

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

**BSW Field Manual
For Students, Agencies, and Faculty**

Department of Social Work
NC State University
1911 Building
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Raleigh, NC 27695

**The NC State University BSW Program is accredited by the
Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).**

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
NCSU Department of Social Work Field Faculty	5
Mission Statements and Goals of the BSW Program and NC State University	5
BSW Program Mission Statement.....	5
BSW Program Goals	5
Mission of NC State University	5
BSW Program Policies	6
Academic Integrity	6
Academic Warning and Probation	6
Confidentiality	6
Grievance Procedures for NCSU Undergraduate Students	7
Memorandum of Agreement	7
Nondiscrimination Statements	7
Student Conduct.....	8
Students with Disabilities.....	8
Student Fitness for the BSW Program.....	8
Denial of Student Admission to Field Placement	9
Conflict of Interest Preventing Internship in Certain Agencies.....	9
The Generalist Model of Social Work Practice	9
NASW Code of Ethics.....	10
NASW Code of Ethics: Section 4.05, Impairment.....	10
NASW Code of Ethics: Section 4.02, Discrimination.....	11
Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors	11
EPAS 2.3 (2008): The Purpose of Field Education.....	12
Steps to a Field Placement Match.....	12
Field Placement Interview.....	13
Suggested Interview Questions from the Student	13
Student Accepts Placement Offer.....	14
Student Not Accepted by Placement Agency.....	15
Student Declines Placement Offer	15
Expectations at Field Settings.....	15
What Can You Expect From Your Field Placement Setting?	16
What Do the BSW Program and Your Agency Expect From You?.....	16
Internship Hours	17
Field Placement Rules and Guidelines	17
Open Identification as a BSW Intern	17
Attendance	17
Illness/Emergency	17
Agency Holidays and Inclement Weather.....	18
Attendance at University-Sponsored Programs.....	18
Trainings, Workshops, and Conferences.....	18
Record of Field Hours.....	18
Field Education Fund	18

Learning Expectations	19
Terminating a Field Placement Internship Match.....	19
Reassignment of Field Placement Unrelated to Student Performance	20
Process of Assigning Student to New Agency	21
Grading for Field Internship Courses	21
Work Plans and Evaluation	22
Other Evaluations	22
Required Weekly Intern Supervision.....	23
Weekly Supervision When the Field Instructor Does Not Have a Social Work Degree.....	23
Weekly Supervision Groups by Department of Social Work.....	23
Weekly Supervision by External Agency Social Workers	23
Agency Visits by the BSW Field Coordinator.....	24
Becoming a Field Placement Agency	24
Initiating the Process of Becoming a New Field Placement Agency	25
Agency Profiles.....	26
Becoming a Field Instructor	26
When the Agency Field Instructor Does Not Have a BSW or MSW Degree	26
Field Orientation for Students and Field Instructors.....	27
The Field Instructor’s Relationship with the Student	28
Facilitating the Student’s Orientation to the Agency	28
Student Employment While in the Program	28
Employment-Based Field Placement.....	28
Students’ Eligibility for Internship at Place of Employment	29
Procedure for Initiating a Request for a Placement in the Place of Employment.....	30
Other Field Placement Issues.....	30
Monetary Compensation	30
Early Completion of Internship.....	30
Transportation to Field Agencies	31
Home Visits and General Safety	31
Transporting Clients: Personal Liability Coverage	31
Intern Liability Insurance	31
Background Checks	31
Other Agency Requirements	32
Field Education Advisory Board	32
Students’ Frequently Asked Questions.....	33
Appendix.....	36
CSWE EPAS: Ten Core Competencies for Social Workers	37
Evaluation Considerations for the Field Instructor	41

The BSW program at NC State University has trained social workers for over thirty years and is among the earliest accredited BSW programs in the United States. Both the BSW and MSW programs at NC State University were fully reaccredited in 2008 by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which is the national accrediting body for social work programs in the United States.

Introduction: What This Manual Does for You

This manual provides guidance to agencies, faculty, and students about the “signature pedagogy” social work education—field internship. It is the July 2014 revision of the BSW Field Manual, in parallel format with the department’s MSW Field Manual.

The manual does not replace or supersede the NC State University Student Handbook or the BSW Student Handbook. Students are reminded that they are responsible to review this field manual and the University and BSW student handbooks, and always to refer to the University website for official information regarding University policies and requirements.

CSWE Educational Policy 2.3—Signature Pedagogy: Field Education

Signature pedagogy represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. Professionals have pedagogical norms with which they connect and integrate theory and practice. In social work, the signature pedagogy is field education. The intent of field education is to connect 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 achievement of program competencies.

Department of Social Work Location and Contact Information

The Department of Social Work is located at 10 Current Drive on the second floor of the 1911 Building. The administrative offices are located at this address in Suite 205. Classes are held throughout the NCSU campus. Our contact information is:

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NCSU Social Work Department Field Faculty

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Mission Statements and Goals of the BSW Program and NC State University

BSW Program Mission Statement

Consistent with the requirements for the Council on Social Work Education, the BSW Program's mission is to prepare students for generalist practice with diverse populations in urban and rural areas of North Carolina and beyond, and for graduate school if that path is chosen.

BSW Program Goals

The goals of the program are to:

1. Provide students with the knowledge, values, and skills to respond competently to the aspirations and service needs of diverse client populations: individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
2. Prepare students to respond to the contexts that shape the needs of clients and service delivery systems throughout the state and globally.

Mission of NC State University

Offering a BSW degree clearly fits with our University's mission. The mission of North Carolina State University (NCSU) is "to serve the citizens of North Carolina as the State's only research University in the land-grant tradition." In observance of the changing needs of a global society, the University in its mission statement recognizes that "the activities of research and extension interact to provide students with an environment for learning that stresses creativity, problem solving, social responsibility, and respect for human diversity" (NC State Graduate Catalog).

As both a land-grant and research-extensive University, NCSU has a "commitment to active stewardship of the human and environmental resources of the State of North Carolina." In keeping with its mission, the University emphasizes teaching, research, and public service for the betterment of the people of North Carolina. BSW education promotes the leadership for carrying out social work practice and encourages research and public service to fulfill this mission.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS), in which the Department of Social Work is based, shares the University's emphasis on "engaged liberal arts" by applying a liberal arts perspective to critical social issues. The mission of the CHASS is:

To serve the residents of North Carolina and meet the challenges of the 21st century by educating our students to be future leaders and responsible citizens with a distinctive willingness to engage in the life of their communities, their state, and their nation.

In accordance with the CHASS mission, our BSW program serves to educate students to be "future leaders and responsible citizens." Thus, North Carolina State University and its College of Humanities and Social Sciences form a hospitable setting for the BSW program. The field education component of our program provides valuable services to North Carolina, while these agencies reciprocate by providing a stimulating practice setting for our students.

BSW Program Policies

Academic Integrity

Strict standards of academic honesty will be enforced according to the University policy on academic integrity. When a student signs the NCSU honor pledge on any test or assignment, it means that he or she has neither given nor received unauthorized aid. Violations of academic integrity will result in an F for the assignment and may result in an F for the course. All violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Violations include:

- Plagiarism (which means representing another's ideas, writings, words, and/or work as your own without proper acknowledgment)
- Obtaining another person's assistance on academic work you are expected to complete independently
- Assisting another student on work s/he is expected to complete independently
- Reporting false information on field work.

Academic Warning and Probation

Students may be suspended or placed on probation by the University. More detailed information regarding Academic Probation and Academic Warning can be found at:

<http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-05-01> and at

<http://catalog.ncsu.edu/undergraduate/academicpoliciesandprocedures/status/academicstatus/>.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a hallmark of the social work profession. Students agree to not repeat personal information shared in class discussion outside of the class. Standard accepted practice mandates reporting when there is a threat of harm to self. Such reporting is an ethical imperative, thus not subject to absolute confidentiality. Students who experience personal issues are encouraged to talk with the instructor about available support. Confidentiality, within the above specified limitations, is to be honored by the student and faculty member.

Grievance Procedures for NCSU Undergraduate Students

Most problems encountered by students can be resolved through communication between the student and faculty member and/or advisor. If a matter arises that cannot be resolved to the student's satisfaction within the department, the student may follow NC State Undergraduate Grievance Procedures, which are found at: <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-11-40-01>

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

Field agencies must complete a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the department and University before being able to engage in field internships. Our Director of Field handles this procedure. If you need an MOA, please contact Dr. Jodi Hall. Details on MOAs can be seen in the Becoming a Field Agency section of this manual.

Nondiscrimination Statements:

Department of Social Work Nondiscrimination Statement

We welcome students from diverse backgrounds to our department. We believe that this diversity enriches our educational program and promotes social responsibility. The Department of Social Work upholds the right of qualified students from all ethnicities, cultures, and physical abilities to take part in the program. We adhere to the National Association of Social Workers' *Code of Ethics* (<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/Code/default.asp>) that states:

Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, and mental or physical disability.

Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability.

NC State University Nondiscrimination Statement

It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to provide equality of opportunity in education and employment for all students and employees. Educational and employment decisions should be based on factors that are germane to academic abilities or job performance. Accordingly, North Carolina State University does not practice or condone unlawful discrimination in any form, as defined by this policy.

Discrimination is unequal and unlawful treatment based upon race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. More information about nondiscrimination policies at NC State University can be located at the following links:

Disability Services for Students: <http://www.ncsu.edu/dso/>

NCSU Sexual Orientation Policy: <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-04-25-03>

Student Conduct

The primary purpose for discipline in the University setting is to protect the campus community. Consistent with that purpose, reasonable efforts will also be made to foster the personal and social development of those students who are held accountable for violations of University regulations. For specific definitions or examples of academic dishonesty and nonacademic misconduct with possible sanctions, see the NC State Code of Student Conduct at: <http://studentconduct.ncsu.edu/policies-and-procedures>. Information about misconduct and related policies and procedures can be found in the NCSU Student Handbook at: <file:///C:/Users/Zelter/Documents/FIELD/NCSU%20Student%20Handbook%202013-2014.pdf>

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653. For more information on NC State University's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation (REG02.20.1).

Student Fitness for the BSW Program

The Department of Social Work's commitment to the profession obligates it to evaluate students' fitness to enter the profession. The Department of Social Work consults with the Office of Student Conduct (<http://studentconduct.ncsu.edu/>) about issues of academic and professional performance and makes recommendations regarding students whom it refers to that office. Academic and professional performance concerns include, but are not limited to, the behaviors listed below:

- Failure to meet or maintain department or University academic requirements.
- Academic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, or falsifying academic records.
- Unethical professional behavior in violation of the current National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else.
- Discriminatory behavior or harassment toward others that is unlawful or inconsistent with the professional standards for social work, including discrimination based on dimensions of diversity and difference; commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional standards, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission to the department and becoming known after admission.
- A pattern of unprofessional behavior such as inability to accept appropriate evaluation feedback from BSW/supervisor/faculty, or to modify unprofessional behaviors as requested; habitual tardiness to class or to an agency, habitual unexcused absences from class or from an agency.
- Consistent failure to demonstrate interpersonal skills necessary to form effective professional relationships.

Denial of Student Admission to Field Placement

Students may be denied admission to field for reasons that include:

- Substandard (unsatisfactory) academic performance
- Failure to complete field prerequisites
- Unfavorable faculty recommendations
- Poor adjustment to the educational process for the social work profession
- Failure to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (CSWE Accreditation Standard 4.0)
- Failure to abide by the NCSU Code of Student Conduct

If the student disagrees with a denial decision, the student may appeal through the Student Review Committee and/or through the NC State University student appeals process. However, there is no appeal for substandard (unsatisfactory) academic performance.

Conflict of Interest Preventing Internship in Certain Agencies

Students are not permitted to intern at an agency wherein she/he or an immediate family member was, or is, a client during the previous five years. Also, a family member cannot serve as the student's agency BSW or task supervisor. Since the Department of Social Work does not access client information from agencies or students, it is the responsibility of the student to decline (or not select) a placement based on this conflict of interest. Students who want a placement that could be perceived as a conflict of interest are encouraged to discuss the situation with the BSW Field Coordinator before requesting or accepting the placement. Students who attempt to secure or who secure a placement in an agency where a known conflict of interest exists may be administratively dropped from the field course.

The Generalist Model of Social Work Practice

The NC State Department of Social Work BSW program uses a generalist model. The program features content on human behavior, policy, research, community partnerships, and direct practice with individuals, families, and groups. The generalist model prepares practitioners with: (1) the knowledge and skills to respond to a wide range of human difficulties and diverse client populations in a multitude of settings, (2) an ethical commitment to advocate for underserved and oppressed populations, and (3) the ability to respond creatively to the need for additional programs and services.

The generalist model stresses competence in the full range of social work practice, with an emphasis on social and economic justice and cultural humility. The BSW program teaches students to synthesize and apply a broad range of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge and skills. Generalist students practice in context, using a knowledge base acquired through experience and critical self-reflection. Generalist practice incorporates the ten CSWE-designated Core Competencies.

NASW Code of Ethics

Professional ethics are at the core of social work practice. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth the values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

The NASW Code of Ethics serves six purposes:

1. It identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. It summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide practice.
3. It is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. It provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. It socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. It articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members. In subscribing to this Code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

The Code of Ethics can be seen at: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/Code/Code.asp?print=1&>.

Although all elements of the NASW Code of Ethics are important and should be followed by those in the profession, two are covered below in terms of field placement. These two elements concern impairment and discrimination.

NASW Code of Ethics: Section 4.05, Impairment

Students are admitted to field practice at the discretion of the Social Work Department. If a student experiences or appears to be experiencing impairment as defined in the NASW Code of Ethics Section 4.05, the social work faculty has an obligation to take action to safeguard students, practitioners, and clients. Therefore, The BSW Program Director, in consultation with the Field Director and BSW Field Coordinator, may deny a student's admission into field practice or may suspend or terminate the field placement for reasons of student impairment. The Social Work Department may require the student to provide professional documentation of fitness for field practice before being admitted to field or continuing in field.

Similarly, if a social work student believes that he/she or another student is experiencing impairment as defined under Section 4.05, then the student has an obligation to share this information with a social work faculty member.

(a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional

judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

(b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

NASW Code of Ethics: Section 4.02, Discrimination

Students in field placement should adhere strongly to the Social Work Department's nondiscrimination policy and NASW Code of Ethics Section 4.02. The ability to work effectively with diverse populations is essential to success in the program and in the professional field of social work. A student who states an unwillingness to work with clients, colleagues, or student peers based on race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability may be denied entry to field placement.

Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), our accrediting body, aims to promote and strengthen the quality of social work education by providing national leadership and a forum for collective action. CSWE pursues this mission through setting and maintaining policy and program standards, accrediting bachelor's and master's degree programs in social work, promoting research and faculty development, and advocating for social work education.

The CSWE uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master's-level social work programs. EPAS support academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate. Competency-based education is an outcome performance approach to curriculum design. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. The goal of this outcome-based approach is to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The ten Core Competencies [EPAS 2.1.1–EPAS 2.1.10(d)] are listed in the Appendix and are found at: <http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=41861>.

BSW students must meet these specific Core Competencies while interning at their field agencies. Under the direction and guidance of the agency Field Instructor, students will engage tasks that allow them to learn and demonstrate practice behaviors consistent with classroom curricula and social work ethics and values.

EPAS 2.3 (2008): The Purpose of Field Education

Field internship is the signature pedagogy of social work education; it represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. EPAS 2.3 (2008) states that the purpose of field education is to connect theory and concepts learned in class with practice situations. Classroom professors work closely with the field faculty to integrate field practice and curriculum.

The overall purposes of the field internships are: (1) to enhance the student's ability to apply social work values, theory, skills and knowledge to a broad range of systems; (2) to provide opportunities for students to learn to foster empowerment among vulnerable populations; and (3) to provide a setting in which the mission and goals of the Department of Social Work may be actualized.

The social work field placement is similar to the process for medical students in residency programs. In fact, the words field placement and internship are used interchangeably in the social work practice community. Students have the opportunity to learn, apply, and refine values, knowledge, and skills under the guidance of experienced social work practitioners who serve as Field Instructors and Task Supervisors. These field placement experiences are brought back to the weekly Field Seminar class, where they are further examined within the context of the course curriculum and the social work profession.

Steps to a Field Placement Match

During the semester before the BSW student enters the field internship, the BSW Field Coordinator will meet with the student to discern which agency will be the most appropriate match to meet the student's learning needs. Consideration will be given to location and other variables as well. The student will reach out to the prospective agency's Field Instructor to arrange a meeting, at which time the two will either confirm and arrange for a field internship the subsequent semester, or decide not to confirm. In the case of a lack of match, the BSW Field Coordinator will continue working with the student until an appropriate match is made.

The steps below detail the process the student should take to determine the placement match. Following this list, the manual provides further details on various steps.

Step 1: Think seriously about the kind of placement that you want and the population that you wish to serve. Think about which skills you want to attain and what kind of tasks you want to have in your internship.

Step 2: Review the list of approved agencies with field staff (this may be uploaded on the department's website). Make contact with a student currently in the placement if you want more information; the BSW Field Coordinator can help you make this contact. Because we enlist new agencies all the time, there may be some that are not on the website. Therefore it is critical to work in close cooperation with the BSW Field Coordinator as you plan your internship choice.

Step 3: Meet with the BSW Field Coordinator for a face-to-face field advising conference to discern which agency best fits your expressed interests and the Coordinator's assessments of agency needs.

Step 4: The BSW Field Coordinator will contact the chosen agency to alert them to expect to hear from the student. The student will then contact the agency Field Instructor via email to schedule an interview. The student will attach a current resume to this interview request. A student-agency interview is required – there are no exceptions.

Step 5: After your interview, follow up with the BSW Field Coordinator to discuss your assessment of the interview. If you are not selected by the agency, the Coordinator will assist you in arranging an interview with a different agency.

Step 6: Once you receive an offer for placement, the Coordinator will follow up with the agency to confirm.

Step 7: Once you have a confirmed placement, you must immediately enter this information on the department's website under Student Field Update, at this link:

http://socialwork.chass.ncsu.edu/field_education/forms/student_placement_update.php. This is an important step and is critical to department recordkeeping and field communications.

Step 8: Invite your new agency Field Instructor to the August BSW/MSW joint Field Orientation or to the January BSW Field Orientation, by sending an electronic invitation supplied by the BSW Field Coordinator. Although the agency Field Instructor will receive an invitation from the department, receiving an invitation from you is a good step in establishing the professional relationship.

Step 9: You will want to stay in touch with the agency prior to the beginning of the placement. This should be in the form of a check-in to make sure all is well. Sometimes supervisors leave or there may be agency changes before fall semester begins. Of course, we have no control over this, but the sooner we know of an issue, the sooner we can respond with productive alternatives.

Field Placement Interview

Field placement interviews can be competitive, so the student should present in a serious and professional manner. Dress as you would for any professional job interview. Be sure to have done your research on the agency by reading over their website and using any other means to learn what they do. Expect that the agency will ask questions to determine how much you know about them.

During the interview, you need to learn about the requirements of the particular placement and the educational opportunities available at the agency. The interview is a two-way process. Students should come to the interview able to express clear goals and learning priorities, and should be prepared to ask specific questions about learning experiences available, clients served, skills that can be developed, type of setting (structured or unstructured), and methods of supervision, etc.

Suggested Interview Questions from the Student

1. Are any tests or procedures required before one can begin an internship—for example, medical exams, drug tests, proof of having a driver's license, background checks, etc. If so, what is the time frame for fulfilling these requirements?
2. What kind of activities and programs does this agency undertake?
3. What activities, tasks, and/or projects will I be able to undertake?

4. What specific skills will I be able to develop at this agency?
5. Does this agency have a particular theoretical approach to intervention?
6. What are general characteristics of clients and communities served by this agency?
7. What is the approach to and structure of supervision?
8. What amount of interaction does a student have with other students and with permanent staff?
9. What opportunities exist for inter-professional collaboration or cooperation?
10. What types of in-service training or workshops and conferences will be available to me?
11. What kinds of cases and/or projects do you anticipate assigning to me?
12. What kinds of skills do you hope a student will bring to the agency?
13. How much independence and initiative do you expect me to demonstrate?
14. How are students helped to handle issues of diversity regarding age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability on both staff and client levels?

Students should be prepared to answer questions about their background, educational and career goals, and why they might desire the particular placement. At the interview, agency personnel assess the student's level of interest and suitability for the general type of assignments they have in mind. Typically, it is at this point that placement decisions are finalized. However, if there are well-founded reservations about the suitability of the match between the agency and the student, the BSW Field Coordinator should be informed at once by the student and/or the agency Field Instructor.

Students should voice any special considerations they may need. Students must comply with agency requirements such as background checks, drug screens, etc., once they accept the placement.

Student Accepts Placement Offer

When you and the agency agree that you will begin an internship the next semester, immediately go to the department's website page that records MSW and BSW internship information—this is our central tracking location for all field placements:

http://socialwork.chass.ncsu.edu/field_education/forms/student_placement_update.php.

When accepting a placement offer, the student is making an agreement to begin an internship with that agency the following semester. This is not negotiable and cannot be changed without consultation with the BSW Field Coordinator. A student will not be allowed to switch agencies simply because he/she discovers a placement that she/he likes better. It is important that we maintain positive professional relationships with agencies, and undoing a commitment is unprofessional.

Failure to follow through on your verbal commitment with an agency could delay your start in field placement. And as stated above, be sure to maintain some contact with the agency from the time of the offer through the beginning of internship semester.

Student Not Accepted by Placement Agency

Not all students will be accepted by their first-choice agency for placement. Students must be mindful that the placement process can be competitive. Though there are many available opportunities in the area, there are also several universities that have social work programs. Their programs are also working hard to give their students the best opportunities. Invariably this means that some students may have to interview with a second agency. This is not a sign of failure or cause for alarm.

If a student has not been accepted after their initial interview with a potential field placement, the student will be directed to interview with another agency. If the student is not accepted by a field agency a second time, the student will be reevaluated by the BSW Field Coordinator. If the reason for the student's non-acceptance by an agency is due to student-related issues, the Coordinator reserves the right to refer the student to the department's Field Director for further assessment of fit for field placement. This is not a sign of failure or alarm; it is an opportunity for further assessment and advisement.

If the student is rejected for agency-related reasons, like space, competition, supervision, etc., the student will be offered other placement options at the discretion of the BSW field Coordinator until an appropriate fit is made.

Student Declines Placement Offer

We strongly discourage shopping for the "perfect" placement. Agencies depend on our field faculty to send them the most appropriate candidates. Yet we recognize that it may not always be a good fit for various reasons. However, in order to make the best use of everyone's time and talents, a student can only decline one offer. Even this one decline must be for good reason and discussed with the BSW Field Coordinator.

We ask students to be mindful that agency staff members are very busy and prefer to meet only with students who have a sincere interest in their agency. If you decline an offer from an agency, you must have a second face-to-face meeting with the BSW Field Coordinator before getting a second referral.

Expectations at Field Settings

Many social work graduates and practicing professionals say that it was the field experience they valued most in their social work education. There are many different settings in which social work is practiced. In all agencies there are opportunities to learn, both from satisfying experiences and challenging ones. You may find yourself placed in an agency that was not your first choice, but ends up being a rich experience. Internships offer you the opportunity to make a good impression on professionals who can choose to help you advance your career.

You may feel very ready for your field placement. You may feel uncertain. All of this is fine. The important part is that, as soon as possible, you must position yourself as a receptive learner in your field agency and in the Field Seminar classroom. This stance of flexibility, engagement, and willingness to learn is the foundation of a positive field education experience.

You will have a Field Instructor who will meet with you in the agency every week for at least an hour for supervision. Your Field Instructor has been approved by the Department of Social Work. Field Instructors complete BSW Field Orientation, and will have demonstrated commitment to social work education and teaching the next generation of social workers. We consider our Field Instructors like faculty – they have a role in teaching professional practice skills to our students.

Each Field Instructor is unique; they have their own styles of instruction and personal expectations. Much depends upon the agency and the type of social work that is practiced. We expect that you will be in a professional agency setting in which ethical values, social work skills, and professionalism are demonstrated and taught.

What can you expect from your field agency setting?

- Expect to learn about clients, the agency, and yourself.
- Expect to increase your practice skills, from wherever you are starting.
- Expect to be challenged – a good field placement requires you to go beyond your comfort zone.
- Expect to have at least one supervision conference each week.
- Expect to learn about and utilize community resources.
- Expect to be part of the agency team and to contribute to that team.
- Expect to be valued as a contributor and given the time to learn.
- Expect to put into practice what you have learned from books.

What do the BSW Program and your agency expect from you?

- Be professional – dress appropriately, be dependable and prompt, respectful and receptive.
- Bring evidence-informed information from the classroom to the field agency.
- Communicate often and openly with your Field Instructor.
- Be committed to social and economic justice.
- Approach those you serve with compassion and a willingness to help.
- Talk with your BSW Field Coordinator if you have any concerns.
- Be receptive to feedback from your Field Instructor, others in the agency, and the BSW Field Coordinator.
- Bring “cultural humility” to working with diverse groups, as you learn about various cultures other than your own
- Complete all required written work for field thoughtfully and on time.
- Work actively to develop skills and integrate your classroom knowledge in the field agency.
- Grow where you are planted.... be open and receptive to learning.

Internship Hours

Our BSW field education program exceeds the accreditation standard implemented by the CSWE, which states that students must complete a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs. We require 420 hours of internship in field over the semester.

Students in field are required to document that they have completed the 420 hours of agency service during their internship semester. Normally students are in field for full days on Monday-Thursday, but different hours may be arranged if mutually agreeable. To complete the 420 hours over the semester, a norm of 32 hours/week is recommended.

To document hours, you may use an agency-provided form or one supplied by the Social Work Department. It is the final responsibility of the agency Field Instructor to confirm that the student has completed the required hours to pass the field course.

Exceptions to the number of department-required hours can only be made by the department's Field Director. Such exception would include illness or other such serious and unavoidable circumstances. Under no circumstances can a student be allowed to complete fewer hours than minimum field hours set by CSWE.

Field Placement Rules and Guidelines

Open Identification as a BSW Student Intern

It is the policy of the Department of Social Work and specified in the NASW Code of Ethics that students must identify themselves with clients and other agency representatives as students or interns.

Attendance

Students are expected to arrive on time and to remain for the entirety of their scheduled field work hours. If due to illness or an emergency you are unable to attend, notify the agency Field Instructor prior to the start of the work day.

Attendance at weekly Field Seminar is also required. If you are unable to attend Field Seminar due to an unexpected emergency or illness, notify the BSW Field Coordinator prior to the start of class. Attendance records are kept for field placement and seminar.

Official University policies concerning attendance can be found at the following website:
http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/academic_affairs/courses_undergrad/REG02.20.3.php.

Illness/Emergency

Occasional illness or emergencies may cause students to be absent from field internship. Each student is allowed two sick days per semester, but must still inform the Field Instructor of this absence. The BSW Field Coordinator should be informed of absences of more than two days per semester. Plans for making up extended absences (e.g., prolonged illness) should be discussed with the Field Instructor and Coordinator.

Agency Holidays and Inclement Weather

Students are entitled to any agency holidays. If the agency holiday does not coincide with a school holiday, then students are entitled eight hours of field credit for the day. Students are not expected to make up for days or hours the agency is closed due to inclement weather or to other events resulting in the agency closing. These missed hours can never result in a student interning fewer hours than the minimum required by CSWE. While this is highly unlikely, the BSW Field Coordinator will work with the student and the agency to develop a plan to make up the hours.

Attendance at University-Sponsored Programs

Students are allowed to attend special programs sponsored by the Department of Social Work. Such programs may include workshops, career/volunteer fairs, and the annual Social Work Symposium. There are also some University-sponsored events that students are encouraged to attend. The BSW Field Coordinator will notify the field agencies in advance of such programs. Students can be given field hour credits for University-sponsored programs identified by the BSW Field Coordinator as relevant to professional development.

Trainings, Workshops, and Conferences

Any assignment or activity that is required or requested by the field agency counts toward field hours. This could include research to orient to the agency, outside reading to add to the student's skills, research done for the agency, meeting attendance, conferences, workshops, trainings, etc. Students should be given field hour credits for training, workshops, conferences, board meetings, and any work, assignments, or activities approved by the agency Field Instructor.

Record of Field Hours

Students are responsible for keeping up with their field hours and must have them verified by the agency Field Instructor. Students have until the last day of the exam period each semester to complete the required hours. Students may complete hours prior to this time, as long as Field Seminar assignments are also completed. An Excel spreadsheet is available in the Social Work Department website for students and Field Instructors to keep track of field hours. However, some agencies prefer that student use agency documentation to keep up with hours. The total number of hours is submitted electronically by the Field Instructor to the BSW Field Coordinator at the end of each semester.

Field Education Fund

The Department of Social Work receives donations to provide support for students in field placement. Students can request assistance from these funds to support some travel-related expenses. Students may also request financial assistance to attend conference or workshops. Other requests for financial assistance are considered on a case-by-case basis. Students may access the Field Education Fund Application from the department website and should submit it to the BSW Field Coordinator. All requests are contingent upon availability of funds.

Learning Expectations

- Students will approach field experience with various levels of intellectual ability and personal maturity. Each student should be given increasing responsibility and be encouraged by the agency supervisor to work independently as the semester progresses.
- Students should be engaged in agency service provision. Their experiences may include assessments, formulation of goals, assisting clients in following through with goals, or other tasks appropriate to the agency setting. These may include writing social histories, assisting individuals and families to utilize community resources, intervening in interpersonal relationships when problems arise, organizing and conducting groups, participating in community organizing strategies and policy advocacy, and conducting research.
- Each student must to adhere to agency regulations and schedules. This includes recordkeeping, attending staff meetings, and completing agency forms or other expectations as set by agency Field Instructor. Students should also be encouraged by the Field Instructor to attend conferences, workshops, and professional/coalition meetings.

Terminating a Field Placement Internship Match

A student's field placement may be terminated by the student, the agency Field Instructor, the BSW Field Coordinator, or the Social Work Department Field Director, for any of the following reasons:

Level of student preparation for the placement: It is assumed that the student has acquired the competencies expected for participation in the work world (e.g., arriving on time, managing one's schedule and communicating it to others as appropriate, presenting and conducting one's self in a professional manner. This includes professional dress and professional self-presentation as well as appropriate interpersonal interactions). In addition, it is expected that the student has acquired the necessary basic knowledge for "entry level" professional practice. If the student does not meet the above expectations, given appropriate efforts by the Field Instructor and BSW Field Coordinator to assist the student with such deficits, the department has grounds to remove the student from that field placement.

Failure to comply with the Code of Ethics: Students are expected to comply with the NASW Code of Ethics. (See appendix).

Agency breach of obligations to the student and the university. The agency is expected to provide the agreed-upon learning experiences and/or appropriate supervision to meet any of the other expectations identified on the department website, in this Field Manual, or in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) between the agency and the University.

Unexpected events: There may be times in the life of the student or agency where continuing in that field placement setting might jeopardize the quality of the student's learning experience (e.g., personal trauma, or agency reorganization, etc.).

Mismatch: Sometimes, differences in learning or interpersonal styles between the field Instructor or agency and the student emerge as the student and Field Instructor begin to work together, rendering the field placement less than optimally productive for a student's learning. Such circumstances are rare, but they may generate recommendations for a change in the field placement arrangements.

The circumstances cited above are not necessarily anyone's fault. In some instances, termination of the field placement reflects the fact that the field placement is highly successful in helping the student discover that social work is not what she/he expected and is not an appropriate profession to pursue. Sometimes, it is possible for a change to be made in the student's assignment, either to another unit of the agency or to another agency altogether. This action may necessitate extension of the student's program.

Students have the right to fair and consistent application of evaluation criteria in their field work and to a fair and consistent application of written procedures for termination from the program should this be necessary. Please refer to the University catalog for additional information about termination and dismissal for academic and conduct reasons.

Whatever the reasons prompting consideration of field placement termination, the student, agency Field Instructor, BSW Field Coordinator, and BSW Academic Advisor will work as a team to resolve problems and to come up with appropriate solutions. The steps below describe the process to explore possible termination of a field placement, if the situation cannot be resolved.

1. Student and Field Instructor discuss the problem. When the Field Instructor has attempted to work with the student around practice and learning issues and has seen little or no progress, s/he must contact the BSW Field Coordinator immediately.
2. Student, Field Instructor, and BSW Field Coordinator meet to clarify the problem and to suggest ways of improving the situation, including the establishment of timelines and a contract for student improvement.
3. If the problem cannot be solved at this level, the decision to terminate is made by the Field Instructor and the BSW Field Coordinator.
4. The student and BSW Field Coordinator discuss next steps for the student, which could include transfer to a new agency or withdrawal from the field course.
5. A summary of the termination decision, including the event(s) prompting the termination, is compiled by the BSW Field Director. This summary, once signed by the student, is placed in the student's file. This form is used only to inform placement decisions and for recordkeeping. It is not forwarded to anyone outside of the Social Work Department.

Reassignment of Field Placement Unrelated to Student Performance

Placement reassignments are made when problems unrelated to the student's performance make continuation in the agency not in the student's best interest. The BSW Field Coordinator is responsible for determining whether the problem is due to performance or nonperformance factors. Nonperformance factors may include but are not limited to these issues:

- Inadequate agency resources to support field internship.
- Learning experiences in the agency are too narrow.
- Agency reorganization that hinders student supervision and task assignment.
- Agency closes.
- Agency administrator terminates the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).
- Student/agency mismatch.
- Field Instructor leaves the agency.
- Field Instructor has change in responsibilities and cannot continue placement.

In order to protect the integrity of the professional relationship between the Department of Social Work and agencies, steps are taken by the student and the department to lessen the harm caused by placement termination regardless of termination reason:

- The student must complete the termination/exit process with the Field Instructor. This process includes administrative requirements, completion of paperwork, returning equipment, and termination of contacts with assigned clients, if requested by the field agency.
- The Field Instructor must submit to the BSW Field Coordinator a written, up-to-date summary of the student's field experience, including the reason(s) for termination. This summary must be shared with the student and it becomes part of the student's official record. The student may submit a response to the Field Instructor's summary.

Process of Assigning Student to New Agency

Sometimes a student who is unsuccessful in one setting may have the desire and capacity to be successful in another agency. The BSW Field Coordinator will assess whether reassignment of the student is in the best interests of the student and the profession. If so, these steps occur:

- The BSW Field Coordinator initiates the reassignment process by contacting a new agency.
- The student interviews with the new agency. If it is determined to be a match, the student must update his/her information in electronic Student Update Form on the department's website.
- The BSW Field Coordinator visits the student and new agency Field Instructor at the beginning of the reassigned placement.
- The student may be required to perform extra days/hours in order to make up time lost. The student and the new Field Instructor make these arrangements.

Grading for Field Internship Courses (Accreditation Standard M 2.1.5)

Grading Scale and Guidelines

Grades are based on the final evaluation of field internship performance and assignments from Field Seminar. The BSW Field Coordinator assigns the final grade after receiving evaluation

feedback from the agency Field Instructor. The percentages of the final 100% grade for field practice and Field Seminar can be found on the SW 490 course syllabus.

Students are assessed against the CSWE Core Competencies. In order for students to pass this course, they must:

- Demonstrate reliable and consistent attendance in field work.
- Demonstrate reliable and consistent attendance at Field Seminars.
- Effectively meet the objectives of the course as outlined in the syllabus.
- Effectively meet the objectives of the Work Plan.

Failure to meet any of these criteria may result in course failure.

Work Plans and Evaluation

The Work Plan is an agreement between the student, the agency, and the Social Work Department, and it should be generated in the first couple of weeks of the internship and submitted to the BSW Field Coordinator for review. It is a web-based document based on the CSWE Core Competencies. The student and Field Instructor fill in the form after thinking through agency tasks and outcomes that the student can achieve in order to gain the competencies. When the Field Instructor and student have designed a draft Work Plan, the BSW Field Coordinator visits the agency to approve the plan or assists, if needed, in refining it. The Work Plan may be revised as needed as long as the practice behaviors and activities are consistent with the Core Competencies.

Near the end of the semester, the Field Instructor evaluates the student based on this Work Plan. The evaluation document is web-based and includes a ranking system under each element of the Work Plan. The Field Instructor and the student discuss this evaluation before the face-to-face end-of-semester visit by the BSW Field Coordinator to discuss the evaluation.

A final grade for the internship experience is recommended by the agency Field Instructor and determined by the BSW Field Coordinator. The final grade is comprised of the field internship rating and the grades for Field Seminar assignments and participation.

Other Evaluations

In addition to evaluation of student performance, we may use other tools to monitor and enhance field education. These tools include the following and can be found in on the departmental website:

- Evaluation of Field Instructor by Student.
- Evaluation of Curriculum and Field Education by Field Instructor.

Required Weekly Intern Supervision

Supervision is a critical part of the field internship. Although guidance and attention from the supervisor is ongoing, the agency Field Instructor minimally provides a one-hour weekly conference with the student. Through supervision, the student and Field Instructor plan, organize, review, and evaluate the field experience. The Field Instructor should also help the student as s/he questions some of her/his attitudes toward the people and systems with whom he/she is working.

Both the Field Instructor and the student are expected to participate actively in the supervisory conference. The student should develop an agenda that is submitted to the supervisor prior to the conference, and should take responsibility of planning of the issues to be discussed in the conference. An optional weekly planning form is provided on the department website. However, some agencies prefer to use their own tools.

Weekly Supervision When the Field Instructor Does Not Have a Social Work Degree

All students in BSW field placement must have at least one hour of supervision each week by someone that has a BSW or MSW from a CSWE-accredited institution and two years postgraduate experience. Occasionally there is an excellent educational opportunity with an agency that does not have a BSW or MSW staff person available to provide the required supervision. In such cases, the department assumes responsibility for assuring supervision for the student. The department assures that students in these settings have access to weekly supervision from assigned field faculty or works with agency to identify an external agency supervisor.

Weekly Supervision Groups by Department of Social Work

Students under agency task supervisors who do not have social work degrees are required to attend weekly group supervision with a field faculty person designated by the BSW Field Coordinator or the department's Field Director. These supervision groups are held at the same time and day each week and include mostly MSW's but an occasional BSW student in field. The supervision counts toward field hours. The weekly group supervision provides students with opportunities to ask questions, raise concerns, process field experiences, present cases, and participate in other supervision activities as directed by field faculty designee.

Weekly Supervision by External Agency Social Workers

Agencies where the Field Instructor does not have a BSW or MSW degree may enlist a qualified external social worker to provide weekly field supervision and reflection for the student. The external supervisor must have a BSW or MSW degree and a minimum of two years post-graduate practice experience, and must be approved by the BSW Field Coordinator. This person must also complete the electronic Field Instructor form on the department website. The department recommends that the external supervisor and the student set a consistent weekly meeting time.

Agency Visits by the BSW Field Coordinator

The BSW Field Coordinator generally visits the student and Field Instructor at the agency site twice during the internship semester—near the beginning to establish reasonable expectations for student performance and to assure that the Work Plan is being set, and at the end of the semester to review the evaluation.

If at any point during the semester student's performance is below expectation, the Field Instructor, the student, and the BSW Field Coordinator will determine the actions that need to be taken to improve student performance.

Other than the agency visits mentioned above, there may be reasons for additional visits. These additional visits may be related to student performance, request of support or guidance from Field Instructor, or other reasons as determined by the student, agency, or department. The BSW Field Coordinator is available to the student and the agency as needed.

Becoming a Field Placement Agency

The Department of Social Work welcomes agencies and community partners that share our commitment to educating a new generation of advocates for positive social change, effective client interaction, and social justice. We seek agencies that can provide professional guidance and consistent BSW-level assignments to our students. Ideally, we seek agencies that employ social workers in order for our students to get the social work perspective in the field placement.

However, we recognize there are agencies and community partners that can offer a dynamic and important field placement opportunity that may not have a professionally credentialed social worker on staff. In these cases the department works with the agency to develop ways to assure that the student has access to weekly supervision. The department assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective in placements that do not have a BSW or MSW supervisor on staff.

The application for becoming a field agency is at:

http://socialwork.chass.ncsu.edu/graduate/field_education/field_placement.php.

The BSW Field Coordinator is happy to schedule a visit with agencies to establish this community/University partnership. The following criteria are used in the selection of field agencies:

1. The agency has a point of view about field instruction that is consistent with that of the BSW Program at NC State University.
2. There is a correlation between the agency and the BSW Program's practice perspective, in order to provide the opportunity for the integration of knowledge, theory, values, and research taught in BSW courses with practice in the field.
3. The agency is able to provide a qualified BSW or MSW supervisor to serve as Field Instructor. In the instance where there is no qualified social worker but other qualified

staff could serve as a Field Instructor, the Field Instructor will serve as Task Supervisor and a qualified BSW or MSW external or off-site supervisor must be enlisted to offer weekly supervision.

4. The agency is able to provide the intern the opportunity to practice social work in compliance with professional social work standards and ethics.
5. The agency is able to provide on an ongoing basis a range of internship assignments that are appropriate to the student's educational needs.
6. The agency is able to provide the necessary space and resources necessary for the intern to be able to carry out internship assignments.
7. The agency is willing to allocate sufficient time for ongoing supervision of the intern.
8. The agency is willing to allocate time for the orientation, seminars, and training for Field Instructors that are provided by the NCSU Department of Social Work.
9. The field instruction program must abide by the nondiscrimination policies as set forth in law and in University policies. North Carolina State University is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate against applicants, students, or employees on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, or sexual orientation, or veteran status. We set the same high expectations for agencies that partner with us to educate students.
10. The agency is willing to enter into an affiliation agreement between the agency and North Carolina State University.

Initiating the Process of Becoming a New Field Placement Agency

- The exploration of a partnership between the University and agency may be initiated by the agency, a student, a community member, a Social Work Department advisory board member, faculty, etc. Initial discussion between the BSW Field Coordinator and the agency explores the agency's interest and ability to provide the range of learning opportunities necessary to carry out the purposes of the field instruction courses.
- Following the initial discussion, a site visit is usually made to the agency by the BSW Field Coordinator. The purpose is to meet with agency representatives to discuss learning opportunities available, potential supervisors/Field Instructors, and to review the nature of social work practice in the agency.
- As a result of these discussions, the agency decides whether it wishes to accept students for field instruction and the school determines whether the required educational expectations and standards for field instruction can be met.
- When an agency becomes an approved field instruction site, a contract, in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement is required. The Field Instructor should give the following to the BSW Field Coordinator: (1) the full legal name of the agency; (2) The full name and title of the Executive Director or other management official at the agency who has legal authority to sign the MOA; (3) that person's email address. This information goes to

department Field Director, Dr. Jodi Hall, who sends this person an electronic copy of our MOA, to be completed and returned to Dr. Hall. When it is approved by the legal staff of the university, Dr. Hall returns a copy of the completed MOA to the agency.

- The Field Education Office provides the agency with access to the Field Manual and professional development opportunities.

Agency Profiles

A profile of all field and volunteer-opportunity agencies will be developed and maintained as a resource for field interns and BSW students seeking volunteer hours for their pre-field course work. The profile will provide essential contact information, types of services provided, clients served, opportunities for social work field placement and hours of operation. This profile will also inform students of specific requirements for internship such as, background check, medical tests, certifications, uniforms, etc. The agency profile will be visible to students, staff, field instructors, and faculty.

Becoming a Field Instructor

Field Instructors for BSWs should have a BSW or MSW from an accredited school of social work and have two years post-master's experience. They must also have the support of their employing agency.

The Field Instructor is responsible for planning, supervising, and evaluating the student's internship experience. All agency Field Instructors should have the interest and ability to teach, the ability to conceptualize and articulate information, the self-awareness to function as a role model, competence within their area, adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics, and the insight needed to problem solve. They should be able to relate these skills both within and beyond their specific agency of practice in their teaching and supervision with a student.

Individuals usually become a Field Instructor by virtue of being employed in an approved field instruction agency where the NC State University Social Work Department places students.

All potential agency Field Instructors must submit a Field Instructor Application at:

http://socialwork.chass.ncsu.edu/field_education/forms/field_placement.php

See the departmental section on Becoming a BSW Field Instructor, at:

http://socialwork.chass.ncsu.edu/field_education/forms/instructor_info.php

When the Agency Field Instructor Does Not Have a BSW or MSW Degree

Because of the educational needs of the student, or in the absence of an available agency person who meets the requirements as set above by the department, individuals from related social work disciplines may be appointed to oversee the student's work in the agency. Such individuals are referred to as agency task supervisors. The Field Instructor of record for the student may be an experienced BSW or MSW elsewhere in the agency or community, or a faculty member from an accredited social work program.

For cases in which the Field Instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree, the department assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective. Students learning under agency task supervisors are required to attend weekly group supervision with a field faculty person designated by the field director or receive supervision from an approved social work supervisor external to the agency.

Field Orientation for Students and Field Instructors

Agency Field Instructors and students attend an Orientation to the BSW field program at the beginning of the internship semester. This orientation is mandatory for Field Instructors, agency task supervisors, and students. Field Orientation counts toward field hours for students.

At Orientation Field Instructors meet with the BSW Field Coordinator and with their assigned students. Generally there are separate programs for Field Instructors and for students, with the two groups converging for some portion of the Orientation program.

The Orientation provides an opportunity to:

1. Disseminate knowledge and guidance to Field Instructors and students on the teaching and integration of Core Competencies in practice.
2. Share ideas about integrating field practice and classroom curriculum.
3. Help Field Instructors understand the integration of curriculum and field.
4. Foster a network of communication between Field Instructors and the Department of Social Work.
5. Disseminate the most current information reflecting generally accepted principles of field supervision (including legal issues, supervisory relationship, optimal field learning experience, student or agency problems, etc.)
6. Obtain information from community partners that can be useful to the field education program.

Topics covered in orientation include: field expectations, Work Plan development, Core Competencies and practice behaviors, field evaluation, field safety, instructor/student relationship, and social work ethics. Field Instructors are asked to recommend future learning topics to support their work as Field Instructors. Throughout the year, agency Field Instructors may be invited to workshops to enhance their knowledge and skills and to network with other University partners. Examples of topics for these events include:

- Managing Millennials in the human services workplace.
- Applying the Work Plan to your agency.
- Using the student evaluation as a learning tool.
- The impact of trauma on clients.
- Social work ethics.
- How to write so clients understand.
- Working with military families or other identified populations.

The Field Instructor's Relationship with the Student

Planning for the student's arrival is extremely important. Knowledge of the student's background and particularly of the student's objectives is helpful in making preliminary plans. The agency should feel free to ask the student about this at the initial interview and throughout the semester. In planning, it is important that the student have some specific assignment the first week of internship and that assignments be made more challenging throughout the semester.

Facilitating the Student's Orientation to the Agency

The Field Instructor has a very important role in setting a positive tone for the student in the agency. It can seem scary for an intern to fit into an agency without the process being well facilitated. The Field Instructor should prepare others in the agency for the arrival of the BSW student intern. In the first week with the student, we recommend that the Field Instructor:

- Introduce the student to agency personnel.
- Discuss personnel practices, including office hours, personal conduct expectations, confidentiality, appropriate dress, and office procedures and routines.
- Discuss the organization and structure of the agency. It helps to show an organizational chart showing departments and positions as well as sources of funding of the agency.
- Explain the philosophy and objectives of the agency.
- Talk about community resources and partners.
- Offer reading materials. The agency should provide the student assigned reading that relates to the agency; this should include history and background, policies and procedures, case records, etc.

The student, in collaboration with and assisted by Field Instructor, will complete the Work Plan within the first few weeks of the semester. In this plan, the specific Core Competencies for the field course are listed and the student and Field Instructor decide on a set of tasks and strategies for accomplishing these competencies during the internship period. The Work Plan establishes the benchmarks, consistent with CSWE Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), by which the student will be evaluated by the Field Instructor at the end of the internship.

Please see the Appendix for "Evaluation Considerations for the Field Instructor."

Student Employment While in the Program

When paid employment during the field internship semester is necessary, work hours must be scheduled so as not to conflict with fieldwork assignment, Field Seminar or classroom courses.

Employment-Based Field Placement

The NC State Department of Social Work recognizes that the personal economic situation of some students makes it necessary for them to explore field placement opportunities in their agencies of employment. We recognize that professional activity and learning are not

inconsistent, but there is a difference in emphasis between the goals of educational development and those of a job description. The focus of the field placement must be on the student's learning. In accordance with CSWE policy, field credit cannot be given for any past work experience.

CSWE Accreditation Standard 2.1.6 requires that an employment-based field placement must meet certain guidelines. Within these guidelines is the requirement of clear differentiation between the current job responsibilities and the proposed educational work to be completed as field placement. The hours can be within the regular 40 hours week, but must be different from work assigned as one's job. Also, the hours used for field placement must be under a supervisor different from one's supervisor for employment. An authorized person from the student's place of employment must read and sign the Employment-Based Field Placement Agreement, which is on the department's website.

In the interest of assisting students and agencies, the Department of Social Work has adopted policy guidelines for the development of an employment-based field placement. These policies are designed to insure the accomplishment of the educational goals and objectives of the BSW Program. The agency of employment can be used as a placement setting when the following conditions are met:

- When the agency has available either different units or distinctly different learning opportunities that will provide the student with professional learning experiences different from areas covered with their routine job duties. Thus the student will be taken out of her/his current job description activities for the number of required hours per week that constitutes the field placement, to ensure that specific BSW Core Competencies and practice behaviors can be achieved.
- When the agency has available a qualified supervisor who can serve as the Field Instructor and who is a different person from the student's job supervisor. This is to ensure, in part, that the BSW is free to focus on educational aspects of the placement rather than workload issues. The agency and the Field Instructor are expected to provide professional supervision.
- When the agency and the Department of Social Work can agree that the assignments given to a paid placement student are consistent with the educational objectives of the department, and that the assignments (client caseload, administrative duties, etc.) are designed and planned to enhance the student's professional development. This may mean lighter caseloads, planned and varied assignments for educational purposes, and additional hours above the normal workweek to achieve placement requirements.

Students' Eligibility for Internship at Place of Employment

All students employed by an agency meeting the criteria outlined above are eligible to request an employment-based field placement. Agencies must meet the Department of Social Work standards and procedures for the selection and appointment of field agencies and Field Instructors. If the agency is not already an approved field agency, the process for gaining such approval should begin with the student notifying the BSW Field Coordinator. Field credit will not be given until an agency meets department approval.

Procedure for Initiating a Request for a Placement in the Place of Employment

Below are the steps for developing a field placement in the place of employment.

- The student initiates the process by discussing with the BSW Field Coordinator the wish to have an employment-based placement, and submits to the Coordinator a completed Request for Field Placement in Place of Employment (see department website). This form is completed by the employer, but the student is responsible for its submission.
- The BSW Field Coordinator reviews the request and notifies the student within one week as to whether the placement is acceptable. Any adjustment in the request may be included in this notification.
- The student must obtain documented approval for this arrangement by all relevant agency personnel, including the agency administrator, the student's immediate employment supervisor, and the proposed Field Instructor.
- The BSW Field Coordinator may make a visit to the agency to review the placement plans in relation to the department's objectives.
- If internship in an employing agency is found to be unacceptable, the student must coordinate with the BSW Field Coordinator to find another placement.
- If the arrangement is approved, the situation must be monitored to assure adherence to the guidelines for employment-based field internships. Deviations from these guidelines may result in the student's placement being terminated.

Other Field Placement Issues

Monetary Compensation

Provision for monetary compensation to students must be arranged under separate agreement between the student and the agency. The agency must stipulate that any such agreement between itself and the student will comply with state and federal laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, if such act is applicable to the agency. These cases are treated as paid field placements and must still meet all guideline, policies, and procedures of unpaid placement. Even when they agency provides compensation or stipend, it must still be a learning environment for the student.

Early Completion of Internship

Students are responsible for keeping up with their field hours and must have them verified by the agency Field Instructor. Students have until the last day of the exam period each semester to complete the required hours. Students may complete hours prior to this time, but not before all Field Seminar assignments are completed

Transportation to Field Agencies

Transportation to and from the agency and/or community setting is the responsibility of the student. The Raleigh area does not have extensive public transportation and it is not advisable to rely solely on public transportation to get to and from placement agency. While there are some agencies on the bus line, they are limited in number.

Home Visits and General Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve some risks, depending on location, clients served, etc. Home visits may be an occasional or routine responsibility of a student's field placement, or indicated in a variety of situations. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. The Field Instructor must assure that the student is oriented to agency guidelines and procedures for risk reduction and personal safety, as well as agency emergency procedures. In certain circumstances students may need additional support and security. The BSW Field Coordinator should be consulted by the student or Field Instructor if safety is a concern. All personal safety incidents, (e.g., an accident which may have resulted in an injury or a case of sexual harassment or stalking) must be reported immediately to the BSW Field Coordinator by either the student or the Field Instructor.

Transporting Clients: Personal Liability Coverage

Students should be aware that the transporting of clients is a responsibility assigned to interns by many field internship sites. Students are therefore encouraged to consult with their own insurance companies regarding the need to obtain any additional liability coverage. The issue of transporting clients should be addressed during the pre-internship interview.

Intern Liability Insurance

All students will have intern liability insurance as provided through a group policy with the General Administration of the University of North Carolina System in the amount of \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000 (individual/aggregate claim). Insurance is paid through student fees and is required for each semester the student participates in field internship.

Background Checks

It is the student's responsibility to determine if the agency will require a background check and to request it in timely manner. It can take up to two weeks for background checks to return. Some agencies require background checks before students can be placed in the agency. Typically this is true of all hospitals, schools, clinics, mental health facilities, and many government agencies. See the BSW Field Coordinator if you are asked to provide a background check. These checks are conducted by company contracted by NC State University. The current cost of background check generally around \$25.00 (cost subject to change). Student who are required to have background checks are responsible for this fee. All information from the background check is treated with strict confidentiality.

Other Agency Requirements

All requirements of agencies should be discussed during the placement interview. Be sure to ask about this. Some agencies may require a medical physical exam, immunizations, TB testing, drug screening, or other similar procedures. The agency may refuse to accept any student who does not complete these requirements. They may also refuse to accept a student who does not meet their standards in these tests and assessments. Some agencies may also request driver's license check and proof of personal automobile insurance. Any fees associated with such tests and assessments are the responsibility of the students. The Department of Social Work does not partner with agencies that have requirements that violate the anti-discrimination policy of the University or the department.

Field Education Advisory Board

The Field Education Advisory Board is comprised of social work practitioners and administrators from various human service agencies and students currently enrolled in the BSW and MSW programs. This board serves a supportive function and helps to identify gaps in educational and/or agency services; it provides ongoing program evaluation. Its responsibilities include:

- Maintaining awareness of the changing social work scene and its implication for staffing needs and educational preparation in the field.
- Making recommendations about agency fit and agency needs for the department.
- Meeting at designated times to assess, plan, and evaluate the NC State University Social Work program.
- Recommending changes in program content and administration of the field program, with the knowledge that final decisions are made by the Field Director and Field Coordinators, under the guidance of the department head.

Students' Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How many field placement hours are needed to receive a BSW degree?

A: The Council on Social Work Education establishes the minimum standard for the number of hours required to complete the BSW program and earn the professional degree: 400 hours. Our program requires that BSW students in field complete 420 hours.

Q: Do I find my own placement?

A: The field education office has long-standing relationships with social work agencies and is responsible for developing placement sites. Field education staff maintain regular contact with field agencies regarding student placements. However, we prefer a collaborative relationship with students during the placement process.

We are happy to make arrangements with agencies not listed on our website. You may know of many opportunities that we have not explored. We are always interested in adding new agencies to our list. You may contact agencies on your own to inquire about placements; however, you should check with field staff before making contact. A few agencies do not accept inquiries from students. There are also many agencies that welcome student inquiries. We are happy to give you approval to make contact where appropriate.

Q: Can I be paid for my field placement?

However, there are no “paid” internships. Students who are employed in a human service setting may be eligible employment-based placement. And in rare situations an agency may decide to offer the intern a stipend.

Q: Can I arrange a placement where I work?

A: This type of placement is called an employment-based placement and must be approved by the BSW Field Coordinator. Approval depends on timely submission of the application and the integrity of the proposed field assignment. Such placements must meet CSWE standards.

Q: How far will I have to travel for my field placement?

A: Students are expected to allow approximately 45 minutes of travel time to and from their field placement site. Every effort will be made to plan a reasonable commute. The commute depends on where you live and where the best placement opportunity can be found. This area does not have an extensive public transportation system. It can be very challenging to get to and from a placement if a student must rely completely on public transportation. Getting to and from the placement agency is the responsibility of the student.

Q: Do I need a criminal background check?

A: It depends. For many placements (especially those interning at schools and hospitals), a criminal background check is required. Fingerprinting, a physical exam, a PPD (tuberculosis test), and other health requirements may also be required. When possible, you will be notified about these requirements in advance. It is important to ask about this when you have your agency interview.

Q: What if I am sick and miss several days of field?

A: There are two allowed sick days (you must inform the Field Instructor ahead of your scheduled work day). Missed hours must be made up. You must reach your 420 hours.

Q: Are there any evening or weekend placements available?

A: Evening and/or weekend placements are limited, as many agencies are either closed or do not have available supervision or suitable assignments during these hours. Typical placement days are Monday through Thursday and take place during standard business hours. Students and agencies reach agreement about hours during the interview process. Students are never permitted to miss the weekly Friday morning Field Seminar class to complete field hours.

Q: Can I interview at several agencies before selecting my placement?

A: No. Please do not think of this process as a shopping expedition. The BSW Field Coordinator will work with you to arrange one interview at an agency that meets your learning needs. If the interview goes well and you and the agency agree that the placement is an appropriate fit, it will be confirmed. If either party has reservations, another interview will be arranged.

Q: Is field instruction a graded course?

A: Yes. The final course grade comes from two sources: your Field Evaluation based on your Work Plan, and your completed assignments from the SW 490 Field Seminar class.

Q: Can I switch if the placement does not work out for me?

A: No: The relationship between the Social Work Department and agencies is very important. You should consider the placement to be a commitment to the agency and to the learning process. Once you accept a placement, most agencies then turn down other potential applicants. If you are unable to keep this commitment, the agency may then lose the opportunity to have a social work intern. We fully expect that you will work within the agency structure to resolve any conflicts and protect the integrity the Social Work Department. However, you should consult with the BSW Field Coordinator if any ethical issues arise or if you encounter a situation requiring professional consultation. We do not want you to be in a situation in which your rights are violated or in which you are unable to receive valuable learning opportunities. Every effort is made to assure that an agency is a good fit prior to the placement. Sometimes changes occur within an agency, such as staff departures, which may interfere with the learning experience. If

the BSW Field Coordinator determines that your agency is not able to provide an appropriate learning experience, you will be placed in another agency.

Q: Do I have to attend Field Orientation?

A: Yes. Field supervisors and students attend orientation. Any exceptions must be made by the BSW Field Coordinator

Q: What about liability insurance for interns?

All students have intern liability insurance provided through a group policy with the General Administration of the University of North Carolina System. Coverage is \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000 for individual/aggregate claims. This insurance is paid through student fees and is required for each semester the student participates in field internship.

Appendix

CSWE EPAS: Ten Core Competencies for Social Workers

Evaluation Considerations for the Field Instructor

CSWE EPAS: Ten Core Competencies for Social Workers

The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person and environment construct, a global perspective respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, social work's purpose is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons.

Social work educators serve the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education—at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels—shapes the profession's future through the education of competent professionals, the generation of knowledge, and the exercise of leadership within the professional community.

The Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate- and master's-level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate.

EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design: (1) program mission and goals; (2) explicit curriculum; (3) implicit curriculum; and (4) assessment. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards are conceptually linked. Educational Policy describes each curriculum feature. Accreditation Standards (*in italics*) are derived from the Educational Policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program at the baccalaureate (B) or master's (M) level. Copyright © 2008, Council of Social Work Education, Inc. All rights reserved.

Below is an excerpt from the full document, outlining the ten Core Competencies required to earn a social work professional degree from an accredited Social Work program.

Educational Policy 2.1—Core Competencies

Competency-based education is an outcome performance approach to curriculum design. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. The goal of the outcome approach is to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The ten core competencies are listed below [EP 2.1.1—EP2.1.10(d)], followed by the description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and the resulting practice behaviors that may be used to operationalize the curriculum and assessment methods. Programs may add competencies consistent with their missions and goals.

Educational Policy 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers

- advocate for client access to the services of social work;
- practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
- attend to professional roles and boundaries;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication;
- engage in career-long learning;
- use supervision and consultation.

Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers

- recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
- make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics¹ and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles;²
- tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts;
- apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers

- distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom;
- analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and
- attend to professional roles and boundaries;
- demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power and acclaim. Social workers

- recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate or create or enhance privilege and power;
- gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
- recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences;
- view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

Educational Policy 2.1.5—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers

¹ National Association of Social Workers (approved 1996, revised 1999). *Code of Ethics for Social Workers*. Washington, D.C.: NASW.

² International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work. (2004). *Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles*. Retrieved January 2, 2008 from <http://www.ifsw.org>

- understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination;
- analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation;
- advocate for human rights and social and economic justice;
- engage in practices that advance social economic justice.

Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers

- use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry;
- use research evidence to inform practice.

Educational Policy 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers

- utilize conceptual framework to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation;
- critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

Educational Policy 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers

- analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being;
- collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

Educational Policy 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers

- continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services;
- provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)-(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implements evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)—Engagement

Social workers

- substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- use empathy and other interpersonal skills;
- develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(b)—Assessment

Social workers

- collect, organize, and interpret client data;
- assess client strengths and limitations;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives;
- select appropriate intervention strategies.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(c)—Intervention

Social workers

- initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
- implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
- help clients resolve problems;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients;
- facilitate transitions and endings.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(d)—Evaluation

Social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Evaluation Considerations for the Field Instructor

Evaluation Considerations for the Field Instructor

From an ethical point of view, it is the trusting clients and innocent students who suffer most from an inadequate, incomplete, or superficial field placement evaluation. In order to assure that we provide adequate social workers to the community, each student must be subjected to an honest appraisal of their ability to function with clients, co-workers, and peers.

A Field Instructor acts as one of the gatekeepers for the social work profession. You may have seen many students and many professional social workers. You know, first hand, that inadequate social work practice can injure clients, produce negative feelings about the agency in the community and have a damaging impact on other professionals. You know, too, that most students in our department have sufficient academic ability to pass their courses and most do pass. It is in the field placement that learning is turned into practice.

It is in the field that students who will become competent social workers can be most easily differentiated from those who will not; and it is the responsibility of the Field Instructor to make the differentiation. If you do not perform this task objectively and conscientiously, you are failing in your duty to our clients, our community, and our profession.

On the other hand, you must understand the impact of a negative evaluation upon the student. You have taught the student. You have formed a relationship with the student. You may personally like the student very much. As a social worker, you are trained to be non-judgmental. You spend your working life trying to be helpful, trying to be positive, giving the benefit of the doubt whenever possible, being very careful to accept people for what they are and avoid imposing your own values on them.

Yet now you are in a position where you are required to make a judgment. You are required to impose professional standards and values—which are your own values—upon the student and may write that, in your opinion, the student has failed to meet these standards. It is not surprising that many Field Instructors shrink from doing this. You agonize over the decision. You defend your student in your mind by telling yourself that it might have been different with another instructor in another setting. Then you think about the student's future clients who will inevitably be hurt if the student is allowed to continue.

There is also the matter of the Field Instructor's responsibility as a teacher. Teachers of adults are only responsible for teaching; they are not also responsible for ensuring that the student learns. Nevertheless, if the student fails to learn, there is always a nagging doubt in your mind. Perhaps the material could have been presented differently. Perhaps there could have been more or different feedback, a different client, a different project.

Even when you, the Field Instructor, know that you have done all you could for the student, there may still be a lingering temptation to blame yourself anyway, to let the student pass the placement in the hope that additional experience will bring improvement.

The whole evaluation is a matter of balance. You should note the student's negative qualities, and you should note the student's positive qualities.

This brings up a problem in the evaluation system—*subjectivity* is necessarily present in the whole affair. You will have records to support your opinion of student performance in various areas but nevertheless it

is an opinion. Some of you have standards that are higher than others; some agency requirements are more stringent than others.

Thus, the evaluation may seem inherently unfair. The question of making allowances for the skills and backgrounds of different students is always a difficult one for the Field Instructor. A field placement assessment is supposed to reflect the actual level of skills attained, not the number of problems the student solved in order to get there. Nevertheless, the problem-solving process in itself says something about the student. A student who has had to overcome her own prejudices in order to attain a certain skill level has learned more than one who has not; moreover, she has demonstrated self awareness, self control, and an ability to use herself for the client's benefit.

All other things being equal, a student who has struggled to achieve will probably be given a slightly higher assessment rating than another student who has reached the same skill level without a struggle. If this does not seem fair, remember that you will be looking for two things: evidence that learning has taken place; and evidence that the student has the ability to learn. Remember, a student who is outstanding in the classroom is not necessarily outstanding in the field.

The primary purpose of a Mid-Semester Progress Report is to assess the student's achievements to date in order to properly focus and direct future growth. A major task after the evaluation may be to revise the learning outcomes, paring down or supplementing some learning outcomes, and adding or eliminating others. The Field Instructor will act as the recorder for the Mid-Semester Progress Report and will make notes on the form as the student and instructor discuss progress toward meeting the learning outcomes. We will use the meeting as a time to summarize and to plan for the remainder of the semester.

The Final Evaluation assesses achievements during the entire semester, highlighting major growth areas and areas for ongoing attention after placement ends.

Adapted from Thomlinson et al., *The Social Work Practicum: An Access Guide*, 2nd Edition, F.E. Peacock, 1996, pp. 201-210.

Gate Keeping: Performance of Student in Field Placement

(The following information is summarized from a presentation by Dr. Deana Morrow, former Director of the Social Work Program at Warren Wilson College, currently with UNC-C, to NCSU field instructors and faculty on February 21, 1996 and from University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Social Work Field Education Handbook.)

Gate keeping is the professional responsibility of social work educators, both university-based and agency-based, to determine whether a student should enter the social work profession. It is an ongoing process that begins with guarding the entrance “gate” to the profession (including providing responsible education) and concludes with guarding the exit “gate.” Field instructors are social work educators, and thus, have a gate keeping function.

This function is supported by CSWE accreditation standards for BSW programs which state that “the program’s policies and practices must include procedures for terminating a student’s enrollment in the social work program...” (CSWE Handbook of Accreditation Standards and Procedures, p. 89, 1994)

Field education has been identified as a primary screening point in gate keeping, along with matriculation into the department, admission to field, graduation, and situations of violation of department standards. The field course is distinct from most other university courses in that field placement in the community entails not only educational outcomes for the student and faculty, but also professional responsibilities to clients, social agencies, and the community. When students engage clients and assume service responsibilities, there are ongoing professional, educational, and ethical responsibilities and courtesies to

be considered. Also, considerable time and effort is spent on the part of faculty and community supervisors to plan and deliver a good field placement. Thus, it is important to recognize early and respond to performance problems of students, particularly those of a serious nature.

Most students deal quite well with personal struggles and problems of daily life. However, when personal problems impair field performance and professional behavior to the extent that client (and student) obligations are not being met appropriately, faculty and community supervisors have the responsibility to intervene.

Various kinds of limitations and external demands may impair the performance of students. Some may be struggling with circumstantial limitations; such as, lack of transportation, financial problems, part-time employment, commuting difficulties, etc. Others may need to cope with more chronic or long-term situations; such as, a language barrier, a physical disability or chronic illness, etc. Often these limitations, though they can be burdensome, are compensated for and accommodated by adequate planning and flexibility. These students may perform very well, given the opportunity and appropriate support.

Personal or emotional problems of a more serious nature present greater difficulties. These may include a serious physical illness or psychological impairment, a life crisis, a serious legal offense, addiction, personal instability or unsuitability for the profession. These may be evidenced behaviorally by inappropriate or unethical behavior, excessive absences, noncompliance with agency policy, or competence and skill deficits. Fortunately, serious ethical violations or breaches of integrity are rare. Most common performance problems have to do with deficits in competence, understanding, or excessive absences.

These problems usually present an interrelated set of concerns which require monitoring, communication, and professional judgment on the part of faculty and community supervisors. The concerns are: the rights of clients to adequate service and professional care, the educational needs of the students, the "gate-keeper" role of the university and professional community, and the provision of corrective and support services for the student. Field faculty, agency supervisors, and the Field Director have the responsibility to discuss students' field and seminar performance in the execution of their educational duties.

While all students have ongoing supervisory review and consultation, early recognition and feedback of serious performance problems is especially important. Field supervisors and faculty should communicate their observations and concerns to each other as soon as they are identified. Students as well as clients are better served by early recognition of significant performance problems. Field supervisors and faculty are both in a position to detect these kinds of deficits, and each has the responsibility to initiate communication with the other. If in doubt as to whether a particular deficit is serious or major and merits particular attention, discuss it with each other. The Field Director is available to consult in these situations. There is sufficient program flexibility and resources within the university and the community to give students time and support to deal with personal problems which affect their education. Career and psychological counseling, additional work or life experience, reconsideration of career goals, etc., all could be part of a response to problems.

When students perform poorly in placement, the treatment and service needs of clients become the higher priority. In these situations, agency supervisors and faculty should act to protect the needs of the client and ensure appropriate service provision.

Faculty and community supervisors need not, and should not, be therapists to students. Field education does not permit automatic access to students' private lives or personal problems. We have the right and the obligation to expect quality performance and professional behavior, to evaluate and provide feedback on the field performance, and especially to bring to the attention of the student serious performance

deficits. At that point, students may voluntarily share personal information to explain or rationalize their poor performance. It is important that this personal information be treated confidentially and that students be provided with guidance, resource information, and concerned support. At the same time, they may need to be relieved of their client responsibilities, based on the collective judgment of supervising staff and faculty.

Areas for concern include, but are not limited to:

- inadequate oral communication skills
- inadequate interpersonal relationship and/or helping skills
- inadequate written communication skills
- lack of adherence to social work values and the NASW Code of Ethics
- personal values that consistently interfere with upholding the values of the profession
- lack of respect toward clients related to issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, disability, religion, etc.
- sexual/romantic involvement with clients
- confidentiality violations
- mental/emotional instability
- unresolved personal issues which impair performance in the classroom or in the field
- possible drug/alcohol addiction
- criminal conviction
- lying, cheating, or plagiarizing in coursework or field work
- inadequate performance of assigned field activities
- display of behaviors which undermine the work or morale of faculty, students, or field personnel
- excessive absenteeism
- persistent inability to meet deadline dates on assignments and projects.

Field instructors who experience difficulty in any of the above situations (or others which cause concern but are not listed above) with students should consult with the BSW Field Coordinator to determine an appropriate action.