

Georgia State University School of Social Work

Office of Field Education

BSW & MSW Field Manual

For Students, Agencies, and Faculty



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.

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, mezzo and macro level.

Georgia State University Field Education Office

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. Our goal is to create educational partnerships with community agencies/organizations that afford outstanding experiential opportunities for all involved parties. In collaboration with field office staff, field liaisons, field instructors, students, agencies and member of the social work faculty, the director of field education is responsible for:

1. Developing and coordinating an orientation for all field liaisons.
2. Providing supervision for field office staff.
3. Coordinating and finalizing assignment of students to field courses.

4. Overseeing content and implementation of field orientation for students.
5. Working closely with field liaisons and field instructors to address any student issues that arise during the field experience.
6. Providing supervision for field liaisons to help ensure the field courses are implemented.
7. Developing and implementing orientation for trainings for field instructors.
8. Providing final approval of agency sites.
9. Providing development, implementation, and monitoring of the field education website.
10. Ensuring that field education policies and procedures are developed and correctly implemented and that the educational objectives of field education are not compromised.
11. Working collaboratively with field directors within the Field Education Consortium to strengthen field education programming regionally.
12. Continuously assessing the quality of the field education program.

Field Education Coordinator: is a member of the field education office who has responsibility for assisting with student placements and serving as a faculty liaison. In collaboration with the field director and field office personnel, the field coordinator is responsible for:

1. Developing new field placement sites.
2. Monitoring current field placement sites.
3. Conducting interviews with agencies to determine if they meet criteria appropriate for the field experience.
4. Collecting and reviewing agency field instructor documents to help ensure that the field instructor meets the criteria for field supervision.
5. Working with the director of field to facilitate orientation for students.
6. Educating students, directors of sites, and field instructors about field policies and expectations.
7. Collaborating with field education personnel to help ensure that agency affiliation agreements are completed.

Field Education Academic Specialist: is a member of the field education office that is responsible for working closely with the director of field and field office personnel to provide overall administrative support for students, faculty liaisons, and others. Under the supervision of the director of field, the field academic specialist is responsible for:

1. Reviewing and approving students' field experience application documents.
2. Contacting students to provide information about deadline and important notices from the field office.
3. Monitors the field education office email account.
4. Provides administrative support to the director of field and field education coordinator.
5. Assisting in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the SSW field website.
6. Updating and maintaining field data in systems utilized by the field office.
7. Provides field education data reports and statistics.
8. Supervising graduate research and student assistants.
9. Performing other tasks as required or requested by the field director.

Field Liaison is the faculty member 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. The field liaison holds the MSW credential and can provide required supervision, if in the unlikely case, an MSW is not on site. They serve as the liaisons between the social work program and the field agencies by:

1. Holding site visits with field agencies, at least once per semester, to (a) identify appropriate learning opportunities for the students; (b) consult with the students and field instructor on the progress of the experience.
2. Consulting with field instructors and students regarding existing field-related problems, including appropriate problem-solving activities.
3. Evaluating the student's performance and assigning a grade for field seminar.
4. Assessing the students for the appropriateness in the social work profession, including adherence to the professional code of ethical conduct.
5. Teaching field education seminar to social work field students to help them understand the integration of social work theory and practice.
6. Providing evaluative information to the director of field on the quality of the agency's field experience and recommending revisions to the field experience.

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 is responsible for:

1. Attending meetings once a semester during the academic year and communicating as necessary through email.
2. Providing recommendations or field concerns about the field experience to be addressed at advisory board meetings.
3. The Director of Field Education chairs the Field Education Advisory Board.

Agency Associates

- **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.**

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

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.

Criteria for Admission to Field Placement:

All students in both the BSW and MSW program must apply to begin the field placement process through the Office of Field Education. There are specific guidelines that determine students' eligibility

for field placement. 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 seminar courses or be matched with a placement agency. Additionally, Georgia State University School of Social Work **Does Not** provide any course credit based on life or previous work experience of the student.

Field Placement Application Process

Students must apply for enrollment in field education. Students are not expected to apply for field until after pre-orientation. The field education sequence begins in the fall semester only. There are no summer or block field placement opportunities currently. Students should become familiar with the order of their courses and know the term that they should be applying to field placement. **Students should:**

1. Pre- Orientation

Field Pre-Orientation is held in Fall semester and will provide an overview of the purpose of the field experiences, application processes, policies, requirements, and upcoming deadlines.

2. Field Application

Complete the online: [Field Application](#). As part of the application process, students are asked to select three possible areas of interest. ***Please note, in the unlikely chance that a student is not placed in their area of interest all field placements meet the expectations of the Generalist and Specialization curriculum.**

3. Background Check

Submit a background check through PreCheck. The cost of the PreCheck Background is \$49.50, which is the student's responsibility. 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

4. Interviewing

The Office of Field Education makes the initial contact with the potential placement site and the student sets up an agency interview when instructed via email.

5. Finalizing Placement

A student who is rejected for placement by **two** agencies for reasons related to appropriateness (i.e. behavior, attitude, professionalism) or readiness for placement may be dismissed from the program. It is imperative that students prepare in advance for their interview prior to arriving at the agency. Students should be dressed professionally, present as courteous, have resume and the social work competencies in hand.

6. Professional Liability Insurance

Students are expected to purchase university sponsored liability insurance three weeks prior to the start of fall semester placement.

Field Placement Hours, Requirements & Scheduling

Generalist Practice (BSW, MSW 1st, & MSW 2nd Part time students) are expected to complete a minimum of 400 hours over the course of the two academic semesters. It is expected that students will complete at least 200 hours during each academic semester (16 hours week). 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).

Specialization Year (MSW 2nd second & 3rd year part time students) are expected to complete a minimum of 500 hours over the course of the two academic semesters. Students are expected to complete 250 hours each semester. 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.

Employment Based Placements

Employment Based Placements are only allowed on a case by case basis and are at the **sole** discretion of the field director. In certain circumstances, it may be acceptable for students to complete their internship at their place of employment. Some agencies are large enough to provide unique and distinct experiences for students so that their role of employee does not conflict with their role as an intern. Employee based placements must be applied for two semesters prior to the semester in which the student plans to begin field placement (Spring).

Students Placed in School Settings:

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

Field Placement Absences:

If an emergency arises necessitating absence from the field, the student is responsible for:

1. Immediately notifying the field instructor and taking responsibility for postponing appointments or scheduled meetings.
2. 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.
3. A minimum of 200 hours must be completed for students to receive a grade in field seminar at the conclusion of each semester. Students who fail to meet this requirement will have to retake the course or receive an Incomplete (I) if they were passing field seminar.

4. Absences due to observance of religious holidays, attendance at professional conferences may be permitted with the prior approval of the field instructor and field liaison. The field instructor will determine the number of field hours credited for attendance at professional conferences.
5. Students are not allowed to bank field hours in hopes of completing their field experience earlier. Students must remain at the field placement agency until the end of the academic term.

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 10 hours total in December (to be agreed upon by both student, field instructor, and field liaison) and such hours can be counted towards spring semester hours. 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:

Field internships are designed to help students develop and practice as professional social workers. Therefore, 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:

1. Items related to past social work, or related, coursework and work experiences
2. 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)
3. Items related to mid-semester or final evaluation instruments
4. Items related to field placement (both task and process focused)
5. Additional Items (future career goals)

Field Education Policies & Procedures

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.

[*Adapted from: Reeser, L.C. & Wertkin, R.A. (1997). Sharing sensitive student information with field instructors: Responses of students, liaisons, and field instructors. *Journal of Social Work Education* (Spring/Summer), 347---362.]

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 unable to pay 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 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.]

Guidelines on Safety in the Field

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.

Transporting Clients:

The University and the School of Social Work does 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.

Grades and Evaluation for Internship Courses

The student's letter grade for field education incorporates a grade for field placement given by the field instructor 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 Education Grievance Procedure

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.

Termination of Field Placement

Student's progress will be continually and thoroughly assessed throughout their time in the social work field experience. Normal growing pains of getting acclimated to a new agency may occur as these are usually part of the learning process. However, there are circumstances when students may have their placement terminated if:

- Their performance in field experience demonstrates, after adequate corrective efforts, little likelihood of successful completion. This may be a matter of knowledge, skills and/or values.
- Their attitudes or values are incompatible with the practice of professional social work.
- Commit a serious violation of NASW Code of Ethics.
- Consistently unable to form productive working relationships with clients, field instructors, or other students.
- Their personal problems (e.g. relationship substance abuse, mental illness) are so serious or recent as to preclude effective work in the field setting.
- Engage in serious academic or other dishonestly or in a breach of confidentiality

Steps after termination:

- Students will be informed in writing by the field of education of the area (s) of concern and corrective action necessary for continuance in placement.
- Students who have been terminated from field may be assigned a new field site if the problems that led to that decision are resolved. The burden is on the student to demonstrate that this is the case.

FIELD SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION OF STUDENT

Evaluation of the student is an on-going 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 40% 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.

FACULTY LIAISON'S EVALUATION OF STUDENT

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. 60% of the overall field education grade is determined by the student's performance in field seminar.**

Individualized Partnership Plans

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. 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.

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

<http://aysps.gsu.edu/files/2017/08/BSW-MSW1-Competencies-CSWE-2015.pdf>

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

<http://aysps.gsu.edu/files/2017/08/IPP-BSW-MSW1.pdf>

2nd Year MSW IPP

<http://aysps.gsu.edu/files/2017/08/8500-8900-IPP-8-16.pdf>

Trainings: New Field Supervisors

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 four-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 three 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. 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?

Employment Based Placements are only allowed on a case by case basis and are at the **sole** discretion of the field director. In certain circumstances, it may be acceptable for students to complete their internship at their place of employment. Some agencies are large enough to provide unique and distinct experiences for students so that their role of employee does not conflict with their role as an intern. Employee based placements must be applied for two semesters prior to the semester in which the student plans to begin field placement (Spring).

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, present as courteous, 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>)

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 fielddeduction@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."