



2023

University of Southern Indiana
Social Work Field Manual

Thanks goes out to the past Directors of Field Education for leaving their signatures on some part of this field manual. Their Labors are not forgotten.

Dr. Kathy Elpers,
Dr. Catherine Gore
Dr. Karen Northcraft
Dr. Paul Frazer
Dr. Marie Opatrny Pease
Patricia Loehr LCSW, LCAC, and
Barbara Ferguson, LCSW



Bonnie Rinks, LCSW, ACSW
Director of Field Education

Summer Wilderman, LCSW
Assistant Director of Field Education

Social Work Department
University of Southern Indiana
College of Liberal Arts

Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Del Doughty, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Liberal Arts
812.461.5475
ddoughty1@usi.edu

Silvia Rode, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean
812.465.7026
sarode@usi.edu

Kristalyn Shefveland, Ph.D.
Interim Assistant Dean
812.461.5434
kmshefvela@usi.edu

Marie Opatrny Pease, Ph.D.
Chair, Social Work
812.465.7058
mopatrny@usi.edu

Bonnie Rinks, LCSW, ACSW
Director, Field Education
812.465.1106
berinks@usi.edu

Summer Wilderman,
LCSW
Assistant Director, Field
Education
812.465.1147
s.wilderman@usi.edu

Jay Dickerson Ph.D.
Director, MSW Program
812.461.5243
jay.dickerson@usi.edu

Wendy Turner, Ph.D.
Director, BSW Program
812.465.1201
wturner@usi.edu

Carol Blair,
Senior Administrative Assistant
812.464.1843
ceblair@usi.edu

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Chicago, IL 60604-1413
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Introduction

Purpose of the Field Manual

This manual serves as a guide to agencies, faculty, and students engaged in the field program at the University of Southern Indiana (USI). The table of contents provides a method for easy reference in regard to specific areas of interest in the field education program. While it is anticipated that the educational objectives, policies, and procedures will be most often referenced, the manual also includes the mission statements of the university, the BSW, and MSW programs and descriptions of the curriculums to clarify the larger context within which field education occurs.

The Field Manual is available to students, field instructors, and faculty through the USI Social Work Website (<https://www.usi.edu/liberal-arts/social-work/student-resources>). Printed copies of the manual are available upon request to our field education supervisors.

It is important to note that the field education program design, its policies, and procedures reflect consultation and input from faculty, students, and field instructors. We are always interested in your comments and recommendations in regard to the design, implementation, and maintenance of the field education program.

History of the University of Southern Indiana

Originally founded in 1965 as the Evansville campus of Indiana State University, the University of Southern Indiana was made a separate state university by an act of 1985 Indiana General Assembly. The Governor appointed a board of trustees, and the establishment of the University of Southern Indiana became official on July 1, 1985.

USI is a broad-based institution offering instruction, research, and service. A liberal arts and science curriculum serve as the foundation of knowledge for all programs and complements undergraduate programs leading to careers in business, engineering, government, health professions, education, and related fields. Selected master's degrees and Doctoral degrees serve persons in professional and technical studies. As a public institution, USI counsels and assists business and industry as well as social, educational, governmental, and health agencies to higher levels of efficiency and improved services.

University Mission

American education assumes a link between the truth of an idea the good it promotes for individuals and society. An educated person can be expected to not only be knowledgeable and more financially secure, but also a better citizen among whose virtues are tolerance, judgement, and belief in freedom for self and others. These values develop in an atmosphere of open inquiry and the pursuit of truth. USI is an engaged learning community advancing

education and knowledge, enhancing civic and cultural awareness, and fostering partnerships through comprehensive outreach programs. We prepare individuals to live wisely in a diverse and global community. Therefore, as USI seeks to support education, social and economic growth, and civic and cultural awareness in Southwestern Indiana, it will be devoted primarily to preparing students to live wisely.

Social Work Department History

BSW Program

The development of the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Degree at USI began in 1974 when the university was a branch campus of Indiana State University East (ISUE). Courses in social work were offered as a part of the Social Science curriculum in the School of Liberal Arts. In 1980, a degree in Social Sciences with a concentration in social work was implemented under the auspices of the Sociology Department. A Bachelor of Social Work degree was approved by the University's Board of Trustees and the Commission on Higher Education in 1986. The BSW Program became autonomous within the School of Education and Human Services, later known as the Bower-Suhrheinrich College of Education and Human Services. In the fall of 2011, the Social Work Department joined the College of Liberal Arts. The BSW Program was awarded initial accreditation in 1991, retroactive to 1988. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has continuously accredited program since the 1988 accreditation.

MSW Program

Interest in creating an MSW program emerged in 1988. The university and the Social Work Department was approached by a group of agency directors across Southern Indiana who were frustrated by the not being able to attract and hire MSWs in the region. Additionally, with the only MSW program in Indiana located at the IU School of Social Work in Indianapolis, the distance of four hours driving time made it difficult for agency staff to obtain much needed MSW degrees. Their issues were quite clear:

- A significant lack of MSW candidates across Southern Indiana to adequately fill open professional positions where the MSW is required or preferred;
- Problems with retaining MSWs from outside the region that needed to adjust to a rural and/or "Midwest" culture in terms of practice and acculturation;
- Lack of access into the only MSW program in Indiana (at that time) because of the large application pool;
- Distance and cost factors which made it difficult for agency staff to obtain MSWs; and
- Lack of easy access and high costs related to MSW programs in surrounding states.

The Social Work Department, with support from the university, undertook a series of feasibility studies to confirm and document the need for the MSW program. All data clearly supported the need for the degree, not only in the university service area, but also in the state of Indiana. As a result, the MSW degree was approved by the state of Indiana in 1991. From 1991 to 1994, the USI Social Work Department began active development of the curriculum and degree requirements, including program mission, goals, objectives, and outcomes. During the 1993 Indiana State Legislative Session, USI was given a special increase in funding starting in 1993, with the understanding that a part of the money would go to the development of an MSW program at the University. In 1993, two directors from other MSW programs were hired to assist in the development of the USI MSW degree program.

In the summer of 1994, the department faculty was increased to four members, with a fifth faculty member added in January of 1995. A sixth faculty member was added in August of 1996, dedicated to the MSW program. The first admitting MSW class in the fall of 1994 totaled fifty-seven (57) students. Based on data collected during the MSW program feasibility study, the program was designed to meet the needs of students who were not undergraduate social work majors (non-BSW) and students who graduated from accredited undergraduate social work programs (advanced standing). In addition, a full- and part-time course of study was provided for both non-BSW and advanced standing students.

The generalist practice model and systems perspective were selected for the Social Work's theoretical underpinnings, and a clinical concentration at the MSW level was selected as the focus for advanced study. These decisions were based on the following rationale:

- The approach would provide departmental continuity because the generalist practice model and systems perspective were already the foundation for the USI accredited BSW program;
- Data collected from area agencies during the feasibility study documented the need for foundational skills in the generalist problem solving process and clinical skills to practice in are agencies as an effective clinical social worker; and
- The philosophical base and orientation of the Social Work faculty fit this approach.

The choice of the initial clinical concentration was relatively easy, considering the long-term needs within the region. After careful consideration of various perspectives, the faculty unanimously selected the systems perspective as the theoretical base for the program. Social work is framed by a person-in-environment perspective. The systems perspective is clearly an orientation to practice that focuses attention on person-in-environment transactions and their potential for either enhancing or diminishing and individual's well-being and capacity to have needs met. Consistent with this theoretical orientation in the foundation year, the clinical social work content in the concentration year focuses upon best practices in work with individuals, families, groups, and organizations. The MSW program received its initial accreditation in July 1998, retroactive to the graduating class of 1995. Since that time, the faculty has continued to

review and refine the curriculum, mission, goals, and objectives of the MSW program to meet the social service educational needs of Indiana and the tristate region.

In the fall of 2019, a certificate in Addictions was added. The Online Advanced Studies in Addiction Science (OASAS) was designed for current MSW students and for individuals who hold a graduate degree in Social Work or a related field who worked in the field of addictions to address the need in the community for clinically trained addictions specialists.

Social Work Department Mission Statement

The Social Work Department prepares students for competency-driven practice focused on evolving issues in the community.

Council on Social Work Education

The Social Work curriculum has been developed based on the guidelines provided in the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) Curriculum Policy Statement. The learning objectives are framed by the Nine Competencies in the *CSWE Education Policy and Accreditation Standards, 2022* (<https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/94471c42-13b8-493b-9041-b30f48533d64/2022-EPAS.pdf>).

Generalist Field Placement (BSW I & II, and MSW I)

The Generalist Foundation Field Placement is designed so that students can demonstrate the Competencies of social work practice at the generalist level. Social work roles typically of generalist practice include case manager, advocate, broker, educator, community organizer, group worker, and individual counselor. Assigned tasks often include preparing psychological histories, developing service plans, and implementing broad based interventions congruent with the multi-variant client's needs.

Generalist practice is broadly defined. The parameters for practice are usually determined by the identified client needs, the mission and function of the agency, and level of training and skill of the student. The student works under supervision and relates to the client and delivers services in ways which convey respect while honoring and promoting the dignity of the clients served. Skills expected include the ability to communicate empathy, genuineness, and a positive regard when listening and interviewing, and the ability to utilize the planned change process and problem-solving strategies in all phases of work with the client: engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation. It is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods based on scientific inquiry and best practices. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.

Generalist Social Work Competencies and Behaviors (BSW I, II & MSW I)

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and

response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

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

Competency 5: Engage in Policy and Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects well-being, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

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

Specialized Practice Information **Clinical MSW II**

The specialized track for the USI MSW program is clinical. It builds on the foundation of generalist curriculum. All MSW students complete a specialized field practicum. The clinical placement provides agency-based opportunities for clinical social work practice. The educational focus in the practicum is in providing students with opportunities to demonstrate clinical Competencies at the advanced level of social work practice. Typically, field agencies offer programs in specialized practice areas defined by a problem, such as substance abuse; or a population, such as children and adolescents at risk; or practice areas defined as health, mental health, or school social work. The agency program may be even more narrowly defined by a highly specialized context, such as the use of a particular intervention model, e. g., the 12 Step Model in chemical dependency programs or a research role. The specialized practicum is grounded in the liberal arts, the generalist foundation, and the values that distinguish social work as a profession. The clinical practicum is advanced, reflecting the specialized knowledge, skills, and values of an advanced practitioner whose training which is both specialized and rigorous in its demands for practice grounded in sound science, technical skill, and the art of therapeutic practice. MSW II field placements provide a mix of generalist and clinical activities, with the emphasis on the student developing therapeutic styles with clients while acquiring expertise within the specialization offered by the field agency. The ratio of generalist and clinical activities vary, depending upon the professional developmental needs of the individual student and the mission of the agency.

Clinical Field Placement (MSW II)

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the

distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- a) make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
- b) demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- c) use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;
- d) use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior;
- e) practices personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development; and
- f) demonstrates therapeutic relationships within the person-in-environment perspective.

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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices

throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- a) advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels;
- b) engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice;
- c) utilizes a social justice perspective when working with individuals, families and groups; and
- d) analyzes the impact of policies on individuals, families, and groups.

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

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

- a) demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels;
- b) demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences;
- c) adapt services to effectively respond to client identity and preferences;
- d) recognize and address institutional disparity; and
- e) engage in self-reflection related to ADEI.

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

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

- a) apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs;
- b) identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work;
- c) apply research findings to evaluate clinical practice effectiveness and/or outcomes; and
- d) apply evidence-based practice in clinical assessment and intervention with clients.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy and Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects well-being, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

- a) use social justice, anti-resist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services;
- b) apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advance human rights and social racial, economic, and environmental justice;
- c) analyze implications of policies & policy change in the lives of clients; and
- d) advocate for policies that advance social and economic well-being in practice settings.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- a) apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies;
- b) use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies;
- c) develop a culturally responsive therapeutic relationship; and
- d) establish a relationship that encourages clients to be equal participants throughout the treatment process.

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger

practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

- a) apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies;
- b) demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan;
- c) apply multidimensional assessment methodologies; and
- d) apply appropriate intervention strategies based on continuous clinical assessment.

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

- a) engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals;
- b) incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies;
- c) utilize appropriate theoretical model based on client needs and best available research; and
- d) applies knowledge of multiple intervention strategies.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of

human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- a) select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- b) critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- c) evaluate clinical practice effectiveness and outcomes; and
- d) applies evidence-based research to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery.

THE FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM: AN OVERVIEW

Philosophy and Purpose of Field Education

CSWE describe field education as the “signature pedagogy” for social work education. Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners of the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline – to think, to preform, and to act ethically and with integrity, field education is the signature pedagogy for social work.

The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept 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 the professional practice.

The field instruction sequence in the USI curriculum is designed to give students generalist (BSW I, II and MSW I) and clinical (MSW II) field experiences within an agency, community or government setting under supervision of experienced social workers and in a class-based seminar course led by an experienced faculty field liaison. The faculty field liaison conducts the field seminar and works closely with the student and field instructors to ensure the student has opportunities to practice in all areas of social work, is being coached, mentored, and supervised by the field instructor and or task supervisor. The faculty field liaison also conducts at least two evaluations and is available to the student and field instructor throughout the course of the time the student is in field. Through this experiential model, students can learn to use themselves and their professional generalist and clinical knowledge, skills, and values in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practice setting, fostering the implementation of evidence-informed practice.

The field education experience occurs within an agency, social service organization or community setting under supervision of an experienced Social Worker. Experiential in nature,

the varied arenas afford practical experience where students can learn to use themselves and their skills working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The element of supervision from a seasoned social worker provides learning activities and work assignments that are individualized for the student. Individualized student learning plans are important for numerous reasons. In addition to the activities of the individual student experience in the agency, students have additional activities in the field seminar class which reinforces the competencies and behaviors. Most importantly they can focus on the specific educational needs of the student and create realistically attainable experiences. Students therefore gain an understanding of the problems and needs of the population with whom the agency works. This creates an environment that helps develop skills in the practice of social work interventions. Additionally, during the process students acquire firsthand knowledge of the agency functions, and resources, establishing networks of various community agencies.

The field experiences allow students to apply and integrate knowledge gained from the classroom into real life situations. Thus, field education is a highly valued component of the USI Social Work curriculum, as it is recognized that field placement provides a level of learning that cannot be duplicated in the classroom.

Approved potential field placements are established through a formalized arrangement between the University and a community based social service agency. The arrangement is formalized in a written affiliation agreement that is signed by appropriate administrative personnel from both facilities. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3: Signature Pedagogy - Field Education)

Structure of Field Placement Curriculum:

Generalist students (BSW I, II and MSW I) are required to complete the generalist field placement under supervision of an experienced social worker. This foundation field placement occurs after the foundation courses have been successfully completed. The USI field education model is a “concurrent” model; that is, student take classroom courses concurrently with their field placement. Field Education works with community partners to ensure social work students have opportunities to develop competencies with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.1 - Field Education)

BSW students complete at least 450 hours of generalist field education over two (2) semesters, typically, fall and spring. MSW I (generalist) students complete at least 425 hours of field education over one (1) semester. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.3 - Field Education)

Clinical students (MSW II) are required to complete a clinical field placement that builds upon the field experience and classroom curriculum. The USI field education model is a “concurrent” model; that is, students take classroom courses concurrently with their field placement. Field Education works with community partners to ensure social work students have opportunities to develop competencies with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Clinical students complete at least 600 hours of field education over fall and spring semesters (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.3: Field Education)

Administrative Organization of Field Education

The administration of all field education is primarily the responsibility of the Director of Field Education. The BSW and MSW Program Directors review the academic files of all students to determine if they meet eligibility requirements for field placement. The Program Directors provide a list of students eligible for field to the director of field education. All students deemed eligible for field placement are required to attend a mandatory field placement meeting to begin the application and interview process for field placement.

Faculty members who teach the field seminar courses taken concurrently with field placement also serve as the *faculty field liaisons* to the field placement agencies in which their students are placed. This model provides a designated faculty member with whom each field agency will interact to ensure consistency in the relationship between the program and the practice community.

An agency-based supervisor serves as the “field instructor” to the student in placement. The field instructor has primary responsibility for the assignment and oversight of the student’s educational activities in the agency. The design of the practicum is guided by the educational objectives as defined by the department, an individualized student-learning plan, consultation with the faculty liaison and policies and procedures as outlined in the Field Manual. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4: Field Education)

The duties of the field education staff are described in the Section, *Field Education Personnel and Student Responsibilities* of this manual. Additionally, the faculty liaisons also are part of the *field committee*, an advisory group to the director of field education. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4: Field Education)

In addition to informal feedback from social service agency personnel and students, agency representatives serve on the social work department of advisory board and/or ad hoc field advisory committees, and the field committee providing guidance concerning the field education program.

Field Education Roles and Responsibilities

Director of Field Education – Roles and Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for the operation of the field program rests with the Director of Field Education. Field education policy and procedures are governed by the standards for field education established by CSWE and the USI social work faculty and administration. While field education activities may be delegated to other faculty directly involved with field education, chief responsibility for program development and assessment of field education remains with the director of field education. The field committee provides primary consultation to the

Director of Field Education. The director of field education provides orientation, field instructor training, and continuing dialogue with field education settings and field instructors.

Field Education works within the established field education policy and procedures, under the supervision of the Director of Field Education and is responsible for placement of all field students for their generalist (BW I, II and MSW I) and clinical (MSW II) placements.

Responsibilities include:

1. Assessing the readiness of students;
2. Assuring that the student has met all criteria for admission to field education;
3. Meeting with students to ascertain their areas of interest;
4. Verifying qualifications of field instructors;
5. Scheduling and implementing orientation and training of students, field instructors and field liaisons;
6. Maintaining field records, and
7. Communicating with seminar instructors, field liaisons, and community agencies.

Activities may be delegated to another faculty member directly involved with field education. Field education also responsible for field education development. The faculty field liaisons will provide consultation to the director of field education pertaining to field students.

Field Education provides orientations for students coming into field, field instructor training at the beginning of each year, and an ongoing dialogue with field education settings and field instructors. (CSWE Accreditation standard 3.3.5 - Field Education)

Responsibilities of the Director of Field Education include coordination of placement activities with faculty field liaisons, field instructors, and other agency representatives. The Director of Field Education works with the faculty field liaisons, who have the most direct personal contact with field agency personnel, providing support through technical assistance and mutual consultation to students and field agency personnel. The Director of Field Education ensures that support is provided to field practicum instructors in the following ways:

1. Offering orientation and training to newly active field instructors,
2. Offering periodic continuing education opportunities to all active field instructors,
3. Providing information about the curriculum,
4. Providing clear practice and evaluation goals for individual students,

5. Providing electronic copies of the field manual, and
6. Sharing pertinent information about practicum students when congruent to prudent academic practice. (Information about practicum students considered “pertinent” in this context would be limited to confirmation of the student’s academic eligibility to enter the field placement and information about prior academic performance if relevant to field placement. Such information is shared only for the purpose of acquiring and implementing educational field experiences and supervision designed to address the individualized professional development needs of the student. This information would be shared on condition of a signed formal authorization of release by the student.

The director shall ensure that support is provided to field practicum students by selection of field placements based upon the objectives of the educational program and the learning needs of students, maintaining seminar courses concurrent with field placement which provide structured learning opportunities that enable students to compare their practice experiences, integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom and expand knowledge beyond the scope of their practicum setting. As part of the advising process related to the selection of field placement, students are provided access to descriptive field agency files and content of the field manual for review.

Overall responsibility for the operation of the field program rests with the Director of Field Education. Field education policy and procedures shall be governed by the standards for field education established by CSWE and the USI social work department administration and faculty.

Field education provides orientations for students coming into field, field instructor training/orientation each year, and an ongoing dialogue with field education settings and field instructors. (CSWE Accreditation standard 3.3.5 - Field Education)

Additional duties for Field Education under the supervision of the Director of Field Education include developing policy guidelines for the administration of field, maintaining appropriate files, and obtaining consultation or feedback from faculty, students, and field agency representatives regarding field education. This will be done through survey instruments, personal contact, and meetings with the faculty field liaisons, Field Committee, Advisory Board, or other ad hoc groups. (CSWE Accreditation standard 3.3.5 - Field Education)

Policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field settings, placing, and monitoring students, maintaining field liaison contacts, and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness are congruent with the program’s competencies. (CSWE Accreditation standard 3.3.5 - Field Education)

Criteria for Selection of Field Agencies

The director of field education ensures the agency's philosophy is compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession.

The director of field education seeks additional appropriate field settings for a growing program. Input is sought from social work students, social work field liaisons, faculty, and the Social Work Advisory Council. In addition to the above mentioned, we also have agencies who contact the department wishing to become an affiliated agency. Each new setting is evaluated to determine appropriateness for social work education, i.e.; what type of work does the agency do, do they have social workers on staff, are the social workers licensed, do the social workers have the experience to supervise students. Once an agency is vetted, the appropriate level of placement is determined (generalist, clinical or both), and new agency personnel receive orientation and training on supervision, social work competencies, student learning plans (SLPs), field handbook, student roles, use of task supervisors, what to do when problems arise, and our responsibility for gatekeeping. Current agencies are monitored to ensure students are receiving appropriate supervision, and training and the safety of students in current field settings.

Faculty field liaisons are in communication with personnel and agencies several times each semester and are also the "eyes and ears" of USI field education. *Faculty field liaisons (seminar leaders) conduct site visits with the field instructors and students to assess midterm and final student performance. In addition to student assessments, field liaisons inquire into any agency changes and inform them of program changes or foci (e.g. addressing an emerging issue among students or a collective issue raised from field seminars). The site visits can be conducted electronically via Zoom, Skype, or other electronic means. In the event the faculty field liaison has a cause for concern, the liaison attempts to correct the situation and notifies the director of field education. Should agencies need training on supervising students, or student safety, there is a training module under Field Education of the social work web site (<https://www.usi.edu/liberal-arts/social-work/field-education>).

Approval of community social service agencies is based upon the agency's ability to provide learning experiences congruent with the mission, goals, and objectives of the social work program, to provide competency-based field instruction and a clear articulation of student learning opportunities within the agency. The program assists the agencies in assessing and documenting their abilities to meet these criteria through mutual discussion during the agency selection process and uses of such instruments as the Field Placement Agency Profile, university/agency affiliation agreement and other forms and procedures,— Field Education Personnel and Student Responsibilities.

Agencies are required to identify learning activities, which provide social work experiences correlated to the competencies and affiliated behaviors. It is preferred that field placement agencies operate under an accrediting or oversight body as evidence of their on-going review in regard to ethical and professional standards. In those instances, in which an agency does not

meet those criteria, particular attention is given to the credentials of the individual professional staff, including licensure status and participation in continuing education activities.

Agencies also are required to demonstrate support for the professional education process itself by offering a qualified agency-based field supervisor and adjusting work assignments to permit him or her adequate time to meet the responsibilities of a field instructor which includes developing and implementing the student's field placement and providing the student regular access to supervision. Agencies also are expected to support and encourage the participation of field supervisors in orientation and training programs offered to field instructors through the social work department.

The Director of Field Education has responsibility for determining if agencies meet the eligibility criteria for approval as a field placement agency and for maintaining an agency file, which includes the agency profile, affiliation agreement, the field instructor's credentials or other documentation supporting that eligibility. It is the responsibility of the agency to complete and update these documents when requested. Students are given access to agencies which have an affiliation agreement with the university. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

Agency Roles and Responsibilities

Agencies are not obligated to accept students every semester. It is not unusual for changes in the organization or personnel, or even the desire for a respite to prompt an agency to not accept any students at a given time. Agencies also have the right to not accept an individual student, based upon their assessment after reviewing the student's resume and/or as a result of the pre-placement interview. Additionally, an agency may request to be removed from the list of approved agencies, just as the social work department may remove the agency from the list should it no longer meet the criteria as an approved agency. Agencies located more than one-hour driving distance from the campus of the university are utilized as required, with approval decided on a case-by-case assessment. Below is a summary list of field agency responsibilities:

1. Complete the agency application forms;
2. Provide services representative of generalist social work for the Generalist Field Practicums (BSW I, II and MSW I) and clinical social work for the Clinical Field Practicum II (MSW II);
3. Preferably, have a licensed (LBSW, LSW for generalist and LCSW for clinical) social work staff member with the recommended practice experience who can serve as the agency field instructor;
4. Provide time for weekly supervision sessions between the field instructor and the student at least one time weekly for one hour;

5. Insure regular ongoing supervision of the student, including pre-scheduled conferences equivalent to a minimum of one hour per week, and;
6. Be committed to the values and ethics of the profession of social work.

Note: if an agency meets all criteria except for having a qualified social worker on staff, the social work faculty can provide supervision, with the agency providing task supervision. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

Placing and Monitoring Students

Students attend the Field Application 101 orientation, and later before they begin their field practicum, they attend a Field Orientation. Students complete and submit the *Application to Field* in the semester before they are eligible to begin their placement. Students are given access to our electronic Field Management System, TEVERA, where they complete their application, view, and select agencies with an agreement with the USI social work program. Students interview with the agency and, if selected, the agency signs a *Field Instructor Guideline Form*, housed, and submitted in TEVERA. The student and agency work out a schedule for the internship. Students also are required to participate in a field seminar which runs concurrently with the field placement. Seminar faculty liaisons monitor and support student learning and help students link the tasks and activities of their field placements with the social work competencies. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.5- Field Education)

The USI field manuals have a section called *Problem Solving, Corrective Action and Termination Procedures in Field Placement*. This section outlines the problem-solving process for students, liaisons, and agencies. When students are in the agency, the faculty field liaison has the first level of monitoring the student. The liaison meets with the student in the field seminar and conducts midterm and final evaluations with the student and the agency field instructor. At any point during the internship if a student has a concern, he/she can bring this to the field liaison's attention who, if the situation warrants, may involve the director of field education. If the agency has a concern with a student and or performance, they will report to the faculty field liaison who may involve the director of field education if the situation warrants.

Student Safety

Students are trained in safety precautions prior to beginning their field. Safety is also covered in the seminar class and many of our agencies provide safety training to students. This presentation is also located on our website and is available for agencies to utilize. <https://www.usi.edu/liberal-arts/social-work/field-education> (Accreditation Standard 3.3.5- Field Education)

Evaluating Student Learning

This is a continual feedback loop. Field Education, under the direction of the Director of Field Education, conducts a training at least once per year with agency field instructors/supervisors. (This training is conducted through zoom, is recorded, and placed on our website (<https://www.usi.edu/liberal-arts/social-work/field-education>). In the workshop/training, expectations of the agency and supervision are explained. The Director of Field Education evaluates the agency for field appropriateness, and the faculty field liaison conducts evaluations at midterm and final with the student and agency field instructor. Students also report on the learning opportunities the agency provides, the supervision received, and the topics covered in the setting. They are evaluated on the CSWE competencies throughout the practicum experience. In the field seminar course, the faculty field liaison helps the students' link the tasks and activities they are completing in the agency with the competencies, so students can identify, describe, apply, compare, appraise, and compose a learning plan which incorporates the competencies and behaviors of social work practice. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.5- Field Education)

Field Setting Effectiveness

Field education evaluates effectiveness and appropriateness of each location by seeking feedback from students and from faculty field liaisons. Faculty field liaisons are in direct contact with the agencies, programs, and field instructors. They tend to be the *eyes and ears* of field education and the social work program. We also utilize the learning plans to see what types of goals, objectives, and experiences students have had in the agency settings. For each level of placement (generalist or clinical), the field office ensures that students are performing appropriate tasks for that level placement. If a setting is not allowing appropriate level experiences, we work with them to improve and to provide the appropriate level of tasks and activities if possible. We have also discontinued placing students if the setting is not appropriate for the level of internship. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

Selection of Field Instructors

USI field education maintains ongoing contact with field agencies and supervisors in those settings. Field Education assesses student learning and field setting effectiveness in four ways: affiliation agreement approvals and reviews, field agency survey, onsite field visits, and ongoing field instructor trainings. Field Education conducts an annual Training for Field Instructors which is held via zoom, recorded, and placed on our web site. Which can be accessed by individuals field instructors and/or agencies throughout the year. <https://www.usi.edu/liberal-arts/social-work/field-education>. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

Formal Affiliation Agreements are established and reviewed by the director of Field Education, USI Risk Management, and chair of the social work department every three years, negotiated in face-to-face meetings, emails and telephone calls. The director of field explores agency characteristics and resources, changes of an agreement renewal, and their goodness-of-fit with the USI, social work department, BSW/MSW programs missions and goals.

Agency based field instructors approved to supervise social work students in field placement are required to possess the appropriate degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and have a minimum of two years post-graduation social work experience. The preference of our clinical placements is that the field instructor will also be appropriately licensed. Other criteria taken into consideration include length and level of their practice experience in generalist or clinical practice and expertise in the student's focus area or specialization. In all cases, the credentials of the field instructor and the mission of the agency are expected to be compatible with the social work program mission and goals. In any case in which the field instructor does not hold a social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program, the field liaison or director of field education assesses if there are specific areas that require additional faculty involvement to ensure that a social work focus, and identification are sustained. It is important that field instructors have adequate practice experience, at least two years post-graduation. In rare situations when a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree or does not have the required experience, the program assumes responsibility for providing the social work perspective. This is accomplished by the faculty field liaison assuming the responsibility to ensure the social work perspective. Another way in which this may be accomplished, a social worker with the appropriate degree, experience and/or license from outside the agency will provide supervision, and in many cases, it is a USI social work faculty member who accepts the responsibility. (Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

In exceptional cases, a professional who holds a doctoral or master's degree in a related discipline to social work may serve as a field instructor. To be approved, the non-social work professional must:

1. Hold at least a master's or doctoral degree in a related field,
2. Be employed in a program providing services and educational opportunities congruent with the educational objectives of the MSW program and the educational needs of the student,
3. Provide evidence of a high level of expertise, as reflected in their professional training and experience,
4. A commitment to ethical practice, and
5. Values and respects social work as a peer discipline.

Approval for field non-social work instructors is evaluated by the director of field education on a case-by-case basis. These exceptions will most often be made when the educational opportunities provided by the agency and field instructor are not available to the student in a similar agency under the direct supervision of a professional holding a degree in social work. Agency field instructors from disciplines other than social work are provided a copy of the NASW Code of Ethics. In most cases, it is a USI social work faculty member who accepts the responsibility. The non-social worker serves as a task instructor.

When approving field instructors, the program also assesses prior student supervisory experience and evidence of professional development, e.g. certifications, continuing education programs, in particular those offered through the USI social work department. Field instructors also are expected to highly value field education, have an affinity for working with students, receive gratification from the supervisory development activities, and make a personal commitment to be an agency field instructor. The Director of field education keeps on file resumes and other credentials as evidence that the criteria for approval as a field instructor have been met. (CSWE Accreditation Standard B3.3.6- Field Education) and (CSWE Accreditation Standard M3.3.6- Field Education)

Roles & Responsibilities of Field Instructors

The focus of the field experience is the professional education and development of social work students. The primary role of the field instructor is that of teacher. The field instructor assesses the professional education and development needs of the student, arranges learning experiences to meet those needs and master the nine competencies and affiliated behaviors, and provides on-going student supervision.

A basic requirement for assuming field instruction responsibilities is the agency's adjustment of the individual staff member's work assignments to permit sufficient time to develop and implement the student's field practicum. The field practicum plan is expected to give the student regular access to the field instructor. At a minimum, formal supervisory conference time is expected to be equivalent to at least one hour per week. Other specific responsibilities of the field instructor include providing consultation to the student in the development of an individualized student learning plan (SLP), completion of a formal mid-term and final evaluation of the student's competency-based performance, meeting with the faculty field liaison at mid-term and the end of the term to review the student progress and verifying completion of required hours. Field instructors participate in orientation or other continuing education programs offered by USI and the department of social work.

Roles & Responsibilities include:

1. Attend the orientation workshop for new field instructors as appropriate;
2. Provide the student with an orientation to the agency;

3. Provide regular and consistent supervision, including pre-scheduled conferences equivalent to one hour per week;
4. Assist the student obtaining information needed to complete field related assignments, including seminar assignments, when appropriate;
5. Assist the student in the development of the individualized learning plan;
6. Assess the quality of the student's performance in field and complete the mid-term and final evaluation instruments provided by the school and review the evaluations with the student. While an evaluation in a narrative form is not required, they are highly valued, and as a qualitative assessment often more effectively individualizes the report. Including a narrative appraisal is optional;
7. Participate in conferences with the Faculty Field Liaison and the student in conjunction with your evaluation of the student's performance, or otherwise as appropriate;
8. Consult with the faculty liaison whenever such contact might be of benefit to you or the student;
9. Contact the faculty liaison whenever concerns emerge in regard to the student's performance in field, and;
10. Assure adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

Involvement of "Task" Supervisors

The field instructor may arrange for other professional staff to provide learning experiences for the student in placement. This allows the field instructor to draw on the experience or expertise of colleagues in facilitating student learning. On those occasions when the field instructor delegates task supervision responsibilities to another professional, it is the field instructor's responsibility to coordinate the learning experience and obtain input from the task supervisor when evaluating the student's performance. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

Faculty Field Liaison Roles and Responsibilities

The faculty member serving as liaison to the field agency provides consultation and support to the field instructor and the student for the purpose of facilitating the educational process. Functions of the field liaison include linkage, mediation, and monitoring. These functions are carried out through meetings and other contacts with the field instructor and student. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.5- Field Education)

The general expectation is that the field liaison will visit or utilize acceptable conferences with the agency a minimum of two times during the practicum. Focus of the meetings might include

review of the student's individual learning objectives and a review of the student's evaluations at mid-term and end of practicum. The field liaison is also the field seminar instructor and has regular contact with the field student. The seminar course is spread out over the entire practicum placement and meets in-person, hybrid, or synchronous on-line formats with the students enrolled in seminar.

Other specific responsibilities of the faculty field liaison include:

1. Providing feedback in regard to the individual learning plan developed by the student in consultation with the field instructor;
2. Attending meetings or workshops relative to the operation of the field program;
3. Providing first line mediation and consultation to the field instructor and student regarding field placement issues or problems;
4. Informing the director of field education of field placement progress, and;
5. Assigning the grade for the field placement.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations in Field

A primary expectation of students in field placement is that they take the role of a learner actively involved in their own professional education and development. Specific requirements to assist and guide students in the field education process include:

1. Practice competency objectives for social work field education, which are identified in the student learning plan (SLP) and the Field Manual;
2. Students are required to work with their faculty field liaison in seminar and agency field instructors to write their student learning plan (SLP) which frames CSWE Competencies;
3. Students are required to attend a field seminar course, which includes additional assignments designed to assist them in integrating knowledge from their courses with their field experience and performance, and;
4. Students are required to meet the specified number of field practicum hours. The Social Work Generalist Practicum (BSW I, II) requires 450 hours, (MSW I) requires 425 hours, and the clinical (MSW II) Social Work Practicum II requires 600 hours. The field instructor will be asked to verify this requirement has been met.

Other expectation and requirements of students in field placement include that students are to:

1. Conduct themselves in a professional manner in relation to clients, their field instructor, and other agency staff and community colleagues;
2. Abide by agency personnel and program policies as well as USI and social work department policies governing students;
3. Actively participate in his or her learning experience through self-assessment of learning needs, professional development, personal strengths, and professional potential, and;
4. Work within the framework of agency and faculty supervision.

(CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.4- Field Education)

Compensating Students for Travel

Agencies are expected to compensate students for the use of their own personal vehicles for any travel directly related to agency work. Such compensation should be given at the same rate paid to full-time staff. Agencies are not required to compensate students for travel from or to their home.

Conference Attendance Students
may be permitted to attend professional conferences or workshops and count those hours toward field. While the social work department is supportive of student attendance in continuing education programs, approval of attendance in lieu of field is at the discretion of the field instructor and may be contingent on the needs of the agency.

Employment Concurrent/Separate from Field Placement

Field Education is the signature pedagogy of social work education. Students develop professional presence and practices and integrate skills and theories of the social work curriculum in their practice settings.

Students seeking an employment-based placement must engage in new learning activities and must be able to demonstrate the competencies and practices commiserate with the identified level of practice (generalist or clinical) and must engage in activities that directly link to the competencies of Social Work Education.

Students must be employed at the agency for a minimum of one year, be in good standing, and past any probationary period to be eligible for an employment- based placement.

Agencies must be willing to engage in an articulation agreement with the university and must be willing to separate work supervision from field practicum supervision.

Students must complete a request for an Employment Based Placement application, which must be signed by the agency representative and approved by the Director of Field Education. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.7- Field Education)

It is recognized there may be exceptions to the process outlined above based on student and/or organizational needs. The process as outlined is not intended to rule out viable field placement options that meet the CSWE standards.

To protect the integrity of the learning process, protect the student from a hazardous overload, including an undue professional liability risk, and protect clients served by students, it is recommended that students limit the number of hours they are employed outside of field practicum to 25 hours or less per week during the time they are completing their field practicum. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.3- Field Education)

Hours

The Generalist Social Work Practicum (BSW I and II) requires at least 450 hours, (MSW I) require at least 425 hours. The clinical Social Work Practicum II (MSW II) requires at least 600 hours. Student are permitted up to 10% of the total hours to be devoted to research and observation for the agency/internship benefit.

BSW I (generalist)	150 hours
BSW II (generalist)	300 hours
MSW I (generalist)	425 hours
MSW II (clinical)	600 hours

MSW II students may also want to pursue a certificate in addictions, in which case, students must complete 700 clinical clock hours, of which 280 must be face-to-face.

<https://www.usi.edu/online-learning/online-programs/online-advanced-studies-in-addiction-science>

Requests for Agency Field Placement during Non-Traditional Hours

Most agencies only have professional staff present during traditional business hours. Therefore, most placements for social work students are during traditional business hours and days. Agencies, which are open during non-traditional hours, may not be able to provide learning activities or supervision which fulfills the educational objectives of the social work program. The field office cannot guarantee the availability of a field placement during non-traditional hours (nights and weekends).

Part-time students are often employed full-time and wish to continue to be employed full-time during their field placement. Students are advised upon admission to plan for making accommodations, so they can meet the demands of field placement. The recommendation is made out of concern for students and clients as well as because the availability of non-traditional hours is extremely limited.

Requests for Field Placements with Agencies Who Do Not Have an Affiliation Agreement with the Social Work Program

All Social Work students must complete required Field Placements with qualified Social Workers (Agency Field Instructors).

Students who are requesting Field Placements with agencies who do not have a current articulation agreement with the University of Southern Indiana Social Work program, must **secure a placement at least one month prior** to the beginning of the semester in which they are eligible for field education. In some instances, field placements may be completed in the student's own community.

All Agency, Agency Field Instructor, and any related **paperwork must be finalized one month prior** to beginning field placements. The student is responsible for identifying appropriate agencies and agency field instructors in their own community. Agency field instructors may not be relatives or in a relationship (past or present) with the student.

Approval of selected agencies and agency field instructors must be obtained from the Director of Field Education **at least one month prior to** beginning the field placement. A completed written agreement with the agency (Articulation Agreement and any related paperwork) is **required one month prior to** initiating the field placement experiences. All agency field instructors should be Licensed Social Workers in the student's specialty track. (example: LBSW or LSW for generalist, LCSW for clinical).

Some students may encounter difficulty obtaining a field placement for completing required field placements. We will work with you to obtain an appropriate level placement; however, in identifying an agency, students may need to travel to reach this field placement opportunity.

1. Students must work closely with the director of field education to ensure new agencies are appropriate for the level of social work education.

for example: an agency that provides case management services for students in BSW I & II, and MSW I field placements. Or an agency that provides clinical mental health and/or substance abuse treatment for students in the MSW II field placement.

2. Send to us a list of organizations you have contacted. We will then not duplicate your efforts.
3. Continue to communicate with us. Should you find a placement, please be sure to let us know of your success.
4. Students must ensure the field instructor is a social worker with the appropriate level of education, experience, and license.
5. All affiliation agreements and other related paperwork must be agreed upon and signed by both the University of Southern Indiana and the agency **one month prior to** a student beginning his/her field placement.

PLEASE NOTE! THIS CAN BE A LENGTHY PROCESS AND MAY TAKE SEVERAL MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

THE FIELD EDUCATION PROCESS

Student Eligibility for Field Placements

To be approved to enter *Social Work Practicums* students must meet several requirements:

BSW Requirements

- A. Officially admitted to the Social Work program and be in good standing.
- B. Maintain a minimum 2.75 overall GPA and 2.75 GPA in the major on a 4.0 scale.
- C. All major social work courses taken after admission into the BSW program must have a minimum grade of C+.
- D. Completed a minimum of 90 college credit-hours.
- E. Completion of all requirements, achieved by the final summer session immediately preceding entering Practicum I (SOCW 401).
- F. Have the consent of the Director of Field Education in consultation of the Director of the BSW program.

MSW Requirements:

- A. Officially admitted to the Master of Social work Program and be in good standing.

- B. Maintain a minimum 3.00 overall GPA.
- C. Completion of all noted requirements.
- D. Maintained academic and professional standards as required in MSW I Placement (for non-BSW MSW students).
- E. Maintained academic and professional standards as required in the MSW II Placement (for all students).
- F. Have the consent of the director of field education in consultation with the director of the MSW program.

Student applicants proceed through a series of defined steps, requiring specific forms and materials (listed in chronological order):

1. **Field Application 101** – In the semester before students are eligible for field placement students attend a field application information session (Field Application 101), that reviews field criterion, application procedures, forms and timelines, agency assignment practices, *NASW Code of Ethics*, and expected professional image and behaviors (e.g. dress, written and verbal communication, online reputation, alcohol usage). USI also strongly recommends that students get professional liability insurance through the National Association of Social Work (NASW) as more and more agencies are requiring such coverage for students. Shortly after this session, students can attend training on resumes and job interview skills conducted by USI's Career Services.
2. **Application for Field Placement** – Eligible students submit a formal *Application to Field Form* in addition to a professional resume, HIPPA and OSHA certification, confirmation of valid national and local background checks and an authorization of *Release of Information* statement signed by the student allowing the field office to release field specific information to possible field agencies. All students are required to have national and local criminal background checks completed and submitted prior to being placed in an agency. Instructions for completion of both criminal background checks will be provided by the director of field education at the Field Placement Process session. Lists of approved agencies and descriptive materials are made available to students for review through our electronic field management system TEVERA. We also strongly recommend that student get professional liability insurance through NASW as more and more agencies are requiring it for student placement.
3. **Agency Placement** - Field Education reviews the student's complete application to field placement and required materials to assess the individual student's field education needs. The application includes an authorization of "release of information" statement

to be signed by the student. Past professional experience, education, agency and population interest, student preferences, career goals, and program requirements are reviewed and correlated to the available field agencies.

4. **Field Agencies Informed**– The field office contacts agencies of prospective student field placements, informing them of the process schedule and when to anticipate hearing from students who seek placement. They are asked to inform the director of field immediately if it is not feasible for them to accommodate a student for the upcoming semester.
5. **Student Contact with the Agency** – Once the field office has received all required documents and field agencies have agreed to interview, students are advised to send their resume and a cover letter to the prospective field instructor at their assigned agency. The cover letter should inform the agency personnel of the student’s desire for a field placement, the reasons for that interest, and intent to follow-up with a phone call within two business days asking to schedule an interview. Any exceptions to this process will be indicated to the student. Students are not to contact agencies unless authorized by the field office.
6. **Field Agency Interview & Report** – The student will be interviewed in the prospective agency by the field instructor and/or other agency personnel. Upon completion of that interview, the student contacts the Director of Field Education by e-mail, telephone, or a brief face-to-face visit and inform him or her of the outcome of the interview.
7. **Confirmation of Field Placement** – The *Field Instructor Guideline Form*, is sent to the agency via TEVERA. which includes the date of the orientation for new field instructors and other information relative to the field placement such as hours required and dates for the placement. [Should the placement not be available to the student for any reason the field office will pursue the next agency on the student interest from and repeat steps 4 through 7 in reference to an additional agency placement.]
8. **Clarifying Starting Date and Schedule Negotiation** – Students are advised to contact their field instructor no later than the week preceding the beginning of the placement to clarify when, where, and with whom they will report for their first day of placement. Students negotiate a weekly/hourly schedule with their field instructor by the end of the first week in placement that accommodates their class schedule and the agency’s needs or recommendations for their optimal educational experience in that setting. It is the student responsibility to maintain the agreed upon schedule. **[Students must continue through the end of the semester even if the required number of hours has been met prior to the end of the semester.]**
9. **Field Orientation** – A mandatory student *Orientation to Field Education* will be provided under the direction of the Director of Field Education prior to the start of the semester in which the student will be in field. This meeting takes place no later than their first

field seminar class. This orientation session reviews keeping to established time schedules, being on time, absences, field timesheets, practice logs, social work competencies and affiliated behaviors, SLPs, field safety, professional behavior, problem solving, ethical decision making, self-care, and time management for the competing demands of field, academic courses, and personal lives.

It is recognized there may be exceptions to the process outlined above based on student or organizational needs. The process as outlined is not intended to rule out viable field placement options that meet the CSWE standards. For example, it is not unusual for a student to identify a viable placement agency that has never applied for approval as a field agency and request a placement there. In such cases the agency must complete the application process, be evaluated, and approved as an eligible field agency. The agency will be provided consultation by a field faculty member during their application process.

Students are asked to **not** initiate contact with any agency already listed as an approved agency. To do so can compromise the equal opportunity of all students interested in the agency. It also risks jeopardizing both the student's and the school's relationship with the agency as it violates established procedures between the agency and the program. (CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.3.5- Field Education)

Field Seminar

Students are required to take a field seminar course concurrently with their field placement. The primary purpose of the seminar is to integrate classroom content from across the curriculum with the practical experience in field. Specific course assignments are designed to meet that goal. Additionally, discussion of field experiences in the seminar raises policy and ethical issues, which aids analysis of case material in relation to understanding human behavior and evaluation of one's own social work practice. The broad range of practice settings in which students gain generalist and clinical experience further enhance the learning process. This course allows the student to utilize Competencies within their field experience.

Student Learning Plan (SLP)

Quality learning experiences require thoughtful planning. The student-learning plan is a tool to facilitate such planning. The student's learning plan should be individualized with regards to:

1. Student's present abilities, goals, and professional development needs;
2. Learning opportunities the agency setting can provide;
3. The Competencies established by CSWE;
4. The USI Social Work Department's educational objectives for field education, and;

5. Application of the social work curriculum.

The student-learning plan should identify learning objectives, as well as activities and assignments to meet those objectives, and methods for evaluating if the student has met the learning objectives. Developing the student-learning plan delineates the expectations of both the student and the agency supervisor and provides data for evaluation of student performance.

PROBLEM SOLVING, CORRECTIVE ACTION, AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES IN FIELD PLACEMENT

Student Performance Review Process in Field Placement

As required by CSWE, it is the Social Work Department's responsibility to ensure that field placements are "educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored." When problems occur, the school will take an active role to mediate and resolve the difficulties. The primary goals of the school will be the assessment and resolution of barriers to achievement for field, related criteria for satisfactory completion of field placement, and to prevent the disruption of the placement. However, there may be circumstances in which a student is advised to discontinue field education or is involuntarily terminated from the field placement. The student, the field instructor, or the faculty field liaison may initiate the problem-solving process. In all cases, an effort should be made to resolve problems as the lowest organizational level.

Student Affairs Committee

At the beginning of each academic year, a student affairs committee and a committee Chairperson will be appointed by the chair of the social work department. The committee shall be composed of at least three faculty members and one BSW and one MSW student. The director of field education will serve as an ad hoc member in an advisory, non-voting capacity. Note: If a committee member requests a review of a student, the department chair will appoint an alternate to serve on the committee.

The student affairs committee is a department level mechanism for reviewing student problems in academic or professional performance. The committee will: 1) complete an annual review of the "Student Performance Standards and Criteria"; 2) make recommendations to the faculty for updates or changes to the review process; 3) receive and review requests for student performance reviews.

The Problem-Solving Process: Student Initiated

When a student perceives a problem during the field placement, the student should first try to resolve it at the agency level. It is recommended that the student take the following steps in the order listed, only moving to the next step when unable to resolve the problem otherwise:

1. Meet with the agency field instructor to discuss and resolve the problem;

2. Meet with the faculty liaison;
3. Meet with the field Instructor and the faculty liaison together;
4. Meet with the field director;
5. If the issue is not resolved, the field director will consult the student affairs committee, and;
6. If the issue is not resolved, the student and field director will meet with the program director and/or Department chair.

Students attend a field seminar taught by the faculty field liaison concurrently with field practicum. Thus, it is not uncommon for students to raise issues of concern with the faculty field liaison to check their own perspective or for advice on how to best address the issue with their field Instructor. However, even in those cases, the student should initially be directed back to the field instructor to resolve the issue at that level.

The student may request reassignment to a different field agency at any point in the process. However, reassignment will not be pursued by the faculty field liaison or the field director without first consulting with the field Instructor. Reasonable steps must be taken to resolve the perceived problems before a new placement will be considered. Before a transfer is approved, the student must submit a formal written request for reassignment to the field director specifying the reasons for the request with copies also sent to the agency field instructor and faculty field liaison.

The Problem-Solving Process: Field Instructor Initiated

When agency field instructor or other agency personnel has a concern about a student's performance in field, the following steps to resolve the difficulty are recommended:

1. The field instructor will meet with the student to address the issue;
2. If the issue is not resolved, the field instructor will consult the faculty field liaison regarding the concerns;
3. If the issue is not resolved, the field instructor and student will meet with the faculty field liaison together, and;
4. If the issue continues to be unresolved, the field director will be consulted and may include all necessary parties, including the Student Affairs Committee.

It is not uncommon or inappropriate for the field instructor to consult with the faculty field liaison prior to meeting with the student to check his or her own perspective or to share their thinking about how to best approach the student. However, it is the field Instructor's

responsibility to first work with the student to resolve the concerns before involving school personnel in any corrective action.

The Problem-Solving Process: Faculty Field Liaison Initiated

In rare instances, the faculty field liaison may initiate the problem-solving process as s/he becomes aware of concerns based on a student's self-reporting regarding conduct and performance in field or become aware of difficulties in the field agency or with the field Instructor, which adversely impacts the educational experience of the student.

When a faculty field liaison has a concern about a student's performance in field, the following steps to resolve the difficulty are recommended:

1. The faculty field liaison will meet with the student to address the issue;
2. If the issue is not resolved, the faculty field liaison will consult the field instructor regarding the concerns;
3. If the issue is not resolved, the field instructor and student will meet with the faculty field liaison together, and;
4. If the issue continues to be unresolved, the field director will be consulted and may include all necessary parties, including the student affairs committee.

Student Review Process Related to Student Performance in Field

The field instructor will regularly review the student's work as a part of the supervision process. Concerns should be discussed with the student at the field Instructor's first awareness. Explanations or examples of performance problems and recommendations for improvement will be made to the student along with any potential consequences of failure to meet expectations. If either a single event assessed to be of a serious nature occurs or if problem behaviors persist, consult the problem-solving process above.

A written action plan to address the issue (with a timeline) should be developed under the direction of the field instructor after consultation with the faculty field liaison and the student. This might be accomplished with a revised student learning plan, or with a separate document to be signed by all parties: student, field Instructor, and faculty field liaison.

Students develop a Student Learning Plan (SLP) based on CSWE Competencies and identify performance outcomes and expectations. Students who receive items rated less than satisfactory at mid-term will be expected to demonstrate improvement in those areas. In order to receive a "Satisfactory" grade for field placement, 80% of the items on the student's final evaluation must be rated at 3 or above.

To pass field, BSW students must have a “C+” or higher and MSW students must have a “B” or higher.

The faculty field liaison will determine the grade for the student, after consultation with the field instructor and review of existing student performance evaluation instruments.

[See also “Termination of a Field Placement” below.]

Receiving a Grade of Incomplete

A grade of incomplete may be assigned in the following situations:

1. The student is demonstrating significant progress in problem areas previously identified but has not yet obtained a satisfactory level of performance and the assessment of the faculty field liaison is that the student could meet required performance levels within a reasonable and feasible time period and the placement agency is willing and able to extend the placement;
2. The student has not completed the required hours for the field placement due to issues which can reasonably be excused or are due to extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control. The agency must agree to extend the placement and an agreement must be negotiated between the student, agency, and school about how and when the hours will be completed before the grade is changed, and;
3. The student may be transferred to another agency to complete the field placement if that is assessed to be appropriate and is feasible. (See Transfer in Field Placement) [See the Student Handbook and University Bulletin regarding incomplete work and an “I” grade.]

The student must complete all course work related to the field placement before moving to the next level of field. For example; if a student is in MSW I field placement and receives an “Incomplete” (I) grade. All the conditions of the incomplete grade must be met before the student can begin MSW II field placement.

Transfer in Field Placement

Students may be transferred from one field placement agency to another when it is not appropriate for them to remain in the originally chosen agency. However, it is recognized that such a disruption can compromise the educational process and create additional stress for the student. Therefore, the justifications for a transfer must be compelling. Occasions when a transfer might be considered include the following:

1. The field agency is no longer able to meet their responsibilities due to organizational or staff changes;

2. It is discovered early in the placement that the student/agency fit is not adequate to meet the professional education needs of the student, and;
3. The student has received an incomplete in the first agency and it is either not feasible or not advisable for the student to complete their placement there.

In any of the situations described above, maximum effort would be made to meet the deficiencies to allow continuation of the current placement before a transfer would be initiated. **The Social Work Department reserves the right to not offer a second placement based on student performance issues.**

If a transfer is necessitated, the transfer would be contingent on the student's authorization for disclosure of prior assessment, including both identified student strengths and performance problems to the potential new Field Instructor. The purpose of disclosure is to facilitate a field education plan designed to optimize the students' potential for successful completion via adaptation to the student's strengths and deficiencies.

If a grade of incomplete was received in the first internship, the student will be required to complete the full number of hours required for the course. In all cases, the first Field Instructor will be asked to clarify the number of hours completed in the first agency.

Grade of Unsatisfactory

The social work department may assign an Unsatisfactory grade (below C+ for BSW students) and (below B for MSW students) based upon the recommendation and documentation of the agency field instructor. The grade must be based on the student's unsatisfactory performance because of failure to meet standards for competency, violations of policies of the agency or school, or unprofessional conduct and unethical practice as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics. The receipt of a failing grade for field automatically terminates the student from that internship and may result in suspension from either the BSW or MSW program. [See "Range of Corrective Action Outcomes" in the Student Handbook.]

Students may request another internship. This request must be submitted to the director of field education in writing. The request must state the student's understanding of the reasons for the failure in the first internship and what he or she will do to avoid or resolve those factors in a future field placement. The director of field education will review the request and take any steps deemed necessary to fairly assess the potential success of the student in a new field placement. In consultation with the field committee a decision will be made as to whether the student will be offered another field placement. As in the case of all field assignments, placement will also be dependent upon the availability of an appropriate agency. The original unsatisfactory grade will not be changed. Therefore, the entire internship must be retaken, and the student must reregister for the course.

In some cases, the social work department may assess it to be in the best interests of the student to not immediately reenter another internship but would consider an application to reenter field in the future. It would be expected, should the student reapply to field that the

student would present evidence that supports the potential for success in a repeat field placement.

The social work department reserves the right to deny a student a second internship based on student performance issues or other pertinent information. **In no case will a third internship be offered for any single Field course.**

Termination of Field Placement

Student performance or conduct that places client at risk, is unprofessional, or is unethical may result in termination from the placement at any time during the internship. A determination ordinarily is made jointly by the field agency personnel and the field faculty. However, agencies provide field placement for students on a voluntary basis and have the right to suspend a student without prior notice. Termination may also result from the agency's inability to fulfill their responsibilities, unrelated to the performance of the student. The agency is required to notify the director of field education in writing of their termination of the student and the reason, with a copy of the letter provided to the student.

The social work department may also act to terminate a student from field placement. Students who are preparing for a career in the social work profession are expected to adhere to the standards for conduct of professional social workers as guided by the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics>). Behaviors that may result in the termination of a student from field placement include unethical conduct and/or failure to perform satisfactorily.

Agency Background Check and Drug Screens

It is expected that students are substance free prior to, and during the field placement. Students are expected to pass pre-internship agency requirements (drug screen, background checks etc). If a student fails a pre-internship drug screen, they will not proceed to another agency.

Unethical Conduct

Students who perform in an unprofessional manner within the field agency may be subject to immediate termination from placement. Behaviors that could result in immediate termination from field include sexual misconduct, violation of the university's Alcohol and Drug Policy; physical or verbal assault of clients, faculty, or professional colleagues; or any violation of the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>).

Unsatisfactory Performance

Performance may be assessed as unsatisfactory for reasons including the following:

1. Violating agency policies regarding record keeping, attendance, tardiness, confidentiality or practice;

2. Inability to cooperate in the learning process with field instructors and/or professional colleagues, and;
3. Inability to meet learning expectations.

Additional factors which might prompt the initiation of corrective action, potentially resulting in removal from field and/or the Social Work program include:

1. Failing/Inadequate performance in field;
2. Personal problems which interfere with student performance;
3. Unprofessional behavior, including unethical or illegal behavior (Appendix C);
4. Negative attitude which impairs the student's ability to actively participate in the learning experience;
5. Inability to function in the role of a student;
6. Inability to work within the framework of supervision;
7. Failure to comply with policies of the school or placement agency, and;
8. Poor attendance in field or the seminar.

Students will be terminated from field for violations of the above standards by the director of field education in consultation with the field committee, the student affairs committee, and/or department administrative staff with a "need to know." Consultation will not be sought if such consultation could compromise the student's appeal process. If the student is withdrawn from field for such violations, a failing grade will be given for the field practicum course. The receipt of that grade may result in dismissal from the program.

NOTE: If a student is dismissed from an agency due to their own actions, they CANNOT return to field that semester/academic year. They must reapply to Field Education no sooner than the following academic year to be re-evaluated for field appropriateness. The student is NOT guaranteed readmission into Field Education. This opportunity will only be offered one (1) time.

The Social Work Department reserves the right to deny a student a second internship based on student performance issues or other pertinent information. In no case will a third internship be offered for any single field course.

Student Rights to Appeal

A student who receives a failing grade in field placement or is terminated from field has the option of appealing the decision through the grievance process. If a student wishes to appeal any decision, he or she should meet with the program director to review the appeals process only after all steps in the problem-solving process at (as outlined above) have been completed.

If a student believes that certain rights have been violated (i.e. discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class or disability) the student may file a grievance.

For further clarification of the appeals and grievance conditions and processes, see the Student Handbook and USI Bulletin.

[Note: All sections of the Corrective Action Procedures as outlined in the Student Handbook and Grievance Procedures of the University apply to students in field.]

Use of Service Animals

The use of service animals is outlined by the university in the student handbook as, “service animal as defined by current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the State of Indiana regulations. Is defined as an animal that is specifically trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a physical, sensory, psychiatric/mental, or intellectual disability; and the work or tasks performed by the animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Animals that only provide crime deterrent effects, emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not fall under the legal definition of “service animal.” See website for details:

<https://www.usi.edu/media/om5p3qwg/editing-student-handbook-2021-22.pdf>

Health Insurance

You must carry Health Insurance. You are not an employee of your internship agency and therefore not covered. Should you be injured while at your internship you are not covered under workers compensation. If you do not have healthcare coverage of your own, you may get it from HealthCare.gov or 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325). You may also want to investigate The University Health Services, <https://www.usi.edu/health-center>

Liability Insurance

Students are strongly encourage you to have your own liability insurance. NASW offers student coverage at affordable rates, see <http://www.naswassurance.org/malpractice/student-liability-individuals/> or call 855-385-2160.

Forms

All forms for Field Education are in TEVERA.

