the field placements section of the manual for additional information regarding inappropriate, unprofessional, and incompetency issues that may result in termination from field education.

Request to change field placement.

Students are only changed from their field placement if the agency requests termination of the placement or other unique circumstances exist. In the event a student feels a placement change is needed, the student must follow the steps listed below:

- First, the student must meet with the agency field supervisor to discuss the problem and devise an action plan to remedy the situation.
- If the student and field supervisor cannot remedy the situation, the student will contact his/her field seminar instructor.
- If the field seminar instructor cannot rectify the situation, the student may request permission to be removed and reassigned to another field agency. However, the student must request this in writing using the Request for Change of Placement form. When submitting this information, the student must include the reasons for the change request and the action taken to maintain the existing placement to the Director of Field Education, who has final authority to approve the placement change. If a change in placement becomes necessary, the student must agree to submit an action plan on completing the requirements and agree to an extended time in a new field setting.

If, based on the request, a student is granted reassignment to a new agency, there may be a delay in securing another placement. (The delay depends on the time it takes to secure the new placement, which may take several weeks).

**Field Placement in an Agency Where the Student Previously Completed a Year of Field Work
at Foundation Only Agency:**

The Students should plan to complete their 2nd advanced year of Field in a setting different from the foundation placement unless the Agency can expose the student to a more advanced level of practice. Internships are essential to building the foundation for the student's successful development of professional competencies. Field Placement should expose students to a wide range of problems and possibilities. It also allows the student to experience growth and learning in a completely new environment— allowing for exposure to new processes, organizational cultures, and clientele, thus creating a more educationally sound experience for the learner. Experience in different Field settings allows students to obtain a broader knowledge of their Field. This experience will ensure that a student has a variety of field learning experiences while in the social work program. If a student decides to stay at your previous agency placement site for your advanced level, the Director of Field Education must approve the placement. The Students must complete and submit a *Request to Remain at Foundation Year Placement Form* to the Director of Field Education, who has final authority to approve a second-year placement. The Agency must agree to identify new and challenging student activities relevant to the learning agreement's core competencies. The Agency must be equipped to provide students with responsibilities and learning opportunities that fit the competencies aligned with the student's year in the Field.

Placement at your place of employment

Field Placement at your place of employment can occur under the following parameters. All approvals are on a case-by-case basis. Because these are more complicated vetting processes, applications are due at least one month before the semester starts. No last-minute approvals will be made.

At SUNO-SSW, Employment-Based Field Placement is offered under the following conditions:

1. ELIGIBILITY

- Employment-based placement is possible for students already working full-time in a social service program and who have completed the agency's probationary period.

2. APPLICATION PROCESS -

- Students must complete and return the "Request for Placement at Employment Form". If it's a new agency or new supervisor, an Agency Affiliation Agreement, Request for Students form, and Field Supervisor Application must also be completed. Lastly, a Student's Acceptance form must be submitted to finalize the request for placement at your place of employment by the specified deadline.

3. APPROVAL

- This placement can only occur if all forms are submitted and approved by the Director of Field Education.

4. SUPERVISION

- The Field Agency Supervisor, who can also be the employment supervisor, must be a licensed social worker with an LMSW (and two years of experience) or an LCSW.
- Weekly one-hour Field Education Supervision (Competency Based) must be distinct from employment supervision, even when provided by the same supervisor.

5. DUTIES AND HOURS

- Assignments given to the students/employees must be directly linked to the nine social work competencies in Fields I and II – on the generalist level and Fields III and IV – on the Advanced level.
- Field hours can be up to 20 hours a week. Field hours must be earned over at least 11 weeks of a 14-week semester or 6 weeks of an 8-week semester. This interaction allows continued integration with Field Seminar content.

6. CONTINUITY

- If students complete an Internship for Field I/II at their place of employment, they can choose to continue, but Field III/IV must include new and more advanced assignments in a different part of the agency.

7. ISSUE RESOLUTION

- If a student has an issue as an employee, every effort needs to be made to separate the student learning issues from the employment concerns. Consultation with the Seminar Instructor first and then the Field Director is required under these circumstances.

The program has a policy documenting whether it permits field placements in an organization where the student is employed. If permitted, student assignments and employee tasks may qualify as field hours when directly linked to the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) and level of practice (generalist or specialized).

The same supervisor may provide field education supervision if field education supervision is distinct from employment supervision and the supervisor meets the requirements of

Accreditation Standard 3.3.6. The policy documents how the program assists students with continuing field education or changing situations where a student becomes unemployed in an organization where field education has co-occurred with employment.

Preparation of Field Supervisors

Agencies approved as field placement sites will provide the base practice experience necessary for our students. These agencies support the educational objectives of the field experience and are willing to provide the time and staff necessary to achieve our field experience objectives. A series of seminars will be held for all field supervisors during the fall semester to ensure that agency field supervisors are up-to-date with policies and procedures. Individuals selected as field supervisors receive information about the seminars and attendance expectations. These seminars will constitute the agency's working agreement with the School.

The seminars will introduce an overview of the School's mission, themes, curriculum, and field practicum. The field faculty team leads the seminars. In addition, the seminars focus on the principles of adult learning theory.

Student's Field Placement change to Employment

Students' Field Placement assignment is strictly intended for educational purposes. In the event that a student assigned to a Field placement change to employment, the Field Placement Affiliation Agreement will need to be adjusted to meet the requirements of a Field Placement at Place of Employment. It is the sole responsibility of student to immediately inform the Director of Field of this status change. Failure to disclose this change shall result in disqualifying the student in the field education program. If the student wants to continue Field Education, the student must make a request to the Director of Field using the *Request for Change of Placement form*. It must be that the reason for the change is due to the fact that the student accepted employment at the agency placement. Failure to complete field internships per the Curriculum Guide precludes graduation from the MSW Program. ***Please note that this policy does not apply***

to paid internship and/or agency offering stipend to student who received prior documented approval from the Director of Field Education.

Supervision & Field Education Monitoring Plan

Agency Supervisors assume responsibility for supervising and monitoring student progress, assigning tasks to the student, and assisting the student in integrating theory and practice. Agency Field Supervisors are critical role models and provide meaningful feedback to students to assist them with learning and applying social work skills and the development of professional self. Students accepted to a field agency will have an assigned field supervisor responsible for one hour of individual weekly supervision.

Field Seminar Instructors are vital in monitoring students' field education experience. Students while assigned to an agency field supervisory, the student concurrently attends weekly seminar classes conducted by a field seminar instructor who is responsible for monitoring students' learning plan development, performance, safety concerns, recommended learning needs, and/or corrective action plan, using field seminar class to check-in and reinforce student learning experiences. Additionally, field seminar instructors interface with assigned students' field agency field supervisors by making at least three contacts per year, with one contact at the beginning of the semester.

The Learning Contract/Evaluation

The learning contract and student evaluation are in one document. The learning contract is a plan for the field experience, which allows the student, the field supervisor, and the field seminar instructor to focus on the knowledge, values, and practice behaviors necessary for the student to develop competency as a social worker. The learning contract/evaluation is a single working document the supervisor can update throughout the placement. The final page contains

lines that require signatures when the learning contract is written. The document also requires signatures at midterm and the end of each semester when the evaluation components of the document are complete. All persons involved with the field placement must sign the learning contract which includes the student, field supervisor, and the field seminar instructor. **All parties should keep a copy of this document each time it is signed.** The student's signature on the evaluation line means they have read the document but do not necessarily connote agreement. We need full cooperation from the field supervisors to complete these forms by the deadline, which is extremely important as the student will receive an incomplete grade if the form is late. If the student receives an incomplete grade, it will prohibit them from progressing to the next level.

The level of field placement should be identified in the learning contract/evaluation and the concentration, if applicable. Contact information for all parties must be included on the contract, i.e., student, field seminar instructor, and field supervisor. Each learning contract/evaluation contains the Nine Core Competencies identified by the CSWE as necessary for social workers to be able to demonstrate:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic and Environmental Justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion in Practice
4. Engage in Practice Informed Research and Research Informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage in Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Under each competency, a minimum of two practice behaviors must be listed on the learning contract/evaluation. The student should demonstrate each practice behavior listed via an activity or product specific to their placement. The supervisor can add additional practice behaviors and/or activities or products. Any behavior or agency expectation that will be evaluated by the field supervisor that is not already a part of the evaluation form should be added, such as confidentiality, computer use, record keeping, policy and procedures, dress code, and any other substantive requirements or expectations of the agency.

The activities or products that demonstrate competencies should include professional and interpersonal skills, such as appropriate use of confrontation, supervision, self-awareness, and boundary development. Student attitude toward placement, clients, and the student's level of comfort/discomfort should be areas to explore during placement. The student should identify any limitations or skills related to specialized interests as potential growth areas.

The student should identify specific opportunities at the agency to be involved, e.g., work with groups and community resources. These assignments may be those required by the faculty supervisor, those related to the student's interests, and/or those requested by the field supervisor. The agency's safety checklist and how the student will incorporate safety into their Practice must also be included in this section.

In writing the learning contract/evaluation, students should consider the type of agency, the needs of the clients served, agency limitations and boundaries, and what the community needs from this agency. In addition, the student's learning style and the field supervisor's teaching approach will need to be considered. Students use this learning opportunity to stretch themselves professionally and create goals that will take them beyond their current knowledge base and push them into new areas of professional experience. Students should note the ongoing use of the NASW Code of Ethics as the guide for developing their value and skill base.

Field Practicum/Seminar Grade

The assigned field seminar instructor will work with the students, field supervisor, and field agency. They will conduct the weekly field seminar classes and will be responsible for assigning final grades for the field practicum experience. The field supervisor will indicate a recommended numeric grade and letter grade on the Field Evaluation for the practicum side of the course. The field seminar instructor will utilize the field supervisor's recommended grade along with the seminar grade to determine the final field grade.

Because the field courses test the student's ability to apply knowledge and skill to actual client situations, they aim to enhance their professional development; this is why the field course grade is of special significance. To achieve a passing grade, students must receive a minimum of 80% (a grade of "B") in both courses (seminar and practicum). If a student receives a letter grade of "C" in a field seminar/practicum course, they must repeat that course before going to the next field course. If a grade of "C" is received in the last semester, the student will not be permitted to graduate with a BSW or MSW degree. If a student receives a grade of "F", they will not be able to continue in the BSW or MSW degree program. If students receive a grade of "I" in any field course, a detailed contract must be complete by the field seminar, signed by all parties and the contract must be completed it by the end of six weeks of the next semester (**by midterm**).

Request for an Incomplete "I" Grade

Students and faculty must understand that an "I" is **NOT** given automatically when a student fails to complete all the requirements for this course. Students and faculty must also understand that an "I" will not be recorded instead of an "F". A student must complete the required practicum hours and seminar assignments to receive a proper letter grade for the

course. It would be difficult for a student to finish in time for graduation should they attempt to do more than 35 hours for the previous semester.

As in any other course, the student must initiate the communication/discussion of the “I” grade by contacting or meeting with their field seminar instructor, indicating why they feel a “I” grade would be appropriate. If the field seminar instructor agrees, the student and the field seminar instructor must execute a written contract. The request for an “I” Grade form must be completed by both parties, explicitly detailing ALL conditions that must be met (i.e., hours, required assignments, and/or tasks) for the “I” to be changed to a proper letter grade. The contract must state a due date (at least six weeks into the next semester) to complete the conditions outlined in the contract. Failure to meet ALL the contract requirements will automatically result in an “F” grade.

Students in Field **MAY NOT** be granted an “I” grade if they have not completed at least 85% of the practicum hours required for that semester. Further, students cannot advance to the next level without executing and completing an approved contract for an “I” grade.

The intent of this policy is not to be punitive to students who start the field practicum later than stipulated through no fault of their own. For example, if a student had to wait an extended period for clearance due the agency’s background check policy or due extended time required by field faculty to establish a placement for the student, then that student would not be subject to the 85% rule. That student would be eligible for the “I” grade but would still have to complete the course requirements within the first six weeks of the following/succeeding semester (**by mid- term**).

Problems in the field placement

Some simple ways to avoid problems:

- Plan ahead.
- Make the learning contract reflect interests and needs.
- Review the learning contract/evaluation during weekly supervision.
- Request frequent and regular supervision from the field supervisor.
- If students have special constraints, i.e. pregnancy, illness in the family, transportation problems, childcare responsibilities etc., which may create future problems, these issues should be discussed with the field faculty and field supervisor early in the semester/session.
- Provide documentation regarding disabilities at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made.
- Discuss and agree to a schedule in writing at the beginning of the semester.
- Students should prepare an agenda for each supervisory conference and seek input from the field supervisor.
- Students are encouraged to read all communication from the field supervisor and the field faculty carefully.
- Students should be sure they understand directions, instructions, and requirements clearly including agency policies, guidelines, expectations, requirements, etc., and ask for assistance.

The students must take the initiative and responsibility for their own learning and utilize the problem-solving model below to work on resolving problems in the field placement:

Procedures for Students/Supervisor to Follow When Problems Arise:

Step 1. The student or supervisor must first talk to the field seminar instructor about concerns and problems concerning the student/placement. An Action Plan to remediate the situation should be developed and emailed as acknowledgment.

Step 2. If problems persist, the student or supervisor should request a problem-solving meeting with all parties involved (student, supervisor, and field seminar instructor). An Action Plan to remediate the situation should be developed and emailed to all parties.

Step 3. If termination from field placement is necessary due to the student's performance or other issues surrounding placement, the student and supervisor must participate in a meeting with the field seminar instructor, liaison, and/or field director. From this meeting, a recommendation will be made to determine the student's status.

Performance Issues: Competence Variables

During the course of the student's educational program, the field seminar instructor and agency field supervisor will continuously evaluate the professional competence variables.

Students should be able to:

- Relate to people with warmth and empathy and communicate feelings appropriately.
- Recognize the essential worth and dignity of all human beings.
- Appreciate the value of human diversity and offer services to persons needing assistance regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, physical condition, and/or value system.
- Be willing to grapple with personal issues that include religion, sexual, and political preferences, etc., to ensure that their individual personal views are not imposed on clients.

Professional Incompetence Issues

Professional incompetence signifies a student is not adequately or appropriately performing at their program level. The following list contains examples of behaviors that constitute professional incompetence:

- After three agency interviews, students who are not offered a field placement will be referred to the Field Committee for evaluation and problem-solving. This referral could result in a recommendation that the student be terminated from the School of Social Work Program.
- Lack of commitment to the values of the social work profession.
- Exhibiting professional inappropriateness.
- Inability to establish and maintain positive and constructive interpersonal relationships with clients and field instructors.
- Inability to perform professional duties due to personal problems.
- Refusal to accept and follow through on field placement assignments.
- Inability to accept constructive feedback from the field instructor and/or faculty liaison.
- Attendance problems or failure to communicate with the field seminar instructor about schedule difficulties.
- Constantly missing deadlines and not completing work.
- Inability to apply professional skills and knowledge gained through classroom learning to the field experience.
- Additional areas may be identified.

Violations of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics

BSW and MSW students in the School of Social Work are required to conduct themselves according to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics is used for making decisions about whether students have exhibited unethical behavior. Ethical behaviors as designated by the Code of Ethics are part of the requirements and standards for the program. All students have access to a copy of the NASW Code of Ethics upon entering the program (NASW web site www.socialworkers.org for a copy). Discussion about the Code of Ethics occurs in social work field seminars and practice classes.

The following behaviors are examples, but not a complete list of behaviors, which constitute a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics or misconduct that could result in a meeting of the Field Committee, which could result in dismissal from the program:

- Engaging in sexual activities with clients.
- Participation in dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.
- Exploitation of clients for personal advantage.
- Engaging in an inappropriate dual relationship.
- Convicted of a felony offense while in the School of Social Work Program.

Cancellation of Field Site

A field agency may be cancelled if the field agency (*consistently*):

- Violates the NASW Code of Ethics
- Placement change to student's place of employment
- Promotes a culture of discrimination based on difference
- Harms students, clients or staff in any way
- Disregard code violations for their physical facilities (citations)
- Expects students to operate as paid staff and not interns
- Places students at risk (in unsafe situations) and fails to properly train students to minimize risks and if the agency is not willing to abate any safety issues
- Refuses to provide supervision to the student

Transportation

Interns shall be responsible for transportation to and from the internship site. Interns should only drive clients if the agency specifies to the intern such requirements as part of their essential duties within their internships and to manage any such driving requirements with the interns. Interns are advised that an internship requiring driving as an essential duty may require submission to a Motor Vehicle Records check, notification of their insurance carrier of the use of their vehicle within the internship, and compliance with the driving requirements of the agency. Southern University at New Orleans shall not be responsible for managing any requirements for transportation or driving as part of internships and shall not maintain insurance for interns driving as part of the essential duties of the internship. Any accident involving a School of Social Work student in an internship should be reported to the School of Social Work office at (504) 286-5376 and Campus Police at (504) 286-5236 for appropriate reporting within SUNO.

Student Safety in the Field Placement

Safety of students in their field placement is a huge priority for the School of Social Work. While we do not want the student to be shielded from the realities of professional practice, but immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks. Many students arrive at their field placement with concerns about personal safety that can significantly impact their learning opportunities and their experiences. The School of Social Work and all field placement agencies are encouraged to partner to reduce risks for students in field placement.

Students are required to discuss safety with their field agency supervisors at the beginning of the field placement and before going on any home visits. Students are required to know what the agency policy is regarding safety. Students must always survey their surroundings and take appropriate precautions to avoid potentially harmful situations. In all cases, students should develop a plan with their supervisors for dealing with potentially volatile situations or unusual events should they arise.

The safety orientation provided by the field seminar instructor is organized around the following

objectives:

- To raise student consciousness about potential violence and place such violence in a contextual frame so that students maintain empathy with clients.
- To place emphasis on preventing violence by providing students with knowledge of precautionary measures, including alertness to possible danger signals about the immediate environment and behavior of clients.
- To encourage students to assume responsibility for their own safety and to trust their own feelings and intuition.
- To help students develop a framework and various options for responding to potential danger.
- To provide activities for students to demonstrate how safety information is relevant in practice situations.
- To provide content that is consistent with social work values and principles and congruent with the curriculum.

The following information should help the student and the field supervisor frame discussions regarding safety in the field placement:

Closing the Loop: Agency Issues

Agency are encouraged to have policies and procedures regarding employee and student safety. These policies should be reviewed, prioritized, and reinforced on a regular basis.

Agency field instructors are encouraged to:

- Debrief the student after any incident.
- Help the student understand how a client's cultural background and ethnicity could be vital to personal safety.
- Help the student understand individual and group differences when it comes to accurately interpreting behavior.

Field supervisors are encouraged to include the following during agency orientation:

- Information about the prevalence of, or potential for, violence while in field placement.
- Orientation to the surrounding community and neighborhoods, or areas where the student may work, and discuss concerns that students may have regarding their work in a community-based setting.
- Include opportunities for students to observe and shadow their field instructor on

community-based visits.

- Allow field instructors opportunities to observe and mentor students on community-based visits.
- Provide resources (such as safety training, pagers, cellular telephones, etc.) to students for community-based visits if available to staff.
- Carefully consider all assignments given to students and assess the assignments' potential for risk, as well as the student's ability to perform the assignment, prior to the student accepting the assignment.

Supervision, the Learning Contract, and the Safety Check List

- All student learning contracts should contain a section regarding student/employee safety in the agency and community.
- In an effort to “close the loop” between the School of Social Work and community agencies who host student field placements, all students are **required** to complete a Safety Check List with their field supervisor and turn it in to the Office of Field Education by the due date.
- Cases that are “at risk” should receive more intense supervision/consultation/monitoring.
- Students need to be exposed to triaging client situations, peer review (where possible), and the importance of seeking consultation in potentially unsafe situations.

Social workers nationwide are experiencing increased danger and students must recognize the potential for risk to personal safety. When in the field placement, students must be alert to environmental factors relative to personal safety.

Students are required to comply with the following:

- Agency standards regarding personal safety.
- Agency standards regarding building, office safety, and security.
- Agency infectious disease control procedures or OSHA requirements.
- Agency standards for working with high-risk clients.
- Agency policies related to the use of a personally owned vehicle specifying that the vehicle is insured and in good working order when making community-based visits and/or transporting clients on agency business.
- Agency safety protocols, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients, and home visit safety procedures.

Rights and Responsibility for Field Agency/Supervisor

1. Provide experiences working with all five client systems, i.e. individual, family, group, agency and community.
2. Provide opportunities to gain experience as a Generalist Social Work practitioner. The assignment should include such things as individual assessments, social histories, crisis intervention, case management, developing client goals and intervention strategies. The student should be assigned a small case load and have the opportunity to follow the client from the intake process through termination. Students should be involved in group work. Students should also have some community involvement as well as organizational/management activities.
3. Provide at least one hour per week supervision. The supervision must be educationally focused as opposed to work focused. The supervisor must hold a master's degree from an accredited School of Social Work with a minimum of two years post graduate experience.
4. Complete an evaluation on each student at the end of each semester. The field supervisor will submit a recommended grade for the field practicum experience.
5. Accept a pre-determined number of selected interviewed social work students as adult learners and professional colleagues, and follow through with them during the academic year by providing them with appropriate supervision and learning experiences consistent with the School's objectives for the field practicum experience.
6. Provide adequate physical facilities and support services for the accomplishment of the student's assigned tasks within the field agency.
7. Provide time for the students' field supervisor to meet regular with each student and to be involved in an ongoing professional relationship with the School of Social Work; including attendance and participation in meetings, seminars and workshops designed to enhance the field practicum program of the School.
8. Provide time for the agency field supervisor to meet with designated faculty on a regular as well as a need basis to discuss and evaluate the students' field practicum experience.
9. Provide each student with clear standard of expected professional performance for her/his placement within the agency. This standard must clearly designate what skills and knowledge a student needs minimally in order to function with in the placement, and must distinguish generic skills

and knowledge from skills and knowledge highly specific to the agency and/or the particular field of practice.

10. Provide each student a thorough orientation to the agency and its service delivery system.
11. Identify gaps between skills and knowledge needed to function in the agency and those actually possessed by each student upon entry, and design learning assignments and field instruction to fill these gaps.
12. Provide written documented evaluations of each student's performance within the field agency as required by the School.
13. Notify the faculty immediately of any problems arising within the field agency related to the field experience which cannot be resolved within the agency to the mutual satisfaction of both the student and the agency field supervisor.
14. Reserve the right to terminate any student in placement should it provide detrimental to the agency. This entails responsibility of the agency to notify and clearly explain the reasons for termination to the student and faculty.
15. **No student shall be allowed to report to field practicum sites between semesters or at any time students are not officially enrolled in field practicum with the University.**
16. Notify the Director of Internship/Field if a student is being considered for employment at the field practicum agency.

Rights and Responsibility for Students

1. Accept placement in the agency only by virtue of his/her free choice and participate in a replacement interview at the proposed field agency.
2. Accept, as responsibilities, those assignments deemed appropriate for his/her learning by the agency field supervisor; in cases of disagreement, immediately seek assistance from the field supervisor in understanding the appropriateness of an assignment, and immediately seek the assistance of the School of Social Work faculty in situations not resolved with the agency field supervisor.
3. Accept the expectations of the field agency and agency field supervisor and the responsibilities for professional performance and conduct inherent in these expectations.
4. Provide the agency field supervisor with his/her learning needs, goals, and professional interest initially and throughout the duration of the placement.
5. Participate in the field supervisor's evaluation of his/her performance at the end of each semester.
6. Provide written documented evaluation of the agency and agency field supervisor at the end of the placement.
7. Notify the agency field supervisor immediately of any problems related to the field experience, and faculty of any problems that cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the assistance of the agency field supervisor.
8. Meet with the agency field supervisor and appropriate faculty as designed for supervision and evaluation.
9. Participate, throughout the placement experience, as an active adult learner, and assist the agency field supervisor in identifying the skills and knowledge needing improvement and in setting appropriate learning objectives.
10. Attend meetings related to the field program as required by the School and faculty.
11. Terminate from the field placement in a professional manner.
12. Accept constructive criticism and make use of such to grow and develop professionally.

13. **No student shall be allowed to report to a field practicum sites between semesters or at any time they are not officially enrolled in field practicum with the University.**
14. Notify the Director of Internship/Field if you are being considered for employment/employed at your field practicum agency.

Acknowledgment Form

Name (Print) _____ Date _____

By signing this form, I _____ acknowledge
that I have reviewed and read the field manual.

Return completed form to: SUNO School of Social Work/Field Department, 6801 Press Drive, NOLA 70126
Or email to: Tina Smith at tsmith@suno.edu