Georgia State University School of Social Work

Office of Field Education
BSW & MSW Field Manual
For Students, Agencies, and Faculty

Revised May 2018
Welcome to Field Education at Georgia State University!

This manual is designed to facilitate the field education experience for all those involved—students, field supervisors, task supervisors, and faculty liaisons. It also provides useful information for prospective students, field supervisors, and field agencies/organizations. It is intended to provide general information about the various roles and expectations in the school and agency partnerships.

Field education at Georgia State is organized and implemented as a partnership between the educational community and the practice community in training future social work practitioners. Within this partnership, there are three key people to the success of the field education experience: the student, field supervisor, and faculty liaison. First is the student, who possesses the willingness and desire to observe, learn, take action, and reflect. The student’s professional development is guided and nurtured by the field supervisor whose role as teacher is pivotal in the student’s evaluation of self as an emerging professional social worker. The faculty liaison’s role is to provide ongoing support and information to the student and the field supervisor. Communication among all parties is critical in meeting the objectives of field education and maintaining a healthy partnership. Ongoing feedback is welcomed from all parties.

A field education advisory board of community practitioners offers continued input as well. This advisory board of experienced practitioners provides guidance and expert knowledge in field education and enhancing the partnership between the School’s field education office and community agencies/organizations.

We are grateful to all who participate in the field education experience of the social work curriculum, enabling and enhancing the integration of theory, social work practice and professional development of future social workers.

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Purpose of Field Education

According to the 2015 CSWE Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS):

**Educational Policy 2.2**—Field Education is the *Signature Pedagogy* of Social Work Education. Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline—to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work.

The intent of field education is to *integrate* the *theoretical* and *conceptual contribution* of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program.

Field education is an integral part of the BSW & MSW curriculum at Georgia State University. The field education component of the curriculum at GSU is consistent with the mission, goals and objectives of the school of social work. It provides students the opportunity to apply theories and skills they have learned in the classroom with real-life clients under the supervision of a seasoned social worker in an approved setting.

Community agencies and other social work environments act as learning laboratories, giving students valuable exposure to the full range of functions, responsibilities, challenges and opportunities today’s social workers experience at the micro and macro level.

**The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) Stipulation:**

Field Education at Georgia State University is an integral component of social work education anchored in the mission, goals, and educational level of the program. It occurs in settings that reinforce students’ identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters the Integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; and promotes the development of professional competence. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis by which students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives.
The Director of Field Education is responsible for the overall administration of the field education component for the School of Social Work. This involves working with field supervisors, faculty members, and students. Tasks include placing social work students in field sites; establishing student orientation to field; setting field policies, procedures, and standards; developing all forms from the student application process to the student evaluation process; creating field seminar materials; evaluating and maintaining field placement sites; coordinating and consulting with faculty liaisons; providing orientation and training to field supervisors; and maintaining accreditation standards for field education. Our goal is to create educational partnerships with community agencies/organizations that afford outstanding experiential opportunities for all involved parties.

Field Education Coordinator: is a member of the field education department who has responsibility for assisting with student placements and conducting group supervision for students who do not have MSW-credentialed agency supervisor. The field coordinator may also serve as a faculty field liaison. The field coordinator assists in the development of new field sites, monitors current field placements, and provides guidance for students under the direction of the Field Director.

Field Education Administrative Assistant: is a member of the field education department responsible for clerical and administrative support. They organize and maintain field records, manage data, draft and prepare a variety of correspondence, reports, memos, and other similar material; answer telephones and greet and serve as a liaison for visitors to the School of Social Work; supervise student assistants; and perform other tasks as required or requested by the Field Director.

Faculty Field Liaison is the individual who is responsible for following and monitoring assigned students through the field experience and for visiting the student and field instructor at least once per term. Faculty field liaisons are considered part of adjunct faculty. They serve as faculty for field seminar courses.

Advisory Board: The purpose of the advisory board, comprised of field supervisors, is to strengthen the link between social work education and community-based social work practice by providing an ongoing opportunity for field supervisors to have input into the field education component of the social work curriculum. The advisory board holds formal meetings and communicates as necessary through e-mail. Any changes, recommendations, or field concerns from students, faculty, and field supervisors are addressed at advisory board meetings. The Director of Field Education chairs the Field Education Advisory Board.
Agency Associates (Accreditation Standard 2.2.9)

- **Agency Field Instructor** (sometimes referred to as agency supervisor) is the individual who meets the qualifications to supervise the student. This person must have an MSW degree and two years post-graduation experience, unless otherwise approved by the director of field education.

- **Agency Task Supervisor** is an individual in the agency who provides day-to-day supervision of a student when a qualified MSW-credentialed agency field instructor is not available.

NASW Code of Ethics

The School of Social Work supports the National Association of Social Workers' code of ethics and expects students, faculty, and field instructors to abide by its provisions. Students are expected to have knowledge of and to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics which outlines the behavior and responsibilities expected of professional social workers. Ignorance of these professional standards is not an excuse for non-compliance.


As noted in revised NASW Code of Ethics, field instructors should not serve as a supervisor of any student with whom they have a dual relationship. Dual relationships occur when the student and field instructor have or initiate an additional relationship, for example, a close social or intimate relationship, therapist-client relationship, or business involvement. Likewise, social work students should not work with clients with whom they have a dual relationship.

If any aspect of field education the potential of a dual relationship exists, the student or field instructor should notify the field liaison or the director of field education. All involved parties will participate in efforts to resolve the issue or make other arrangements.

Guidelines on Safety in the Field (Accreditation Standard 2.2.8)

The social work profession has become increasingly concerned about the safety and security of social work practitioners in the workplace. Work-related violence against social workers may include physical and/or verbal assault, the threat of assault and harassment. Such concern about workplace violence also draws attention to the safety and security of social work students placed in field placement settings.

Field sites should have policies and procedures dealing with safety and security issues for all
personnel. These safety and security policies and procedures need to be a part of the student’s site orientation. However, if this information is not formally presented, the student must initiate discussion of such policies and procedures with the field supervisor. Every effort must be made to reduce potential risk in field settings. Safety and security issues to be addressed with the student include:

- office and facility security (e.g., interviewing rooms, emergency exits, disaster plan, parking areas, before and after hours work);
- in-house emergency procedures for summoning security, police, and backup assistance;
- policies and procedures for home and community visits (e.g., when, where, with another worker or escort, under what conditions a visit should or should not be made, emergency backup plans);
- transporting clients (e.g., personal car, agency vehicle, insurance and liability, when, where, with another worker, under what conditions would an intern be given this assignment);
- assessing and handling agitated and/or violent clients (e.g., de-escalation techniques, physical restraint of clients, treating clients with a history of violence); and
- potential risks and safety issues unique to a setting and/or client population.

The field supervisor should discuss with the student any activities that may require special planning with regard to safety. An understanding should be reached between the student and field supervisor, with input from the faculty liaison, about what constitutes “high risk” or “dangerous” assignments. If the student refuses to accept what may be described as a dangerous assignment, this should be discussed with the faculty liaison. The student has the right to refuse a dangerous assignment and his/her safety should not be compromised. If a student is threatened or injured in placement or is involved in an incident where one’s safety may be compromised, the faculty liaison or field director should be notified immediately.

Criteria for Admission to Field Placement: (Accreditation Standard 2.1.4)

There are specific guidelines that determine students’ eligibility for field placement. Georgia State University does not provide any course credit based on life or previous work experience of the student. Only students who have been officially admitted by the School of Social Work and have met certain criteria will be allowed to register for social work field placement courses or be matched with a placement agency.

Field Placement Orientation: (Accreditation Standard 2.2.10)

Field Orientation will provide an overview of the purpose of field experiences, application processes, policies, requirements, upcoming events, etc.
Field Placement Application Process (Accreditation Standard 2.2.6)

Students must apply for enrollment in field education. Students are not expected to apply for field until after the orientation. The field education sequence begins in the fall semester only. There are no summer or block field placement opportunities.

As part of the application process, students are asked to select three possible areas of interest. Once all the completed applications are received, the Office of Field Education makes contact with each student to discuss possible placement sites, special interests related to placement and special needs. The Office of Field makes the initial contact with the potential placement site and the student sets up an agency interview. If a student has not met entry requirements for field education, the student is denied placement but may reapply at a later date. A student who is rejected for placement by two agencies for reasons related to appropriateness (i.e. behavior, attitude) or readiness for placement may be dismissed from the program.

Instructions
Fill in the information on the application.

PreCheck Background Check- $49.50

Go to My Student Check and select your School and Program from the drop down menus. It is important that you select your school worded as Georgia State University - School of Social Work Field Education Background Check

Field Placement Hours & Requirements (Accreditation Standard 2.2.5)

BSW and 1st-year MSW students are expected to complete a minimum of 400 hours over the course of the two academic semesters. With delayed entry into fall field placement, it is expected that students will complete at least 160 hours during the fall semester (approximately 16 hours over 10-11 weeks). Students will complete a minimum of 240 hours during the fifteen-week Spring semester.

2nd-year MSW students are expected to complete a minimum of 500 hours over the course of the two academic semesters. In the fall, these students complete approximately 234 hours (18 hours over 13 weeks) followed by a minimum of 270 hours during the Spring semester.

Scheduling Hours:
BSW and 1st-year MSW students usually complete the required 16 hours/week field placement in two full days (lunch not included in the hour count). 2nd-year MSW students complete the required 18 hours/week field placement scheduled over three work days (not a two day/week schedule). The student and field supervisor must discuss and agree to the student’s weekly schedule based on both the student’s and the supervisor’s needs/tasks. Classes and field seminar cannot be missed to attend field placement.

Students Placed in School Settings:
Placement schedules in schools often differ from the standard placement calendar. Students placed in school should plan to modify their schedules to accommodate agency hours and vacations.

Field Placement Absences:
If an emergency arise necessitating absence from the field, the student is responsible for immediately notifying the field instructor and taking responsibility for postponing appointments or scheduled meetings. In case of prolonged absence, the student and field instructor should notify the field liaison so that a plan can be made to meet the needs of the agency, the student’s situation, and the schools’ educational requirements.

December Hours:
All students should be off the week that GSU is closed for the December holidays – they are not expected to be in placement when the University is closed. Students should return to their respective field placement sites once the spring semester begins in January (check the academic calendar for start date). The School acknowledges there may be work that needs to be accomplished in the field agency requiring the student’s presence once fall semester is completed. However, there are limits to a student continuing his/her placement in between the semesters. Upon completion of the fall semester field placement hours, the student can work for a maximum of 18 hours total in December (to be agreed upon by both student and field supervisor) and such hours can be counted towards spring semester hours. Students should not be working 16 hours per week – their December hours should reflect the time needed to provide continuity in assigned tasks or responsibilities (e.g., case management, group facilitation, holiday project, and fundraising events). If the student or field supervisor is unclear about December field placement hours, the faculty liaison should be consulted.

Field Placement Supervision:

Students are expected to prepare appropriately for weekly supervision. This means following the guidelines and standards set forth by the field supervisor as well as those set by the School. As the student progresses through the field placement, it is expected that he/she will take on increasing responsibility for the content of the supervisory sessions by creating a written agenda for each session. Created by the School’s Field Advisory Board, the following guidelines for writing an agenda offer a holistic approach to assist the student with integration of classroom knowledge and practice application and to focus on processing the field experience. The student and field supervisor should discuss ways to operationalize these guidelines. The student’s supervisory agenda should include these five sections:

- Items related to past social work, or related, coursework and work experiences
- Items related to current coursework and classroom learning (e.g., at the beginning of each semester, bring copies of course syllabi to the field supervisor)
- Items related to mid---semester or final evaluation instruments
- Items related to field placement (both task--- and process---focused)
- Additional Items
Grades and Evaluation for Internship Courses

(Accreditation Standard M 2.2.5)

The student’s letter grade for field education incorporates a grade for field placement given by the field supervisor and a grade for the field integrative seminar given by the faculty liaison. 60% of the final grade is determined by the student’s performance in the field and 40% of the final grade is determined by the student’s performance in the seminar. Assigning the final grade is the responsibility of the faculty liaison. Although the final grade represents a 60/40 split between field and seminar, the faculty liaison has the discretion to lower a student’s final grade if the following occurs:

1) failure to turn in on time all time sheets, the learning contract (Individualized Partnership Plan), assignments, or any additional course requirements
(2) failure to complete any assignment or a course requirement
(3) failure to attend and/or participate in field seminar;
(4) inconsistencies in student performance between field placement and field seminar; and
(5) failure to complete the minimum of 400 field placement hours for undergraduate/generalist practice and minimum of 500 for specialization year.

Undergraduate Students:

A grade of “C” or better in SW 4500 is required for continuation into SW 4900. A grade of “F” represents a failed field education course. Students who fall below the minimum standards set forth by the School of Social Work will be subject to academic review. Academic review may result in re-enrollment in the field education course, academic probation, or dismissal from the social work program (see Student Handbook).

Graduate Students:

MSW students must earn a “B” or better in field education in order to continue into the next semester’s field education course. A grade of “C” (while giving credit hours) will not apply toward the MSW degree. A grade of “F” represents a failed field education course. Students who fall below the minimum standards set forth by the School of Social Work will be subject to academic review. Academic review may result in re-enrollment in the field education course, academic probation, or dismissal from the social work program (see Student Handbook).

If a student earns less than a “B” in a six-semester hours field education course and is allowed to continue in the MSW program, that specific course must be retaken in the next semester in which it is offered. Before being allowed to retake the field education course, the student may be required to take an independent study course with a field component, supervised by the Director of Field Education or another faculty member. Please note that if a student is given the option to remediate a grade lower than a “B” or to remediate a grade point average that falls below a 3.0, this option is available only once during a student’s matriculation in the MSW program. Remediation of a grade or grade point average does not
automatically allow a student to continue in the program (see Student Handbook).

Incomplete Grade In Field Education:

An “I” (incomplete) may be granted to a student with extenuating circumstances as approved by the field director. A student who is failing field education may not receive an “I” grade. According to the GSU Undergraduate Catalog:

The notation of “I” may be given to a student who for nonacademic reasons beyond his or her control is unable to meet the full requirements of a course. In order to qualify for an “I,” a student must:
(a) have completed most of the major assignments of the course (generally all but one) and
(b) be earning a passing grade in the course (aside from the assignments not completed) in the judgment of the instructor.

When a student has a nonacademic reason for not completing one or more of the assignments for a course, including examinations, and wishes to receive an incomplete for the course, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor in person or in writing of the reason. A grade of incomplete is awarded at the discretion of the instructor and is not the prerogative of the student. Conditions to be met for removing a grade of incomplete are established by the instructor.

Field Education Withdrawal Policy

**Undergraduate Students:**
If a student must withdraw from SW 4500 or SW 4900, the student must follow University procedures as outlined in the “Withdrawal from Classes (including Hardship Status)” section of the Undergraduate Catalog. If a student withdraws from field education, the student may not be assigned to the same agency upon re-entry. Re-entry may be limited to a space-available basis.

**Graduate Students:**
If a student must withdraw from any field education course, the student must follow University procedures as outlined in the “Withdrawal from Classes (including Hardship Status)” section of the Graduate Catalog. If a student withdraws from field education, the student may not be assigned to the same agency upon re-entry. Re-entry may be limited to a space-available basis.

**FIELD SUPERVISOR’S EVALUATION OF STUDENT**

(Accreditation Standard M 2.2.8)

Evaluation of the student is an ongoing process. A student continually receives feedback on his/her performance from the field supervisor, task supervisor (where appropriate), and assigned faculty liaison. Written evaluations completed by the field supervisor are required
three times during the two-semester field placement. A mid-term evaluation of the student is required during the first semester in placement and a final evaluation is due at the end of each semester. The field supervisor is responsible for completing each evaluation in a timely manner, discussing the completed instrument with the student and obtaining the student’s electronic signature on the final page. It is the student’s responsibility for reminding supervisors about the evaluations in to the faculty liaison by the due date. The due dates for the evaluations are found on the Academic Calendar.

The field supervisor is asked to grade the student on field performance as part of the end-of-semester final evaluation. The field supervisor’s grade accounts for 60% of the overall grade each semester. The following criteria shall be used in the determination of a student’s final field placement grade:

A 90---100 Represents excellent work. The student demonstrates superior abilities in field. The student is almost always consistent in his/her field performance and in meeting the educational objectives.

B 80---89 Represents good work. The student demonstrates solid, above average progress in field. The student is consistent in his/her field performance and in meeting the educational objectives.

C 70---79 Represents average work. The student demonstrates satisfactory work. The student is somewhat consistent in his/her field performance and in meeting educational objectives.

F less than 69 Represents failing work. The student has demonstrated incompetence in his/her field performance. The student has not met field expectations and educational objectives.

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FACULTY LIAISON’S EVALUATION OF學生
(Accreditation Standard B2.2.2)

As part of the faculty liaison role, the designated faculty member is responsible for assigning the student’s field seminar grade each semester. This includes evaluating the student’s course assignments and final paper, completion of the learning outcomes as set forth in the Individualized Partnership Plan, and the successful completion of any additional field integrative seminar requirements. The liaison’s responsibility for the field seminar grade is in addition to his/her responsibility for assigning the final field education grade each semester. 40% of the overall field education grade is determined by the student’s performance in field seminar. The following criteria shall be used in determining the student’s seminar grade:
### Individualized Partnership Plans (Accreditation Standard M2.2.4)

The individualized partnership plan (IPP) is a learning contract that provides a framework for the student’s time and professional contributions at the field placement site as well as for the student/field supervisor relationship. The student’s field placement tasks are outlined in this document. The IPP is completed during the initial weeks of field placement and is subject to approval by the faculty liaison to ensure compliance with educational objectives. The learning outcomes are broad enough to encompass learning opportunities in diverse settings.

### 1st Year: Generalist Practice Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>SW 4500 --- Field Education I (Fall)</th>
<th>SW 4900 --- Field Education II (Spring)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Logs</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational/Community</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2nd Year: Specialization Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>SW 8500 --- Concentration Field Education I</th>
<th>SW 8900 --- Concentration Field Education II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Logs</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code of Ethics paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Final paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The individualized partnership plan has multiple purposes. It creates:

- a linkage between social work practice and learning outcomes
- opportunities for observation and retrieval of practice behavior
- a linkage between social work practice and professional knowledge/skills
- a linkage between social work practice and current research
- opportunities for evaluation of practice behavior
- opportunities to identify learning tasks/activities specific to a field site’s needs/interests
- opportunities to identify future planning needs for the student and the field site structure for the student’s time in field placement.

Instructions for Completing the IPP

1. The IPP should be developed jointly by the field supervisor and the student. It is the student’s responsibility to submit the completed IPP to the faculty liaison by the due date. Once the faculty liaison has approved the IPP, the student should maintain a copy of this document and provide a signed copy to the field supervisor.

2. In developing tasks to meet educational objectives/learning outcomes choose “active” not passive verbs (e.g., create, develop, facilitate, conduct, prepare, assess, plan). The learning objectives address application and demonstration of knowledge, values, and skills. “Reading” or “reviewing” material may be required by the student in preparation for a task, not as end results.

3. One task may involve multiple steps and, therefore, address more than one learning objective.

4. When considering student tasks, think about the possibilities – not just the realities of a daily routine. For a field supervisor, think about what tasks or projects are on your “wish list” if you just had more time. For example, following-up with clients, facilitating a group, developing a new partnership, expanding a program, recruiting and training volunteers.

5. Use the IPP as a working document as part of supervision to ensure tasks are being met. Both the student and the field supervisor should use the IPP to address issues and challenges in the process of completing a task.

Professional Competence & Academic Review in Field Education

The field placement is a critical component of the student’s development as a professional social worker, particularly as it reflects the student’s ability to internalize academic course content and to combine professional knowledge and skill with a professional demeanor appropriate for practice. The student must maintain a professional demeanor that separates
personal problems/issues from practice in order to engage successfully in one's professional responsibilities to clients, the agency, and the community. Should a student's personal problems, psychological well-being, lack of maturity or lack of learning readiness in the student intern role impair the student's field performance and responsibilities to clients, the agency, and/or the community, the field supervisor and the faculty liaison have the responsibility to intervene.

The following criteria will be used to determine the basis of professional competence in field education:

Field placement experience: The agency field supervisor, the faculty liaison, and/or the Director of Field Education's evaluation of the student will be reviewed. Concerns around the student's professional competence may arise due to the student's inability to:

1. establish and maintain positive and constructive interpersonal relationships with clients and field supervisors,
2. poor performance in the field (see mid-semester and final evaluation criteria), and/or
3. lack of professional demeanor. Any of these concerns will be assessed within the developmental framework of the student's progress through his or her social work education and experiences.

Lack of professional demeanor may be evidenced by the student's:

- Lack of commitment to professional growth and development
- Tardiness or absenteeism at the field placement
- Failure to adhere to agency policies, standards, and guidelines
- Lack of appropriate professional dress and appearance
- Failure to enact appropriate behaviors with clients
- Failure to meet project/task/assignment deadlines
- Inability to accept constructive feedback from the field supervisor
- Failure to exhibit maturity or learning readiness
- Failure to maintain professional boundaries
- Failure to exhibit ethical behavior

Lack of professional competence as exhibited in the student's performance in field education may result in a lower grade or possible dismissal from the program.

Additional criteria that may be used to assess a student's professional competence and lead to an academic review by the School's Professional Review Committee include:

Academic performance: Failure to meet the minimum academic standards set by the University, the College, and the School.

Unprofessional behavior or ethical misconduct: Failure to comply with the ethics, values, and principles of the social work profession as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics; exploitation of clients, engaging in sexual activities with clients; participation in dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation; and/or involvement in illegal activities (conviction of a
felony, breaking the law, specific criminal behavior such as trafficking in and/or possession of drugs).

Inability to function within the role of a student: Inappropriate classroom behavior (disruptiveness, tardiness, inattentiveness, behaviors that undermine the work or morale of faculty and students). The student demonstrates an inability to accept feedback and effectively utilize the problem solving process.

Negative attitude: Demonstrates a negative attitude/lack of enthusiasm toward the social work program, the social work profession, and/or the field placement, to such a degree that it impairs the student's ability to actively participate in the learning experience.

Personal problems: This may include either physical, emotional, or life-related problems that interfere with a student’s ability to meet both the academic and professional standards and requirements and/or raise questions about suitability for profession.

Failure to comply with the policies and procedures of Georgia State University and/or the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies and/or the School of Social Work and/or the field placement agency.

For a student who does not maintain professional standards or whose personal problems/issues present obstacles in maintaining professional standards, that student may be removed from placement and receive a failing grade for field education. In such situations, the student may be denied another field placement and dismissed from the social work program. Depending on the circumstances for dismissal, a student suspended from field education may be allowed to re-enroll only at such time when he/she demonstrates to the satisfaction of the faculty an appropriate commitment to the demands of and expectations for the field education experience. If the recommendation is to remove a student from field education, this recommendation must be presented to the Director of Field Education, BSW Program Director, School of Social Work Director, and to the School's Professional Review Committee for a final decision.
Field Education Policies & Procedures
(Accreditation Standard 2.2.7)

Sharing of Sensitive Student Information

In meetings with the field director prior to field placement or during the field placement seminar with the faculty liaison, a student may choose to share personal information that is deemed “sensitive.” This may include such personal matters as a felony or misdemeanor, mental health diagnosis or treatment, substance abuse history, chronic illness, disease, physical disability, or learning disability. “Sensitive” information may also include problems in classroom performance or in a previous field placement.

In response to the sharing of student information, one must address maintaining the privacy rights of a student, while at the same time protecting the welfare of clients served in a field site, supporting the field site’s right to make an informed decision in accepting a student for placement, and allowing the school to make an educationally sound placement selection. A student’s permission to share sensitive information should always be solicited.

In the attempt to balance these competing demands, each student situation must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The following factors shall be considered in the decision to share sensitive student information between the school and the field site:

- student’s permission to share information
- information is labeled confidential
- potential effect(s) on clients being served at the field site
- relevance of student’s personal matter to field of practice
- timeframe (current or past) of the student’s personal matter
- severity of the student’s personal matter
- field supervisor’s right to know
- field site’s human resources policies/requirements

“Reasonable accommodations” as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Disclosure of student information as defined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

It should be noted that field sites might require a prospective student to be processed like a new employee, which can include background checks, fingerprinting, and/or medical tests (e.g., TB test) as prerequisites for acceptance as a student intern.

Professional Liability Insurance:

The School of Social Work requires that all students have professional liability insurance while enrolled in social work field education. Students pay a fee to the School for the purchase of a group liability policy taken out by Byrdine College of Nursing that covers all student interns and faculty liaisons for two semesters in field placement. Any student not paying the fee for professional liability insurance will not be allowed to start field placement.

It is strongly recommended that social work students have personal health care insurance. Through the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, the University offers an optional “Accidental Injury and Post Exposure” insurance plan for students in internships. This insurance is purchased by the student directly from the company. The Director of Field Education has copies of this policy along with enrollment forms. This insurance is purchased by interested students directly from the company. Students are urged to compare their health insurance coverage with the optional accidental injury and post exposure policy.

The University, and most agencies, do not have “personal property” insurance coverage for students. The student is responsible for personal items (e.g., cellular telephone, laptop computer) brought to the field agency. If using a personal car, the student should check his/her car insurance regarding coverage for damage.

Transporting Clients:

The University and the School of Social Work do not allow any social work intern to transport any client, family member, significant other, etc. Some field agencies request the social work student to transport clients because it is suggested that this task provides an opportunity to have one-on-one time with the client(s). While this may be true, even when the agency is willing to add the student as an approved driver to its insurance policy and provide an agency vehicle, transporting clients is still prohibited. Both the student and the field supervisor (as representative of the agency) must abide by this policy.

Employment-Related Field Placement: (Accreditation Standard 2.2.11)

The School of Social Work recognizes that many students work full-time while attending school. In an effort to be responsive to this situation, the School offers the opportunity for students to develop and submit a proposal to have their place of employment serve as an employment-related field placement. The following policies and procedures must be followed:

A student can have only ONE employment-related placement for BSW/MSW field education credit, i.e., 1st-year: MSW foundation OR 2nd-year: MSW Community Partnerships concentration. Advanced-standing students cannot have employment-related field placements for both the BSW and MSW field placements.
A student cannot use one’s current position and tasks for the field placement. The field intern position and tasks must be different. In addition, the field supervisor cannot be the same person as the student’s work supervisor.

- A student must submit a proposal to the Director of Field Education by the due date as determined by the field director. This proposal must include:
  - Description of current position and job tasks
  - Contact information for work supervisor
  - Description of proposed position and related job tasks as a field intern in your place of employment (use the appropriate IPP to inform your response)
  - Describe how you will complete the required weekly field placement hours over the two semesters. Some deviation may be approved using the December break, spring break, etc. to complete the required hours.
  - Contact information for proposed field supervisor

Acknowledgement from the proposed field supervisor that he/she is able to supervise the student and agrees to all field supervision requirements and responsibilities (on School’s website)

Each proposal will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Director of Field Education will make the final decision in each case.

The agency/organization must agree to the field placement site responsibilities and sign the School’s affiliation agreement (memorandum of understanding).

All inquiries re: employment-related field placements should be directed to the School’s Director of Field Education.

Filed Education Grievance Procedure (Accreditation Standard M 2.2.7)

Occasionally there are situations in the field setting that cannot be resolved satisfactorily between the student and the field supervisor. In these instances, the faculty liaison should be contacted immediately. The faculty liaison is available to assist when problems arise as identified by either the field supervisor or the student. If needed, a meeting is arranged with the faculty liaison, student, and field supervisor. If the situation continues to persist, the director of field education may become involved. Sometimes miscommunications, misunderstandings, and nervousness can interfere with the student’s ability to conform to professional practice. Therefore, early recognition and ongoing, open communication between the field supervisor, the faculty liaison, and the student is critical
Prospective Field Education Sites

Thank you for your interest in becoming a field placement site for our students! The school utilizes community agencies for students in both the undergraduate (B.S.W.) and graduate (M.S.W.) programs. Below you will find information on the selection process as well as resources for requesting student interns. You may initiate the process of requesting an intern (or multiple interns) for your agency at the following link:

https://aysps.wufoo.com/forms/social-work-field-site-information-form/

Tools for Current Field Education Supervisors

Social Work Field Site Information Form:

https://aysps.wufoo.com/forms/social-work-field-site-information-form/

Competencies and Practice Behaviors

BSW and 1st Year MSW


2nd Year MSW

http://aysps.gsu.edu/files/2017/08/2nd-Yr-MSW-Competencies-5-17.pdf

2nd Year MSW Skill-Sets

http://aysps.gsu.edu/files/2016/08/skill-sets.pdf

Individualized Partnership Plans (IPPs)

BSW/1st Year MSW IPP


2nd Year MSW IPP

Trainings: New Field Supervisors (Accreditation Standard 2.2.10)

Training Modules for New Field Supervisors

In 2000, the field directors from the Schools of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University, Georgia State University, and the University of Georgia formed the **Field Education Collaborative.** The purpose of this affiliation is to identify and engage in collaborative activities in order to strengthen the relationships between the schools and the field sites. The goal is to combine the three Schools’ resources in providing effective and efficient field education services and training opportunities to meet the needs of field supervisors and field sites within the metro Atlanta area and in North Georgia.

The Collaborative offers a joint **Social Work Field Supervisors’ Training Program** that is open to current field supervisors of social work students. Due to space limitations and arrangements among the schools, this program is by invitation only and is not open to other professionals in your agency or the general social work community.

Field supervisors are encouraged to complete the five-module training during this academic year. There is no fee for this 18-hour training program and CEUs will be given. Field supervisors will receive a certificate of attendance and will be considered a certified field supervisor for social work students upon completion of all five modules. **All four schools require that field supervisors complete the modules.** If you are unable to complete the training this year, you will remain eligible to complete the training during the following academic year. Field supervisors who have completed the training state that it has been extremely helpful in their role as supervisors/educators.

**All attendees must pre-register for each module. There is no registration at the door for any module.** Brochures for the modules will be mailed approximately four weeks prior to the respective module date. If you do not receive a brochure, please contact your field director. If you have missed any training modules, please note the dates for this academic year. You only need to attend each module one time and modules cannot be repeated for CEU credit. Although each school will host the Module I orientation session, you only need to attend one orientation session (even if you are supervising social work students from multiple schools).
Frequently Asked Questions

What is field education?

Field education offers the social work student an opportunity to apply classroom learning in an agency-based supervised field experience. The field education courses at both the undergraduate (BSW) and graduate (MSW) levels consist of two components: (1) the field placement experience and (2) the field integrative seminar. The field placement is the agency site where the student engages as an intern under professional supervision. The field integrative seminar, facilitated by the faculty liaison, provides an on-campus forum for the integration of academic learning with agency-based field placement.

How many hours is the student at the field placement site?

The BSW and 1st-year MSW students are required to complete a minimum of 400 hours of field education over two semesters. These students are at the field placement site for 16 hours per week (two full days, excluding lunch). The 2nd-year MSW students are required to complete a minimum of 500 hours over two semesters spending 18 hours per week (three days) at the field site.

What days will the student be at the field site?

BSW classes are scheduled on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, leaving Tuesdays and Thursdays for field placement. MSW classes are scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays, leaving Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for field placement. The student’s agency schedule must be discussed and approved by the field supervisor. Also, there may be certain days/times when the field supervisor requests that the student be at the field site (e.g., agency meetings, special events). This can be arranged depending on the student’s class schedule. Please note that a student may not miss classes to be at the field site.

How does one apply for the field education?

BSW and MSW students apply to participate in the field education class. This application includes a student’s resume and requires payment for seminar materials and professional liability insurance. The field education application is online.

Field Education Application

https://aysps.wufoo.com/forms/school-of-social-work-field-application/

*Precheck Background Check- $49.50

Go to My Student Check and select your School and Program from the drop down menus. It is important that you select your school worded as Georgia State University - School of Social Work Field Education Background Check

What do the field applications fees cover?

The fees cover the materials for the field education seminar class and professional liability insurance. These fees do not cover the field education text book or other required materials.
Students must purchase new materials each year. Fees are not refundable.

**What happens if special circumstances should be considered in a field placement?**

In the application, there is a question addressing special circumstances. Also, there is a confidentiality/personal/professional form to submit immediately after the application is submitted (https://aysps.wufoo.com/forms/social-work-personal/). Please include any information that should be considered for success in field.

Students who note special circumstances should make an appointment to meet with the Field Education Office personnel. Dr. Renanda Dear, Director of Field Education, rwood@gsu.edu.

**What happens after I submit my field application?**

After the field application is submitted it will be processed and the student will receive a field assignment email with your agency assignment. Students should not solicit agencies or negotiate their own placement site. Agencies must be approved by the Field Education Office.

**How does the Field Office match students and agencies/organizations?**

The Field Education Office reviews the student application, including where they live and social work interests, as well as the agency/organizations location and services to make the best match. Students are NOT guaranteed specific agencies of interest. Agencies are constantly changing and are evaluated annually.

**How does an agency/organization become an approved field placement site?**

Potential field sites must identify a contact person to complete the Social Work Field Site Information Form and read over the responsibilities of both field agencies and field supervisors. The field director will review the completed application and approve a site visit. Most of these visits are scheduled in the late fall. Applications received during the year will be held and contact will be made prior to scheduling these late fall visits.

**I am working in a social work agency. Can I use this site as my placement?**

Occasionally, a student may do field placement at the place of employment. However, in these instances the internship tasks, responsibilities, and supervision must be completely separate from the student’s work responsibilities and supervision. This arrangement must be discussed with and approved by the field director. A student cannot do two worksite placements. Please read the policies for more information.

**After an agency is assigned, is my placement confirmed?**

Once a student is assigned to a field practicum site, the student will need to call the agency contact to schedule an interview. Different agencies have different processes to accept the student. Some agencies conduct formal, group interviews and some agencies are much more informal. Writing samples are routinely requested. Students should be prepared for all situations. At the interview, students should be dressed professionally, presented as courteous and have resume and the social work competencies in hand.
Increasingly agencies are requiring additional background checks. Students should be prepared for both situations. Ideally, background checks should be completed prior to the placement starting date. Agencies will typically cover the cost of any additional background checks, however, students will be responsible for additional costs or fees in medical or state agencies. If this poses a problem, please notify the Office of Field Education as soon as possible.

**What should I bring to the interview at the agency?**

Please bring your resume and appropriate level of social work competencies.

**Where can a student get help with their resume?**

Please see the Georgia State University’s career planning office. ([http://aysps.gsu.edu/career/career-planning](http://aysps.gsu.edu/career/career-planning))

**When can I start the field and tracking hours?**

Field seminar classes start in August. Field education hours typically start in late August. Field hours **cannot** start over the summer.

**How does a student communicate that there is a change in contact and personnel information?**

Please send an email to fieldeducation@gsu.edu.

**What if I am denied placement?**

A student who is rejected for placement by two agencies in one semester for reasons related to inappropriateness (i.e. behavior, attitude) or lack of readiness for placement may be dismissed from the program.

**Who is a field supervisor?**

The field supervisor is the agency person who provides the student with on-site supervision. This person is responsible for providing weekly supervision and evaluating student performance. Some students may be assigned to work with task supervisors as well. However, the student is accountable, first and foremost, to the field supervisor, who directs the learning experience in field.

**Who is a faculty liaison?**

The faculty liaison is the assigned faculty person responsible for providing the communication link between the School of Social Work and the field placement site. The liaison monitors the overall placement experience through agency visits and facilitation of the field integrative seminars. The liaison is responsible for assigning the final field education grade.

**Where can I find field education information, including objectives, assignments, policies and procedures, etc.?**

We no longer use a written field education manual. Become familiar with the School of Social Work’s website. There is a dedicated area for “field education.”