

University of Washington
School of Social Work



2024-2025 MSW Field Education Manual

Please Keep This Manual For Your Records

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Introduction to the 2024-2025 Social Work Division MSW Field Manual

Important information – Please Read!

This manual serves students and field instructors as a guide for important resources, processes, documents and policies necessary for a full understanding of the requirements of field education. Comprising almost half of a student's required course credits, field education (*aka* "practicum") is the signature pedagogy of social work. Through field education, a student is provided with an opportunity to apply classroom learning to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and policy makers under the supervision of an experienced social worker.

If you have questions about anything in this manual, please do not hesitate to contact us. To our Field and Task Instructors: thanks for your hard work with new social work students—your efforts are deeply appreciated. To our students: thanks for being such great representatives of the UW Tacoma School of Social Work and Criminal Justice.

Welcome from the Office of Field Education

Welcome to the 2024-25 academic year! We are thrilled to work with and support each practicum placement through the School of Social Work & Criminal Justice. The Office of Field Education is here to provide guidance, consultation and address any challenges encountered throughout the practicum process. As your Field Coordinators, we provide support to practicum students, supervisors and agencies.

It is our pleasure to walk with you through this practicum journey. We are excited for all of the learning opportunities and successes you will have. Please contact us at any time with questions, concerns or needs. Our contact information is listed below. We'll be seeing you soon.

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The UW Tacoma School of Social Work and Criminal Justice & The UW School of Social Work

Mission and Goals of the Schools

The Social Work Division of the UW Tacoma School of Social Work and Criminal Justice (“The School”) is accredited jointly with the School of Social Work at the UW Seattle campus. We share a Mission Statement and are closely aligned with their Program Goals. The Tacoma and South Sound regions, however, are different in many ways from the Seattle area and the UW Tacoma Social Work Division (“The Division”) places an additional emphasis on providing access to both the BASW and MSW degrees to residents of our area. As part of the larger, urban-serving mission of the Tacoma campus, we greatly value community-based research and service, and providing four-year UW educational opportunities to students who have not previously had access—especially those from underserved communities who are the first in their families to pursue a college degree.

[UW Tacoma School of Social Work Mission Statement](#)

[UW Tacoma MSW Field Education](#)

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MSW Curriculum

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), through its Educational Policies and Standards (EPAS), sets the overall goals for social work education at both the undergraduate and graduate level. These goals are manifested through nine Core Competencies and the Behaviors that accompany them. The Behaviors are measured in the classroom through in-class content, readings, and assignments. Through Field Education and the practicum experience, mastery of the Competencies is achieved through the development and mastery of Learning Activities at the individual field site.

The MSW program is designed to educate students in generalist social work practice at the Generalist level, with in-depth practice occurring at the Specialization level. In the part-time UW Tacoma Program, MSW students usually complete their degree in three years. The first six quarters (Generalist curriculum) are focused on establishing basic level skills and knowledge, as well as instilling a dedication to social work values, ethical practice, and professionalism. The Specialization curriculum focuses on the integration of practice skills, values, and knowledge in an area of concentration, to include specialized field placements.

The UW Tacoma also offers an Advanced Standing option for qualified students with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work or Social Welfare. These students, having obtained Generalist skills in their undergraduate program, join the existing 3-year cohort for their Specialization curriculum and field placement.

[MSW 3-Year Program of Study](#)

[MSW Advanced Standing Program of Study](#)

[MSW Course Descriptions](#) (both required core classes and selectives)

Competencies and Behaviors: For Generalist and Specialization level MSW Students

Following are the nine Core Competencies and accompanying Generalist and Specialization Behaviors which students are expected to master by the time they complete their MSW classroom courses and practica:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.

Behavior B: Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.

Behavior C: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.

Behavior D: Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.

Behavior E: Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Understand and identify the role of a social worker in cross-disciplinary settings.

Behavior B: Identify opportunities to assume leadership roles in the creation, implementation, and/or evaluation of research-informed intervention programs.

Behavior C: Apply social work ethical principles to the design, implementation, and/or evaluation of research-informed intervention programs.

Behavior D: Engage in reflective practice.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Understand the importance of diversity in shaping different life experiences in practice (micro, mezzo, and macro).

Behavior B: Present as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.

Behavior C: Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Recognize and manage personal biases as they affect the professional relationship in the service of the clients'/constituents' interests.

Behavior B: Understand the many forms of diversity and difference and how these influence the relationship with clients/constituents.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights, and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Apply understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights and the individual and system levels.

Behavior B: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Articulate the potentially challenging effects of economic, social, cultural and global factors on client/constituent systems.

Behavior B: Advocate at all practice levels for the creation and implementation of programs that promote social and economic justice and diminish disparities.

Behavior C: Act as a change agent to promote social, economic, and environmental justice and diminish the impact of injustices.

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

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.

Behavior B: Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.

Behavior C: Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Apply critical thinking to evidence-based interventions and best practices.

Behavior B: Contribute to the theoretical knowledge base of the social work profession through practice-based research.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.

Behavior B: Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.

Behavior C: Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Recognize the interrelationship between clients/constituents, practice, and organizational and public policy.

Behavior B: Collaborate with colleagues, clients/constituents, and others to advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice to effect policy change.

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

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.

Behavior B: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Engage collaboratively with agency and community partners in developing programs to address a range of human and societal needs.

Behavior B: Demonstrate the skills required for effectively engaging with clients/constituents.

Behavior C: Collaborate with multidisciplinary colleagues in program design and development.

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

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.

Behavior B: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.

Behavior C: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges with clients and constituencies.

Behavior D: Select appropriate intervention strategies based on assessment, research knowledge, values, and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Apply appropriate theories of human behavior and the social environment in assessment of clients/constituents.

Behavior B: Evaluate, select, and implement appropriate assessment instruments, adapting them as appropriate to client/constituent circumstances.

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

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.

Behavior B: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

Behavior C: Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.

Behavior D: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.

Behavior E: Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Apply knowledge of the social constructions, dimensions, and intersections of the multiple aspects of human diversity to the implementation of research-informed interventions.

Behavior B: Identify, evaluate, and select effective and appropriate intervention strategies.

Behavior C: Develop and implement collaborative, multidisciplinary intervention strategies.

Behavior D: Engage diverse groups appropriate to the area of focus in the design of intervention programs.

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

Generalist Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.

Behavior B: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.

Behavior C: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes.

Behavior D: Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Specialization Level Behaviors

Behavior A: Apply research skills to the evaluation of intervention programs.

Behavior B: Identify and utilize appropriate evaluation tools for specific interventions.

For more information: [CSWE 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#)

Note: On June 9, 2022, CSWE released updated Policies and Standards which will be incorporated into UW Tacoma's MSW Field Manual at the start of the 2025-26 academic year. Training will be provided.

Field Education in the MSW Program: An Overview for Everyone

Quick Reference to Field Education Terminology

Field Education: The overall educational program of “real life” social work practice. This includes administration of the program; recruiting and retaining field placement agencies; training field and task instructors; and working with students to ensure their educational needs are being met and that they complete their degree ready to begin social work practice.

Practicum: Also known as “field,” or “field placement”. This is the actual practice experience for students under the supervision of a Field Instructor and (when appropriate) Task Instructor at an approved social service agency. MSW students complete two practicum placements: one at the Generalist level in their second year, followed by a Specialization practicum in their third year.

Field Faculty: The personnel from the School’s Social Work Division, including the Director of Field Education, who serve as coordinators of field placements, liaisons to agencies, and site visitors to assess student progress in their practicum placement. The same person may fulfill more than one of these responsibilities.

Field Instructor (FI): The individual at a field placement agency who provides on-site supervision of the student and is the principal contact with the School around student performance. This individual has an MSW degree and at least two years post-degree practice experience and is approved by the agency and School to provide oversight to a student’s placement. Exceptions to these requirements are made on a case-by-case basis.

Task Instructor (TI): Also known as Task Supervisor (TS). An individual at an agency without the required Social Work Degree requirements who provides day-to-day supervision of a student’s learning in collaboration with the On-Site or Off-Site Field Instructor. TI’s are used when the designated FI is not available for day-to-day oversight.

Off-Site Field Instructor (OSFI): A Field Faculty member from the School who provides ongoing Field Instruction to students who may be placed in an agency that does not have a degreed social worker on staff to provide practicum supervision. These instances are approved on a case-by-case basis and are exceptions to Field Education policy.

STAR (System to Administer Records): The online system used by the UW Seattle and Tacoma Schools to organize and monitor field placement activity including Learning Contracts and quarterly evaluation of progress. Students access STAR using their UW NetID. Field agency personnel access STAR through a Protect Network account.

FAQ's and Short Answers

How many hours are needed to complete the practicum? Students complete 1080 hours of field time for their MSW degree: 400 hours at the Generalist level (40 hours credited in an Introduction to Practicum course) and 680 hours at the Specialization level.

Can I do more than the required number of hours if I want to stay at the agency? No. If you wish to stay at your agency beyond the required number of field hours, you will need to “convert” to volunteer status with the agency. At that point, the UW no longer covers you for professional liability—this becomes a relationship just between you and the agency. Check with your Field Faculty if you have further questions.

When can students start their placement? As a rule, students start their placement during the Summer quarter at the end of their first or second year. Students placed in K-12 school settings, whether through the School District itself, or an agency whose work is entirely in the schools (e.g., Communities in Schools) may start their placement when the K-12 school year begins. Other “early starts” must be approved by the appropriate Field Faculty on a case-by-case basis.

Can students do a placement where they work? In special circumstances, students can request an agency-of-employment field placement. See below and Appendix A for more detail.

Are students covered by liability insurance? L&I? Auto insurance? Students are covered by the University for professional liability through the State of Washington. They are **not covered** for L&I (Worker’s Compensation) and are **not covered** for auto liability if they use their own car for practicum activities.

Are meal breaks and commuting time counted as field hours? Commuting time is not counted as field hours (although driving time associated with practicum tasks can be counted). Meals may be counted if you are engaged in practicum activities during that time (e.g., lunch and learn trainings).

Do students get credit for holiday or “snow day” hours when the agency is closed? No. These hours must be made up.

Do students get credit for sick time or parental leave for self or a family member? No. These hours must be made up.

What if an agency wants to hire a student as an employee before they finish their practicum hours? This occurs on a regular basis. We will work with the student and agency on a case-by-case basis to facilitate the process. Please inform your UWT Field Faculty when considering.

What if a student wants to change placement? This is done only in rare circumstances. See below for more detail.

What if an agency has concerns about a student's performance or wants to terminate the student? We will always collaborate with an agency to work out problems related to field placements. More detail about termination or suspension of field placements can be found below.

Approach to Field Education in the MSW Program

It is our belief that the MSW Program, the agency, and the student share a common commitment to field education as the primary means of socializing students to the profession. Service to the agency, its clientele and the community result from the student's involvement in practice organized around educational objectives, which are individualized in a learning contract.

Field Education provides opportunities for students to gain experience in working with a diverse range of persons and, with assistance from the Field Instructor, in understanding the relationship of strengths, values, beliefs and unique attributes in clients' social identities, including age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, family structure, military status, gender identity and/or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. The Field Instructor models social work values and ethics and provides instruction about values and ethics and their implications for social work practice.

We emphasize a teacher-student learning partnership and student/field instructor equity in processes related to educational assessment, learning style assessment, and field education contracting and evaluation. Effective learning also requires students and Field Instructors to actively question theory and practice through critical thinking and self-reflective learning. Instruction is provided by the Field Instructor on site in the agency. Teaching approaches include individual supervision, discussion, simulation, assigned cases and/or projects, readings, role plays, and, in some cases, group seminars for students in agencies with multiple students.

The integration of class and field occurs through many efforts and methods. Students are given class assignments that relate to their field placement and, conversely, they are required to give copies of their course syllabi to their Field Instructors.

Duties & Responsibilities of UWT Field Faculty

Field Faculty are responsible for recruiting agencies that support and affirm equity and inclusion, providing agency and student support through field visits with the student and field instructor, contact by telephone, email and other remote modalities (e.g., Zoom), and through the training of agency field instructors in field education requirements. Field Faculty are responsible for assessment of learning progress, clarification of field education requirements, assistance with the development of activities that build professional competencies, monitoring the learning environment, mediating concerns, and re-placing students if they are unable to learn effectively in a particular agency. Specific duties include:

1. Contact students and agencies to provide information about availability of field placements and basic field requirements, and to facilitate the introduction of students and Field Instructors to arrange initial interviews.

2. Visit the agency at least twice during the academic year to meet with the student, Field Instructor, and any Task Instructor to provide support, education, monitoring, and assessment of progress. Additional field visits will be made as needed to students and agencies requiring additional support and monitoring. When more appropriate, use of remote technologies for visits may be utilized.

3. Provide information and answer questions regarding Program expectations of students in field education sites, educational programs and policies, curriculum objectives, classroom experiences and assignments, and other field education requirements, and make suggestions for ways of applying classroom learning through field learning activities to build professional competencies.

4. Assist with the development of the Learning Contract and/or Evaluation if requested; and review the Contract and Evaluation for completeness and satisfactory progress towards competency attainment prior to assigning credit. The Field Faculty member will communicate with the student and Field Instructor regarding needed additions to the Contract or Evaluation, and will notify them of deadlines and consequences of missing or unsatisfactory paperwork.

5. Assess and address the effectiveness of the learning environment, quality of supervision, adjustment of the student to the placement, coordination between Field Instructors and other agency personnel involved with students, and the fit of the field placement for the student's goals, abilities, and learning style.

6. Provide on-going support and contact as needed to students and Field Instructors in order to maximize learning and professional development. Field Faculty should be responsive to student questions and concerns in a timely manner.

7. Educate students and Field Instructors about contacting the Field Faculty with any concerns about a placement, so that the Field Faculty can work to resolve the issues.

8. Assist the student and Field Instructor in giving direct feedback, including written documentation of difficulties. Incidences and consequences of unprofessional or unethical behavior should be discussed in advance of the evaluation process, to afford students and instructors the opportunity to work towards resolution.

9. Consult with the Field Instructor about student difficulties in field education and before making any change of placement site. No change in field placement can occur without the approval and involvement of the Field Faculty member for that placement.

Field Education in the MSW Program: For Agencies & Field Instructors

Standards and Procedures for Certification of Agencies as Field Sites

Agency Affiliation Agreements & Liability Coverage

When an agency has been identified as a possible Field Education site, a Field Faculty will confer with the agency representative and evaluate the possibility and appropriateness of an Affiliation Agreement. An Affiliation Agreement is a formal document required and approved by the UW Health Sciences Administration, The Schools of Social Work (including the UWT Social Work Program) and the Attorney General's (AG's) office to clarify conditions, risks, and specific terms of the Field Education experience.

In most cases, the School will initiate the Agreement process by providing a copy of the standard Affiliation Agreement pre-approved by the AG's office. The Affiliation Agreement is valid for the Seattle and Tacoma campuses jointly. When the agency returns the Agreement with appropriate agency signatures, the School will obtain the needed School signatures, then return a fully executed copy of the Agreement to the agency. Note that electronic signatures and/or scanned documents are the preferred and most efficient means of Agreement completion.

Any changes to the standard Agreement desired by the agency must also be approved by the AG's office. This also applies if the agency wishes to use its own version of such an Agreement. This process is facilitated by the Office of Field Education on the Seattle campus.

In usual circumstances, an Agreement is initiated after a student has been referred for placement; however, the Agreement must be in place before a student begins placement. Any exception to this policy should be agreed upon in writing by the agency and School. Placement interviews can proceed with agency verbal approval prior to finalizing and signing the Affiliation Agreement. When a student is confirmed for placement, the agency should also submit a resume for the proposed Field Instructor, to confirm the accredited BASW/MSW degree and date, as well as relevant experience in the practice to be taught.

Professional liability insurance through the University of Washington covers students for legal costs if they are named in any lawsuits related to their field work, as long as they are performing responsibilities under the terms of the Affiliation Agreement.

Students are covered by liability insurance if they are at that field site during the interims between academic quarters so long as they are registered for the following quarter, are approved for such hours by their Field Instructor, and it is part of the student's academic

program. The MSW Program model assumes students will continue field placements during quarter breaks, and prior permission from Field Faculty is not required for UWT students.

Liability coverage does not extend beyond the scope of the Affiliation Agreement. If a student wishes to remain at the agency as a volunteer after completing their field placement under terms of an Affiliation Agreement, they will need to make those arrangements with the agency personally and will not be covered by the University's insurance.

Expectations of the Agency

1. The Agency should provide students with:
 - Learning opportunities/experiences in all CSWE Competency areas.
 - Opportunities for direct, supervised learning with clients, social service agencies and other community resources and organizations.
 - Opportunities for directed learning toward understanding professional values and ethics and their applications in social work practice.
 - Orientation to and training in working with agency policies and procedures.
 - Safety training, including policies and procedures related to exposures to blood-borne pathogens.
 - Agency implementation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996.
 - Appropriate role definition and role modeling in professional social work behavior.
 - Opportunities to learn and to integrate empirically derived knowledge about assessment, intervention and the use of personal and environmental resources.
 - Opportunities for students to evaluate their own practice.
2. The agency demonstrates acceptance of its responsibility to contribute to social work education. Agency policies and procedures must be compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession, including affirmation of and support for diversity.
3. The agency should have sufficient staff to maintain its programs without reliance on students. The activities involved in the student's assignment are to be arranged on the basis of the student's learning needs and not to supplement the personnel of the agency. See Appendix F for information regarding U.S. Dept. of Labor regulations related to practicum placements.
4. The agency should be prepared to engage in planning with the MSW Program regarding student learning activities that prepare students to meet all Competencies and Behaviors.

5. The agency is willing to jointly participate in the selection and preparation of Field Instructors and to allow the Field Instructor ample time to carry out teaching responsibilities, including time to attend meetings and workshops conducted by the School.
6. Field Instructors are expected to provide, at minimum, **one hour every other week in regularly scheduled supervisory conferences** for their students who are in placement 16-24 hours per week. Supervision time is prorated for other field hour scheduling plans. While individual supervisory sessions are seen as the cornerstone of instruction, supervisory/instruction requirements may be met, in part, through structured group supervision or a student seminar.

Expectations and Responsibilities of the Field Instructor

1. The Field Instructor is selected by mutual agreement of the MSW Program and the Agency and must meet the following qualifications:
 - a. Have an MSW degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program.
 - b. Have at least two years of post-graduation professional social work experience.
 - c. Be employed and on site in the Field Agency, on the agency Board of Directors or volunteer roster, or a member of a community agency participating in an active coalition with the agency on work of mutual interest.

Exceptions to these qualifications must be approved by the appropriate Field Faculty member. The Council on Social Work Education requires that Field Faculty ensure adequate oversight of student placement. The Field Faculty will assess and address the needs of students in field placements where there may be need for increased oversight.

2. If a Task Instructor is regularly involved in the student's field placement, the Field Instructor takes responsibility for oversight of that relationship and ensuring that activities outlined in the Learning Contract and the student's overall experience are appropriately addressed.
3. New Field Instructors must supply the Program with a resume to verify their degree, date of graduation, and relevant expertise. They are also required to complete trainings provided by the School focused on professional competency development, problem-solving and student evaluations.
4. The Field Instructor must be willing to teach and evaluate students and be able to conceptualize and to effectively impart professional knowledge and skills. There must be the ability to adapt the foregoing to meet the individual needs and learning styles of students, including sensitivity to the affective aspects of socialization to the profession, the development of a professional identity and acquisition of professional knowledge and skills. When appropriate, Field Instructors are expected to assist students in identifying the relationship between difficulties in field education learning and personal problems.

The Instructor must also recognize the broad educational goal of preparation for social work practice rather than for specialized practice within a specific agency.

5. The Field Instructor has primary responsibility for finalizing the learning plan for each student assigned utilizing the Educational Contract template to develop learning opportunities at the agency that will build Core Competencies and related Behaviors. The Field Instructor should not hesitate to call upon the MSW Program to provide consultation.
6. The Field Instructor must facilitate the student's orientation to placement in the first few weeks of the placement as an adjunct to orientation which takes place during the student's Introduction to Practicum course. This may be accomplished through a formal agency orientation program, or by one-to-one consultation with the Field Instructor.
7. In the event that a student's learning in the Field Agency is not progressing satisfactorily, the Field Instructor should communicate with Field Faculty to apprise them of the situation and work to develop a plan of correction, adjustment, or re-placement.
8. The Field Instructor will represent the MSW Program in the agency, serving as an advocate for student training and for the students assigned to the Field Instructor.
9. The Field Instructor, in collaboration with the student, prepares a quarterly written evaluation of the student's progress towards Competencies and Behaviors and submits it to the MSW Program electronically via the STAR system at the end of the regular academic quarter. Late submissions will result in a grade of "X" or Incomplete, depending on circumstance, and should be discussed in advance with assigned Field Faculty.

Field Instructor Training

New Field Instructors and Task Supervisors are required to participate in trainings and orientations for working with practicum students. Group trainings are offered in Summer and Fall and supervisors will receive notice of its availability and how to access it when the agency has been confirmed to take a student for the upcoming year. The trainings include a New Practicum Supervisor Training and Orientation as well as an Overview of the STAR Database. The trainings will cover all requirements and logistics of practicum placements, tips for practicum onboarding, review of the nine core competencies as well as practicum documentation (i.e. learning contracts and quarterly evaluations).

Additionally, the UW Tacoma Field Faculty conduct individual and group trainings in Field Instruction by request and as needed. We're happy to come to any partner agency and talk one-to-one or with the agency's team about having a student and respond to any questions and concerns.

Field Instruction Policies of the UWT MSW Program

Following are general policies to guide the interaction between the UWT MSW Program and agencies providing field instruction to students. These policies serve as guidelines and reflect the common interests of all parties involved in Field Instruction. They are subject to modification as needed, but the guiding principle in their modification must be the "best educational interests of the student." While these policies are generally identical to those of the UW Seattle School of Social Work, some differences exist based on the context in which the UW Tacoma School operates.

1. Placement Pre-Requisites: Students must be in good academic standing before placement in a field education site, to include successful completion of all required MSW coursework up to that point. Placement also is dependent on the faculty judgment of students' readiness for placement. This means that a student has the motivation and skills to pursue the educational objectives outlined in the Field Manual and meets the [Standards for Essential Abilities and Attributes for Admission and Continuance in the School of Social Work](#).

2. Agencies will have the opportunity and responsibility to interview students referred to them for placement. The decision to accept or decline a particular student will be communicated to the Field Faculty in a timely manner. Agencies are not obligated to accept a student, and students are not obligated to accept a field placement offered them following an interview. Students and agencies must have a clear understanding that the Field Education placement is not a job placement. **Students do not arrange a field education placement on their own but work in partnership with Field Faculty to find an appropriate practicum placement.**

3. The Field Education Agency and/or the MSW Program have the right to terminate a student's placement following consultation between the student (when appropriate), Field Instructor and the Field Faculty. In such an event, the Policy Regarding Being Dropped from the MSW Program for Failure in Field Placements will be implemented (see Appendix E).

4. Conditions for placement in agencies of employment: Students interested in using their job as a field experience must meet specific requirements and submit a written request (see Appendix A). No course credits or exemptions are granted on the basis of life experience or previous employment. However, under agreed circumstances, students may propose to their Field Faculty to develop a separate Field Education placement in their social service place of employment. An Agency of Employment proposal (see Appendix A) must be completed to clarify student and agency ability to differentiate roles and provide new learning in an educational environment that does not affect or conflict with work responsibilities. It is highly recommended that any student interested in a placement with their employer reach out to their Field Faculty to discuss the process and requirements as early as possible.

5. In instances where issues have been raised by a Field Instructor and/or Field Faculty related to a student's difficulties in meeting the Field Education Competencies and Behaviors, that student may be required to complete additional hours and/or credits of field education above

and beyond the School's stated graduation requirements. In those cases, the requirement of additional hours and/or credits will be specified to the student in a written plan. This plan must be approved by the field education site, the Director of Field Education, and the MSW Program Chair prior to implementation.

6. Task Instructors: A student can be placed in an agency without direct oversight from a degreed social worker if the agency can identify an on-site employee willing to be responsible for the student on a day-to-day basis for learning assignments, administrative assistance, oversight of daily operations, and issues needing immediate attention. The agency and Field Faculty will collaborate to develop an appropriate supervision plan by a degreed social worker.

7. Off-Site Field Instructor (OSFI): In some instances, the Social Work Division may assign an "Off-Site Field Instructor" who will provide MSW student supervision in agencies with strong social service programs, but no available degreed social worker to provide supervision. The OSFI will be an employee of the Social Work Program, but will work closely with the agency to provide the type and amount of supervision required to maximize the student's learning experience and meet Program requirements. However, the Task Instructor will be primarily responsible for development and completion of the Learning Contract and Quarterly Evaluations in cooperation with the OSFI, who will have final signing authority on the documents.

Policy for Appointment To Affiliate Instructor Status

Affiliate Instructor appointments to the faculty of the University of Washington, Tacoma School of Social Work and Criminal Justice may be made to those Field Instructors and Task Instructors who hold a primary appointment with an outside agency or non-academic unit of the University.

The appointment is a recognition of those practitioners whose contributions to the educational mission of the Social Work degree programs have been continuous and substantial. Contributions to the Program ordinarily refer to Field Instruction, but may also include responsibilities for planning and coordinating social work instructional programs for students within the agency.

Qualified applicants will receive an invitation to apply for Affiliate Instructor status when they become eligible and at the recommendation of the UW Tacoma Field Faculty. At that time, application instructions and appointment procedures will be explained. Approved appointments will be renewed annually at the recommendation of the Director of Field Education subject to a vote of the Social Work faculty. The appointment will end when the appointee no longer meets criteria for Affiliate Instructor status (e.g., due to retirement, leaving the area).

Note: The UW Tacoma Affiliate Instructor appointment is campus-specific and does not apply to the Seattle campus of the University of Washington. That School has a separate application

procedure for affiliate faculty appointment to the Seattle campus. Interested Field Instructors should consult the Office of Field Education in Seattle for details.

Field Education in the MSW Program: For Students

Requirements for Credit

In order to receive a grade of "credit" in Field Education classes, the student must be in compliance with all of the policies and procedures described in this manual. Further, required documentation for the placement must be completed and submitted on time through the STAR system. Specifically, the following documentation must be received:

- 1. Learning Contract**, electronically signed by student and Field Instructor in STAR; this includes the Acknowledgement and Agreement to Participate in Field Education (see Appendix B) form which is accessed by the student in the electronic signature block of the Learning Contract. Failure to indicate acceptance of this Agreement will result in suspension of the Field Education placement.
- 2. Quarterly Learning Contract Evaluations**, electronically signed by student and Field Instructor on STAR. Evaluations must include the number of field hours completed that quarter (or since the previous evaluation, whichever applies best) and a recommendation of "Credit" by the Field Instructor. The number of field hours required each quarter is based on the student's individualized practicum schedule which may include early graduation plans and block placements. While some slight variation in hours between quarters occurs, students are expected to accrue hours consistently throughout their placement resulting in similar hourly counts each quarter. All deviations to this plan need to be proposed by the student and approved by the Field Instructor and UWT Field Faculty. To ensure a comprehensive evaluation, a student must accrue at least 80 hours in any given quarter to be eligible to receive credit. An exception is made for the last quarter of a student's placement if they have less than 80 hours to complete their total practicum hours.
- 3. Compliance with Immunization requirements** of the UW Health Sciences Administration.

If a student fails to submit practicum documentation by the due date or falls out of compliance with immunization requirements by the deadline set by the Health Sciences Immunization Program (HSIP), they may receive a grade of "no credit" and loss of practicum hours accrued during that quarter. Additionally, they may be referred to the SSWCJ Professional Standards Committee and may risk termination of their practicum placement. It is highly recommended that students communicate with their Field Instructor and UWT Field Faculty early if they are concerned about their ability to meet one of these practicum requirements.

Procedures for Student Placement in Field Agencies

Generalist Field Placement Process

The Generalist field placement (T SOCW 524) consists of 400 hours in a single Field Education agency in which the student can obtain instruction and experience at the micro, mezzo, and

macro levels. As a rule, Field Education placements for Generalist students begin in the Summer quarter at the end of the first year of classroom instruction. In some instances, at agency or student request, the placement may not begin until the following Autumn quarter (e.g., placements in public school systems that are not available during the summer months). The student-related process for Generalist practicum placement is as follows:

1. During Winter quarter of the first year, the Field Faculty meet with students individually to determine their interest areas, existing strengths, and the areas where they are in need of growth and learning opportunities. Together the student and Field Faculty member identify an agency which meets those needs and which is able to provide the micro-mezzo-macro experience requisite for the Generalist placement.
2. During Spring quarter of the first year, the student will enroll in one credit of T SOCW 524 and successfully complete it. Activities required in the course include, but are not limited to: interviewing for field placement with the identified agency; completion of online and in-class trainings and assignments; development of Draft Learning Contract with the agency Field Instructor. Students are credited for 40 field hours for successful completion of the course, leaving a total of 360 hours to be completed in the field agency.
3. Once the field placement has been confirmed by the student, agency, and Field Faculty, the online Learning Contract form will be set up in the STAR system and the student and Field Instructor can begin developing Learning Activities. It is expected that the Learning Contract will be finalized no later than the third week of the placement, but preferably sooner.

Specialization Field Placement Process

The Specialization field placement (T SOCW 525) consists of 680 hours in a single Field Education agency in which the student can obtain instruction and experience in a focused area of practice. Specialization Field Education sites are placements which will contribute to a student's depth of knowledge and experience and which will allow them to meet the curriculum Competencies and Behaviors of the Specialization Field Education Contract. The student must have successfully completed the entire Generalist level curriculum, including the Generalist field placement before they can enter the Specialization placement.

The student-related process for Field Education placement is as follows:

1. During Winter quarter, the Field Faculty meet with students individually to determine their interest areas for in-depth practice experience, review the Generalist field placement evaluations to identify areas of particular strength and those areas which may warrant further growth. From that conversation, the student and Field Faculty will identify agencies which meet these needs and which are appropriate to the Specialization year of the MSW degree.
2. The Field Faculty will communicate to agencies the names and backgrounds of students being referred to them to interview for placement.

3. The Field Faculty will provide the student with agency contact information. The student then contacts the agency directly to set an interview appointment and follows through with that interview, providing any additional information the agency might request.
4. The field agency will notify Field Faculty and the student of their decision about placement, at which point the student may accept or decline the offer. If the student declines the offer, they will work with the Field Faculty to identify other Field Education sites. If they accept the offer, this is confirmed in writing and/or e-mail.
5. The student will follow up with the agency for any orientations, trainings, or other requirements that might exist in order for them to begin their placement on the first day of the quarter.

K-12 School Social Work Certification

The UW and UW Tacoma Schools of Social Work do not manage the certification process for School Social Workers. Students seeking certification as School Social Workers must apply through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Social workers in school settings will need that certification in order to be hired by a school district for certificated positions.

Requirements for State of Washington School Social Worker Certification

- Completion of the MSW degree at a CSWE-accredited program
- Completion of a course in school social work or school law
- Submit fingerprints for a background check

While a practicum/field experience is no longer required for certification, candidates are advised to arrange a school placement experience with a certified social worker, as this field is very competitive. The required course in School Social Work is offered annually as a Selective course in the MSW curriculum. Please check out [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction - School Social Worker](#) for more information.

General Policies for Students

Registration Requirements to Start and Continue Practicum

In order to receive academic credit and for the University's professional liability insurance to cover students in field, students must be registered for their field course (T SOCW 524 or 525). In order for students to continue in their field placement during University breaks, they must be enrolled for the following quarter. In such cases, liability coverage will remain in effect during the breaks. Students starting their placements early must be registered for the upcoming quarter.

Academic Standing Requirements to Start Practicum

Students are not allowed to enter their field placement unless they have successfully completed all required coursework up to that time. If a student receives a failing grade (2.6 or below or NS or NC) in an MSW required course, that course must be successfully repeated with a passing grade before the student can enter their field placement. Dependent on the scheduling of courses, this will likely result in a delay in graduation from the program.

Employment Conflicts

If a student is employed, it may be necessary to make changes in the work schedule or other commitments to complete the Field Education requirements. This is the responsibility of the student and Field Faculty do not engage with employers or human resource personnel about such conflicts.

Background Checks, Fingerprinting, and/or Required Trainings

Depending on the placement, some students may be required to complete background checks in addition to the one completed upon admission to the MSW program. Other requirements may include fingerprinting (notably in school settings), CPR training, Domestic Violence Survivor or Perpetrator training, drug screens, etc. When there is a cost to the student for such requirements, you may be eligible for reimbursement from the MSW program. Only **mandatory** trainings/checks will be reimbursed. Registration fees for non-mandatory conferences or seminars will not be reimbursed. Check with your Field Faculty if you have questions.

Immunizations

Students are required to meet the immunization requirements set by University of Washington Health Sciences Immunization Program (HSIP). The UWT Social Work Program does not grant requests for waivers to the Immunization requirements; any such waivers must be issued by HSIP. The immunization program is currently administered through Castle Branch and students should contact them or HSIP (MyShots@uw.edu) directly with any questions or concerns.

1. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure each quarter that they are in compliance with the Health Sciences Immunization requirement. Students must communicate directly with Castle Branch and/or HSIP with questions and or concerns related to Immunization requirements.
2. Students who become noncompliant during practicum will be suspended from their Field site and will not be allowed to return until they are in documented compliance. Any and all time missed from the Field Education site due to suspension must be made up prior to the end of the quarter. Students will receive an Incomplete if compliance is not attained by the end of the quarter and will not be allowed to participate in Field Education until they are in compliance. In addition, a plan to make up all time missed from the Field Education site

must be agreed to by the student, Field Instructor and submitted to the Field Faculty for review.

Additional Field Hours May be Required in Certain Circumstances

In instances where issues have been raised by a Field Instructor and/or Field Faculty related to a student's difficulties in meeting the Field Education Competencies and Behaviors or other related issues, that student may be required to complete additional hours and/or credits of field education above and beyond the School's stated graduation requirements. In those cases, the requirement of additional hours and/or credits will be specified to the student in a written plan. This plan must be approved by the field education site, the Director of Field Education, and the MSW Program Chair prior to implementation.

Termination from Practicum (See Appendix E)

If a field placement is discontinued at any point prior to the end of the placement due to unsatisfactory performance ("for cause"), the student will receive a grade of "no credit" for that quarter and no field hours for that quarter will be credited to the student's overall required total. With the approval of the Field Faculty, and in consultation with the student's faculty advisor, students are allowed to repeat a Field Education placement for which they have received a grade of "no credit" at a different placement site. The conditions of the second placement (e.g., total number of hours to be repeated; when the new placement can begin) are at the discretion of the Field Faculty, in consultation with the student's faculty advisor. If the second placement also is discontinued due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will be dropped from the MSW program.

If a student is terminated from a job which is also serving as a field placement, they will receive a grade of "No Credit" for the quarter and will need to work with their Field Faculty around re-placement.

Field Education in the MSW Program: Agencies, Field Instructors and Students

Placements in an Agency of Employment

The use of the social service agency where a student is employed for field placement may be proposed by students. Evaluation and approval of the proposal is done on a case-by-case basis and is solely at the discretion of the Field Faculty member working with that student.

1. The proposal must be designed in such a way that its implementation will facilitate the student's development as a professional social worker by providing opportunities to pursue and achieve the educational objectives for the curriculum in which the student is enrolled.
2. The proposal must outline new learning opportunities for the student. Any roles, tasks or responsibilities that the student/employee has taken on within the past 12 months is considered new learning. Students are not allowed to use positions or work that they have more than 12 months of experience doing for the purposes of practicum.
3. For specific instructions and required content of an AOE proposal, see Appendix A.

Counselor Credentialing

Per the Washington State Department of Health, students **may** but are not required to register as an Agency Affiliated Counselor. Specifically, DOH states:

“Student interns are not required to apply for the agency affiliated counselor registration. Students enrolled in an educational program are exempt from credentialing requirements per RCW 18.19.040. However, the agency may require them to be registered to satisfy a condition of an internship or practicum.” ([Effective 07/25/21](#))

While ESSHB 1504 was passed during the 2021 legislative session and expands the role of AACs to include not only employees but student interns, the rulemaking process related to these changes are still ongoing during the 2023-24 academic year. If an agency is considering requiring their student to apply for AAC registration, there are a few things to for the supervisor and student to consider:

1. The cost of the application fee may be burdensome and even prohibitive for some students. Agencies should consider paying the application fee on behalf of the student especially if they will be billing for the student’s practicum work. Payment of AAC application fees should be negotiated and disclosed before the start of the practicum placement.
2. Please review the [Policy Statement](#) issued by the Department of Health – Health Systems Quality Assurance. Students who are registered as AACs are subject to

the disciplinary authority of DOH and “may be investigated and placed under disciplinary action according to the Uniform Disciplinary Act at chapter [18.130 RCW](#) and professional regulations at chapter [246-810 WAC](#).” Please be aware that students who are not registered as AACs are not subject to disciplinary processes. If an agency requires a student to apply for an AAC, a plan should be created between student and agency supervisors to ensure that the student has the support and mentorship needed to be successful and avoid disciplinary action.

Accommodations Due to a Disability

Students must notify Field Faculty prior to the start of the field placement process if they have a letter from Disability Resource Services (DRS) for academic accommodation. If such accommodations will extend to the practicum placement, the student must share this information with the agency at the time of interview to ensure the agency will be able to provide appropriate accommodations. Field Faculty are available to consult and assist in presenting accommodation plans to an agency at the student’s request.

As a condition of accepting a field education placement, students represent that they are physically and cognitively capable to participate in the program, with or without accommodation. To request disability accommodation for this field placement, students should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) at: drsuwt@uw.edu, or by phone at 253-692-4522. For more information about disability accommodations, see the [DRS website](#).

Harassment and Discrimination

Local, state and federal non-discrimination and anti-harassment laws, including Title IX, cover student activities involving university credit, including field placements. In the standard affiliation agreement signed by the field education agency, the School requires assurances that agency policies with respect to students comply with all laws prohibiting unlawful discrimination and harassment. If you experience any treatment during the field placement that you believe is discriminatory or harassing, report it immediately to the Director of Field Education. Students should also be aware of and utilize University grievance and discrimination policies and procedures found in the program manual.

Scheduling of Field Education Hours

The schedule for students in the Generalist and Specialization Field placement may be individually arranged between the student and Field Instructor. As a rule, Field Education placements begin in the Summer quarter. In some instances, at agency or student request, the placement may not begin until the following Autumn quarter (e.g., placements in public school systems that are not available during the summer months). It is very important that both the student and Field Instructor be aware of how the student is progressing toward completion of

hours. It often occurs that hours are completed much more quickly than either is aware. **The student and Field Instructor will develop a system for tracking hours at the agency.** The MSW Program does not prescribe a specific “time sheet” or other mechanism for tracking hours.

While students make a commitment to 9-12 months of field placement, when they complete the required number of hours for their Generalist or Specialization practicum (360 or 680, respectively), their liability coverage with the University ends and the student **MUST** leave their field placement.

Generalist Field Education (T SOCW 524)

Students complete 360 hours extended over Summer, Autumn, and Winter quarters. This is in addition to the 40 hours completed during the Spring quarter prior, for a total of 400 hours. Due to liability coverage by the University, students **cannot** have client contact prior to the start date agreed upon with the agency. They **can** engage in orientation or training activities that do not involve client contact prior to the first day of the quarter.

Specialization Field Education (T SOCW 525)

Students must complete 680 hours extended over Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring quarters. Due to liability coverage by the University, students **cannot** have client contact prior to the start date agreed upon with the agency. They **can** engage in orientation or training activities that do not involve client contact prior to the first day of the quarter. It is possible for MSW students to graduate “early” (March instead of June of their final year). If a student wishes to do this, they must complete all field hours prior to the last day of Winter quarter and their final field evaluation must be submitted via STAR. Students must have approval from their Field Instructor and the MSW Program in order to pursue this option and it should be discussed as early as possible to avoid unexpected disruptions to placements.

Early Start Dates: Students placed in school settings, including those agencies whose work is entirely within the schools (e.g., Communities in Schools) may begin their field placement at the start of the K-12 school year with Field Instructor and UWT Field Faculty permission. Students must, however, be registered for Autumn quarter prior to starting.

Early start dates at other agencies must be approved by both the agency and the Field Faculty overseeing the placement and must be for good cause. Mandatory trainings or orientations do not require pre-approval, but the hours count toward the student’s total.

“Block” placements: While most students will spread their field hours over 9-12 months, on occasion it will be to the benefit of both a student and the field agency for the student to do their hours as a “block,” that is, 30-40 hours per week for a shorter period of time. This can be arranged by the student and Field Instructor, but must be approved by the Field Faculty member. **Note:** Completion of hours in a block fashion still requires that the student register for and receive credit for the required number of academic credits for graduation, and will impact both subsequent course registration and financial aid (if applicable).

University Breaks: Students are not required to be in their field sites when the UWT is not in session. However, any such absences from field must be discussed with the Field Instructor in advance to allow for appropriate coverage of student responsibilities. Students are covered for liability by the UWT during University breaks, if registered for practicum the following quarter, and can continue their hours uninterrupted if they so choose.

Holidays and Inclement Weather Days: UW Tacoma MSW students do not receive credit for holidays or bad weather days. If hours are missed because of agency closure for holidays or other reasons, the hours will need to be made up at other times.

Sick Time: Students do not receive sick time for themselves or to care for a family member. Hours missed for this reason must be made up at a later date.

Scheduling Absence from Field Site: Any planned absence from the Field site must be agreed upon between the student and Field Instructor, with coverage of a student's responsibilities arranged for and agreed upon.

Grading

T SOCW 524 and 525 are graded on a Credit/No Credit Basis. While the Field Instructor makes a recommendation of Credit on each Quarterly Evaluation, the final decision for Credit is made by the Field Faculty.

Incompletes in Practicum: A grade of Incomplete in Practicum may be issued when a student falls behind in their field hours for a given quarter. Such grading decision will be made in consultation with the Field Instructor, but is ultimately the decision of the Field Faculty. The Incomplete must be credited no later than the end of the following quarter. The Field Faculty will notify the Field Instructor and student at the beginning of the following quarter that the Incomplete must be cleared and the current quarter hours completed by the end of the quarter. If a student is not able to complete the credits in question, the Field Faculty must review the situation with the Director of Field Education. Together they will determine the need to refer the situation to the Professional Standards Committee. Incompletes in Field Education may have an impact on a student's financial aid eligibility. The student should consult with Financial Aid personnel for more detail.

Grades of “No Credit” in Practicum: If a student receives a grade of “No Credit” in any quarter of the practicum placement, they will be required to meet with their Field Faculty member and the Director of Field Education to discuss the circumstances that led to the failing grade. The student will be required to repeat the credits and field hours for the failed quarter. This may delay the student’s planned graduation date. The student may also be subject to review by the Professional Standards Committee and may be subject to the rules governing termination of practicum placements (see Appendix E).

Mandatory Reporting

While all professional social workers fall under the Mandatory Reporting statutes of the State of Washington, practicum students do not, **as students**, fall under the statutory roster of Mandatory Reporters (unless the student is also an employee at their practicum site). Hence, students are not required to **independently** report neglect/abuse conditions listed in the statute.

However, when a situation arises that falls under mandatory reporting requirements, the student should consult with the Field Instructor to inform them of the situation and discuss how the Field Instructor will proceed with reporting. We highly recommend that students be included in the reporting process as part of their overall professional social work education.

Safety and Transportation

Guidelines for Enhancing Safety and Minimizing Risk in the Field

Field sites are requested to adopt policies and procedures for enhancing safety and minimizing risk to field students.

Agencies must have written policies to address any work situation that entails risk, such as the following: home visits, any services outside the agency in isolated or high crime areas, services at night or weekends, services to clients who may become angry or violent, exposure to pathogens or toxic substances, and services that are politically sensitive that may result in threats of violence. This list is not to be considered exhaustive and each agency is responsible for determining its own situations where students' safety may be put in jeopardy.

Each site is responsible for orienting students to the safety policies and procedures of that setting during the agency orientation, as well as in supervision. It is important to discuss guidelines for prevention, taking risks, as well as to crisis/safety plans. Such discussion should also include, but not be limited to, safety issues in the community, within the agency building(s), with particular clients prone to violent behavior, and security of personal belongings.

Students should not see clients alone unless the student clearly has the knowledge and skills to do so. Students have a right and responsibility to refuse any assignment where they feel physically at risk or which they deem too dangerous to pursue at the time. If students have safety concerns, they should immediately inform their Field Faculty.

The student should not be the sole representative of the agency in making critical decisions about client or patient disposition where there are physical or legal implications such as involuntary hospitalization, threats of suicide, or threats of homicide. If the Field Instructor is not available in such situations, there must be a written and fully understood protocol for

notifying another staff person, a protocol for calling 911, or for getting the client/patient to an emergency facility that can meet their needs.

Students are expected to receive a specific orientation to agency policies and procedures regarding risk management. If the Field Instructor does not provide this orientation, students must ask for it. Students should also learn about the agency's informal methods for assessing and handling risky situations.

Students are **NOT** covered for Labor and Industries (L&I) insurance by the University while in their field placements.

Exposure to Pathogens or Toxic Substances

Students should also be trained to understand the issues involved in exposure to pathogens or toxic substances, reminding them that one's first duty is to reduce risk to one's clients by one's own behaviors. Because some life-threatening illnesses are transmitted through the exchange of blood or body fluids (blood borne pathogens), students are trained about the potential of such risks in the field (e.g., restraining a patient in the ER, cleaning the bloody lip of a child who has fallen), as well as the procedures to reduce risk of infection.

Students are expected to receive safety training specific to COVID-19 or other such airborne infections, including appropriate protective measures such as Personal Protection Equipment and social distancing protocols.

What Students Should Do if Attacked Injured, or Seriously Threatened During Field Time

1. Follow agency procedures to manage the immediate situation and to report the incident
2. Get any needed medical care
3. Notify and debrief with your agency Field Instructor
4. Notify the appropriate UWT Field Faculty member
5. Recognize that a physical attack or threatening behavior is frightening and that you may respond emotionally to the stress. Seek help to resolve the crisis responses.

Transportation

Field students are sometimes asked to use their cars for agency business, e.g., transporting clients, making home visits, or attending client conferences, court hearings, or organizational meetings. Before responding to such requests, the student should ask whether or not the agency has an agency car or agency insurance for the use of privately owned vehicles to cover these activities. If the answer is no, students should immediately check to determine if their current automobile policy covers such endeavors. In no case should students undertake agency business in their personal vehicles without adequate automobile liability insurance coverage for business purposes and passengers.

Students are advised that the student's own automobile insurance will be the primary coverage for any accident or personal injury. The University of Washington, Tacoma does **NOT** provide health or accident insurance for Field Education participants, nor for passengers in the student's vehicles, nor for damage to the vehicle itself. Students have the right to refuse a placement if the site requires business use of the student's personal vehicle and the student does not want to assume liability.

Suspension or Termination of Placement

Unfortunately, not every field placement works out as well as we would collectively hope—what is referred to as a disrupted placement. Often, this is the result of a poor “fit” between the student and agency and a change in practicum site is clearly in everyone's best interests. On occasion, changes in personnel at agencies or in the life circumstances of a student requires that they leave a field placement that is otherwise working well. The Field Faculty member will make every effort to continue that field placement with alternative supervision, but also recognizes this is not always in the best interests of the student and their education.

Following are guidelines for Field Instructors and students to use in various other scenarios. Every situation is unique, and while these guidelines may provide assistance with the situation, the Field Faculty is always available to work with the student, Field Instructor, and agency on a one-to-one basis.

Concerns of the Field Instructor about the Student

1. The Field Instructor should address the concerns with the student and see if the issues of concern can be worked out directly. Experience with such situations indicates that open and clear communication between the student and Field Instructor often alleviates tense or problematic situations.
2. If the issue at hand cannot be resolved directly with the student, the Field Instructor should contact the Field Faculty and consult with him/her about the situation. Often, this sort of strategizing can result in a resolution to the problem.
3. The Field Faculty is always available to come to the site to meet face-to-face with the student, Field Instructor, and anyone else deemed appropriate. At this point, an action plan for resolving the issue will be developed and agreed to by all parties.
4. Should this final approach be unsuccessful, the student, Field Instructor, and Field Faculty will meet to arrange termination of the placement with the agency.

Concerns of the Student about the Field Instructor or Agency

1. The student should address the concerns with the Field Instructor and see if the issues of concern can be worked out directly. Since the power differential between student and Field Instructor can be somewhat intimidating, especially early in the practicum relationship, the student may wish to consult with their Field Faculty to “rehearse” how to approach the Field Instructor for such a discussion.

2. If the issue at hand cannot be resolved directly with the Field Instructor, the student should contact the Field Faculty for the placement and consult with them to arrange a face-to-face meeting among all concerned.
3. Such a meeting will serve to clarify problems, discuss potential solutions, and attempt to develop a plan that will allow the practicum to go forth.
4. Should this final approach be unsuccessful, the student, Field Instructor, and Field Faculty will meet to arrange termination of the placement with the agency.

Situations in which immediate suspension or termination of a placement is necessary

In the event that an agency wishes to immediately suspend or terminate a field placement due to unprofessional behavior of a student, the FI is requested to:

1. Contact the Field Faculty immediately to discuss the circumstances leading to the situation.
2. Inform the student verbally (with written follow-up) the reason for the suspension or termination. Share write up and documentation of unprofessional behavior with Field Faculty.
3. Work with the Field Faculty to accomplish any follow-up activities or meetings that need to occur in order to appropriately end the placement.
4. Discuss with the Field Faculty ways in which the situation leading to the termination can be avoided in the future, and how the agency and School can work together to promote social work education.

If a student is moved from a placement part way through a quarter for any reason, the Field Faculty requests that the Field Instructor provide a written summary of the student's learning activities up to that point in the quarter, along with summary of hours completed and recommendation for credit or no credit. The student should also submit a written summary of learning and evaluation of the placement site.

Policy Regarding Being Dropped from the MSW Program for Failure in Field Placements (See Appendix E)

If a field placement is discontinued at any point prior to the end of the placement due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will receive a grade of "no credit" for that quarter and no field hours for that quarter will be credited to the student's overall required total. With the approval of the Field Faculty, and in consultation with the student's faculty advisor, students are allowed to repeat a Field Education placement for which they have received a grade of "no credit" at a different placement site. The conditions of the second placement (e.g., total number of hours to be repeated; when the new placement can begin) are at the discretion of the Field Faculty, in consultation with the student's faculty advisor. If the second placement also is discontinued due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will be dropped from the MSW program.

Other Field Placement Suspensions: If a student becomes noncompliant with Field Education requirements during any quarter of the academic year placement will be suspended until the issue is resolved. Field instructors and students will be notified that students cannot return to placement until these requirements are met and all time missed must be made up to receive credit. All plans to make up placement time must be approved by Field Faculty.

Field Education in the MSW Program: Learning Contracts, Evaluations

STAR: Learning Contracts and Quarterly Evaluations

STAR: System To Administer Records

All Field Education documentation is done through STAR, our online system for completing and monitoring Learning Contracts and Quarterly Evaluations.

Access to STAR: UW students and employees utilize their UW NetID's to access STAR. Users who are not UW employees or students need to create a Protect Network account in order to access STAR. Your Field Faculty will provide instructions on how to do this when a placement is confirmed.

Learning Contract and Evaluation documents are developed with students and their Field Instructors, submitted online by the Field Instructor, and reviewed online by Field Faculty, who approve and "lock" them. They remain viewable, but no longer editable. Changes or updates to the Learning Contract can be made through the Quarterly Evaluation in the section in which student and Field Instructor indicate priorities for the following quarter.

One VERY IMPORTANT item with STAR: Two individuals CANNOT be in the same STAR document at the same time—the system does not then know which changes to a document to save, and everything is lost. Please remember this as you're completing your documents.

The Generalist Educational Learning Contract

1. The Learning Contract must be developed and electronically signed by the Field Instructor and student. It is submitted on STAR and approved by the Field Faculty in order for the student to receive credit. **A change of field sites or a significant change in field assignment(s) requires the development of a new educational contract or addendum to the original.**
2. The purpose of the educational contract is to make explicit that learning activities for the field placement must support Competency development, to define the agency activities which will be assigned, and to identify methods of assessing student progress towards mastery. The educational contracts also are designed to ensure that all students in all field education sites will meet the Competencies and Behaviors for Generalist MSW education as set forth by CSWE and the Social Work Program.
3. A draft of the Generalist educational contract beings during the Introduction to Field course offered in the spring each year. The final draft, submitted by the Field Instructor in the first few weeks of the first quarter of placement, identifies and guides the learning tasks for the students and methods of measurements towards competency the Field Instructor will use during the placement. A blank version of the Generalist Learning Contract is available as Appendix C if

students and/or Field Instructors want to start drafting the learning contract before STAR documents are ready.

4. Any questions regarding the writing of the contract should be referred to the Field Faculty. It is the responsibility of the student to write and develop the learning contract in discussion with the Field Instructor. Both the student and Field Instructor must sign the learning contract in STAR and the Field Instructor must submit it.

Developing MSW Generalist Level Learning Activities

The student, in conjunction with the Field Instructor, is required to develop specific activities the student will carry out at the field site in order to achieve the Practice Behaviors of the MSW Generalist Learning Contract. Activities are required at each level of practice—micro, mezzo, and macro.

Based on the student’s educational assessment and the specific learning opportunities available at the agency, please list **two or three specific activities at the micro, mezzo or macro levels** that the student will engage in during the course of the placement. At the end of each quarter, both student and FI should review the plan to reflect individual growth, organizational changes, and new learning opportunities, and revise as needed through the Quarterly Evaluation.

Micro, Mezzo and Macro practice reflects the continuum of social work practice. Activities in these three areas range from those focusing on change within the individual to those focusing on change within the larger society. There is overlap between these categories and most social workers utilize skills from all three areas.

Listed below are examples of Field activities that are measurable. The list is not exhaustive and attempts have been made to provide specific practice activities in each of the three areas.

Sample Measurable Activities:

- Participate in or provide weekly individual counseling/therapy to 5 clients per quarter.
- Complete an assessment on 2 clients
- Observe 3 therapeutic visitations
- Complete 5 home visits and document in the agency computer/client filing system
- Observe 3 intake interviews and write up treatment plans
- Assess treatment needs of clients
- Discuss in supervision the disengagement process for each client
- Teach and reinforce social skills with 2 children and their families
- Provide case management services to families
- Prepare discharge plan for client
- Reflect on how mechanisms of oppression and discrimination may play out in a health care setting. Discuss role of social worker in advocating.
- Develop a treatment plan
- Provide family, couple and individual therapy

- Answer crisis line calls, provide crisis intervention
- Meet with client to assess their progress in completing treatment plan
- Meet with family to discuss reactions to diagnosis
- Attend psychopharmacology consultation with client
- Accompany case management staff on home visits
- Observe planning and transition for child from foster home to adoptive home
- Document case management visit
- Provide bereavement counseling
- Provide cognitive behavioral treatment to individual client
- Provide outreach to individuals on the street
- Plan and facilitate therapeutic visitations
- Attend legislative event to observe and advocate
- Keep a reflective journal; student to identify potential ethical dilemmas
- Attend an interdisciplinary conference or meeting
- Review other professions code of ethics and reflect in journal (or in supervision) what makes Social Work practice guidelines unique
- Teach how to prepare and how to use supervision, how to prepare for consultation meeting
- Interview members of the treatment team to gain different perspectives

The Specialization Educational Learning Contract

The process for Specialization Learning Contracts is the same as for Generalist documents, however the Behaviors for the Competency areas are different, reflecting the focus on specialized practice and development of autonomy as a social worker. Also, the requirements for micro, mezzo, and macro experiences are absent from the Specialization contract.

A draft version of the Specialization Learning Contract is available as Appendix D if students and/or Field Instructors want to start the process before STAR documents are ready.

The Quarterly Evaluation

The student and Field Instructor share responsibility for evaluation of the student's field experience each quarter. Students must review each quarter's learning activity and discuss areas of competency development and needs for further growth. The Field Instructor is responsible for rating the student's competency in each Behavior, providing a summary of the student's progress for the quarter, and identifying priorities for the upcoming quarter(s).

Together, the student and Field and/or Task Instructor prepare, discuss, and submit the evaluation. Please Note: The Task Instructor does not sign or submit the evaluation, though they should be involved in its preparation. **The Field Instructor has responsibility for submitting the final Evaluation once both the student and they have signed it.** Students will not receive credit without a signed, submitted evaluation.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Practicum Documentation

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a new and ever-changing part of the social work field. For practicum purposes, AI can be used as an organizing tool to outline practicum documents if a student and supervisor choose to do so. Please remember, learning activities must be measurable and specific to the assigned agency. If the student and supervisor choose to use AI, they must review the language and tailor to the placement's unique goals and needs before submitting. Documents that are not specific to the student or placement site will be rejected and will require revisions.

Reflecting our social work values of integrity and competence, it is expected that when AI is used students are transparent and acknowledge the use of AI tools prior to submission. However, all reflection or assessment prompts should be completed without the use of AI to capture the student introspection and supervisor evaluation that is a critical component of any practicum placement. This is a new experience for many of us. Field Faculty are available to address questions or provide consultation if needed. Finally, this statement is only applicable to AI use in practicum documentation. It is not applicable to any other coursework in the Social Work Program including Practicum Seminars.

Appendix A: Agency of Employment Practicum Policy and Proposal

Request for Field Placement in an Agency of Employment

Students may propose to develop a separate Field Education placement in their social service place of employment, under agreed circumstances and approved by their Field Faculty.

An Agency of Employment (AoE) Practicum Proposal must be completed to clarify student and agency practicum roles and provide new learning in an educational environment that does not affect or conflict with work responsibilities.

No practicum course credits or exemptions are granted on the basis of life experience or previous employment.

Students may request a practicum placement at their AoE if the placement meets the following criteria:

1. Agency must have an established Affiliation Agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with the University of Washington, School of Social Work which includes the Tacoma campus.
2. New learning must be identified in the student's AoE proposal. In their proposal, a student must either a) identify new practicum tasks which are different than their employment experience, or b) have started their current employment position within the last year. Please note, this means that a student cannot use work in a position that they held for over a year as a practicum placement.

Any activities and responsibilities that count towards field education credits must be related to building social work competencies and be outlined in the field learning contract.

3. There must be a MSW degreed social worker at the agency willing to serve as Field Instructor for the MSW student during their practicum. Field Instructors are the official agency representative for the practicum placement providing formal supervision and participation in the evaluation of the student's progress and training. The Field Instructor must serve in the agency of employment, or be on the agency's Board, serve as a volunteer in the organization.

A Task Supervisor can also be identified for daily supervision of the student and can work in coordination with the Field Instructor if needed. No degree requirements are mandated for Task Supervisors.

4. The student must get approval from agency leadership to pursue a practicum placement at their employment site before UW Tacoma Field Faculty will consider the student's AoE proposal.

Evaluation and approval of the AoE proposal is the responsibility of the Social Work Division. The proposal must be approved by the Field Faculty member working with the student. Field Faculty are available to meet with the student and agency leadership to discuss UWT's social work practicum program, requirements and available practicum options. However, Field Faculty do not negotiate, intervene or act on behalf of the student regarding HR or employment related issues between the agency and student. This includes conversations related to work schedules and hours, job duties and/or salary.

Any employment concerns that impact the student's performance in practicum will be addressed using the process outlined in pages 32-34 of this manual. Should a student be terminated from employment for cause, the practicum placement will be considered terminated as well and will be subject to the Termination from Field policy.

Instructions:

1. The student should request a meeting with their assigned Field Faculty to discuss their AoE options. At that meeting, the Field Faculty will confirm that the AoE is an Affiliated Agency with UW.
2. The student should draft an AoE proposal (please see template starting on page 3). The proposal must be designed in such a way that directly links the student assignments and employee tasks to the nine social work competencies at the appropriate level of practice. The proposal should also make distinct field education supervision from employment supervision.
3. Once in final draft format, the student should send the AoE proposal to their assigned Field Faculty for review. Any feedback or necessary changes will be provided to the student at this time. The student should **not** collect signatures from agency personnel until after the Field Faculty reviews the proposal to avoid duplicate signatures.
4. After the Field Faculty has given the greenlight on the AoE proposal, the student should collect signatures from agency personnel including their employment supervisor, the proposed Field Instructor and the agency administrator who is responsible for authorizing practicum placements. Electronic signatures are acceptable and encouraged.
5. The student should sign and submit their proposal with agency signatures to their assigned Field Faculty who will complete one last review before finalizing the proposal. If approved, the Field Faculty will sign, retain the original and send a copy of the AoE proposal to the student and agency personnel.

Request for Agency of Employment Practicum Placement

Student Information

First and Last Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

UW Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Placement Designation (BASW, MSW Generalist or MSW Specialist): Click or tap here to enter text.

Current Employment Information

Name of Agency: Click or tap here to enter text.

Division or Unit (if applicable): Click or tap here to enter text.

Current Employment Supervisor: Click or tap here to enter text.

Supervisor's Phone Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Supervisor's Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed Practicum Site Information

Name of Agency: Click or tap here to enter text.

Division or Unit (if applicable): Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed Field Instructor: Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed Field Instructor's Phone Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed Field Instructor's Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed Field Instructor's Year of MSW Graduation: Click or tap here to enter text.

*** Note:** The proposed Field Instructor must provide a copy of their resume with the proposal, unless the Field Instructor is already approved in that role by the Division. If applicable, please submit the proposed Field Instructor's resume with the final, signed AoE proposal.

Proposed Practicum Placement Information (*all fields must be completed*)

Quarter(s) for which placement is being proposed:

Summer Autumn Winter Spring

Proposed starting date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Anticipated practicum hours per week: Click or tap here to enter text.

*** Note:** The number of qualified practicum hours is at the discretion of Field Faculty.

Current employment title: Click or tap here to enter text.

Hire date: Click or tap here to enter text.

*** Note:** If hired within 1 year of proposed practicum start date, the student is considered a new hire for the purposes of this request.

Describe your regular job responsibilities and functions:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Provide your current work schedule including days and times (not applicable for new hires): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Nine Core Competencies

1. Competency One: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Competency Two: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Competency Three: Advance Human Rights, and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
4. Competency Four: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Competency Five: Engage in Policy Practice
6. Competency Six: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Competency Seven: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Competency Eight: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Competency Nine: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Describe the proposed practicum placement within the agency including identifying learning opportunities which will be made available to link directly with the nine core competencies listed in the learning contract (see above):

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Describe how your workload will be reduced or altered to ensure that the required time for your practicum placement is available each week and provide specific information on what your new work schedule will be (days and times) after you begin the proposed placement (not applicable for new hires): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Specify the practicum supervision schedule with your proposed Field Instructor including days and times: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

*** Note:** The minimum requirement for formal supervision is one hour every other week. More frequent supervision is encouraged during periods of onboarding and training.

Required signatures:

Agency support and approval for the proposal is indicated through the signatures gathered from agency personnel including the responsible administrator, the current supervisor and the proposed Field Instructor.

The responsible administrator is the person with the authority to approve practicum placements on behalf of the agency. The current supervisor must also approve the proposal before Field Faculty will consider the plan. Their signatures indicate support and approval of the proposal including the required time for the employee to be a student in the agency and for the person providing field instruction to serve as the student's instructor.

The proposed Field Instructor must indicate approval for the plan, including their willingness to serve as the Field Instructor and to be available for field instruction and regular supervision, by their signature.

Remember, **do not** collect agency signatures until you have submitted your draft proposal to your assigned Field Faculty and received their tentative approval. The completed proposal must be signed and dated by the responsible administrator, your current supervisor, the proposed Field Instructor and yourself in the following format:

Responsible Administrator	Current Supervisor	Proposed Field Instructor (MSW)
Name: Click or tap here to enter text.	Name: Click or tap here to enter text.	Name: Click or tap here to enter text.
Title: Click or tap here to enter text.	Title: Click or tap here to enter text.	Title: Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone/Email: Click or tap here to enter text.	Phone/Email: Click or tap here to enter text.	Phone/Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Signature & Date:	Signature & Date:	Signature & Date:

Student Signature and Date:

Field Faculty Signature and Date:

Appendix B: Acknowledgement and Agreement to Participate in Field Education

Sample Only: To be accessed and electronically signed on STAR

Acknowledgement and Agreement to Participate in Field Education

Field Education is the central pedagogy of social work education and is structured to align closely with classroom content. One of the many purposes of Field Education is to provide a “practicum” experience that prepares students for autonomous professional social work practice. The integration of theory and practice is central to social work education and students are required as part of their academic program to have a supervised field learning experience (practicum) during which students build skills in required Competencies and Behaviors. Those learning experiences are under the supervision of a Field Instructor with at least two years of post-MSW practice experience and a Field Faculty member from the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice. Students work collaboratively with their Field Instructor to develop the learning plan and are evaluated at the end of each term. Students earn academic credit for completing their field education placement, which is a requirement for a social work degree. Providing supervised field education opportunities is also a requirement for the School’s professional accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education.

Field education placements are supervised educational/learning experiences tied to an academic program. While in practicum, students do not have independent decision-making authority and receive their assignments and ongoing guidance from the Field Instructor and Field Faculty. Field education placements are not employment and do not create an employment relationship with the field placement site. Students are therefore not employees entitled to wages for their field education, and there is no promise or expectation of a job after the field placement.

The program is designed as an educational experience to prepare social work students for their future career. The School of Social Work is committed to creating and maintaining a high-quality social work education. If you believe the field education placement is not meeting your educational needs, please contact your assigned Field Faculty at the School of Social Work or the Director of Field Education.

Protection from harassment and discrimination

Local, state and federal non-discrimination and anti-harassment laws, including Title IX, cover student activities involving university credit, including field placements. In the standard affiliation agreement signed by the field education agency, the School of Social Work requires assurances that agency policies with respect to students comply with all laws prohibiting unlawful discrimination and harassment. If you experience any treatment during the field placement that you believe is discriminatory or harassing, report it immediately to the Director of Field Education.

Protection from errors and omissions

Social work students enrolled in field education credits are covered by the University of Washington's liability self-insurance program. Students are covered for their negligent acts and omissions by UW's general liability coverage as long as they are operating in good faith and within the course and scope of their University academic program. For details about University coverage, please see the Risk Management website (<http://f2.washington.edu/treasury/riskmgmt/proof>).

Accommodation

As a condition of accepting a field education placement, you represent that you are physically and cognitively capable to participate in the program, with or without accommodation. To request disability accommodation for this field education placement, please contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) at: drsugt@uw.edu, or by phone at 253-692-4522. For more information about disability accommodations, see the DRS website: <http://tacoma.uw.edu/drsugt>. This must be done prior to starting the field education process.

Immunization

UW Tacoma Social Work Program students must meet all of the annual immunization requirements set by the University of Washington Health Sciences Center in order to begin and continue in their field education placement. As part of this process, students are required to have their immunization history reviewed and judged to be in compliance by the Health Sciences Immunization Program through Castle Branch, a contracted service prior to start of the field placement experience.

Assumption of Risks, Health Insurance, and Consent to Medical Treatment

Though rare, there are certain risks inherent in field education placement, including risks arising from:

- Activities in the course of field education activities, or in traveling to and from the field education site, or associated field trips;
- Unpredictable or violent behavior of certain client populations served by the field education site;
- Exposure to infectious diseases, including tuberculosis or other airborne pathogens, hepatitis, HIV or other blood borne pathogens.

The University, the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, and the field placement site cannot anticipate or prevent all the risks associated with field education, which could result in bodily or other injury. As a condition of participating in the field assignment you agree to

assume those risks beyond the control of University employees, faculty and staff. It is your responsibility to understand and follow the Field Education Site's policies and procedures designed to identify and control risks, including safety and security procedures and blood borne pathogen policies, and to obtain any immunizations that the Field Education Site or the University require.

If you develop any medical condition about which emergency personnel should be informed, you should immediately notify your Field Education Instructor. Should you require emergency medical treatment as a result of accident or illness during the field education placement, you consent to such treatment.

You understand and acknowledge that the University of Washington does not provide health and accident insurance for field education participants and you agree to be financially responsible for any medical bills incurred as a result of emergency or other medical treatments.

If you have questions...

We encourage you to contact our Office of Field Education if you have any questions about this acknowledgment form or other matter related to the field placement.

[Acknowledgment and Agreement to participate in field placement on the conditions set forth above](#)

I have read and fully understand the foregoing and agree to participate in the field placement/practicum program on the terms and conditions described above. I agree to abide by all University of Washington and School of Social Work policies and guidelines, as well as those established by the field placement/practicum site.

Signature and date

Appendix C: MSW Generalist Field Education Learning Contract

Sample Only: This version may only be used as a tool to draft the Learning Contract. Content will need to be transferred to STAR for signatures and submission.

University of Washington, Tacoma T SOCW 524: Generalist Practicum Field Education Learning Contract

Student Educational Self-Assessment

(COMPLETION OF THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED OF ALL STUDENTS)

Identify the areas of strength you bring to this practicum:

Identify areas for future growth and development:

Identify the methods by which you learn best (e.g., observation, extensive reading and discussion, hands-on involvement in tasks, etc.):

In the MSW Generalist Practicum, students learn practice content that encompasses skills and knowledge to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (micro, mezzo, and macro practice). This content includes engaging clients in an appropriate working relationship;

identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets; collecting and assessing information; and planning for service delivery. It also includes using communication skills, supervision, and consultation. Accordingly, the following required Competencies and Behaviors are intended to reflect the necessary balance between the establishment of a strong professional identity, an approach to practice that is guided by a strong social justice framework with a recognition of sources and consequences of disadvantage and oppression, and a core set of Competencies essential as a foundation for client-centered generalist practice. The Field Instructor and student will set forward learning activities specific to the practicum site that lead toward mastery of Behaviors and achievement of competency in that area.

Required Competencies & Behaviors for MSW Generalist Practicum

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Behavior A: Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.

Behavior B: Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.

Behavior C: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.

Behavior D: Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.

Behavior E: Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Behavior A: Understand the importance of diversity in shaping different life experiences in practice (micro, mezzo, and macro).

Behavior B: Present as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.

Behavior C: Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- 1.
- 2.

3.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights, and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Behavior A: Apply understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights and the individual and system levels.

Behavior B: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

1.

2.

3.

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

Behavior A: Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.

Behavior B: Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.

Behavior C: Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

1.

2.

3.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Behavior A: Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.

Behavior B: Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.

Behavior C: Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

1.

- 2.
- 3.

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

Behavior A: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.

Behavior B: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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

Behavior A: Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.

Behavior B: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.

Behavior C: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges with clients and constituencies.

Behavior D: Select appropriate intervention strategies based on assessment, research knowledge, values, and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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

Behavior A: Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.

Behavior B: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

Behavior C: Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.

Behavior D: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.

Behavior E: Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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

Behavior A: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.

Behavior B: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.

Behavior C: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes.

Behavior D: Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Appendix D: MSW Specialization Field Education Learning Contract

Sample Only: This version may only be used as a tool to draft the Learning Contract. Content will need to be transferred to STAR for signatures and submission.

University of Washington, Tacoma T SOCW 525: Specialization Practicum Field Education Learning Contract

Student Educational Self-Assessment

(COMPLETION OF THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED OF ALL STUDENTS)

Identify the areas of strength you bring to this practicum:

Identify areas for future growth and development:

Identify the methods by which you learn best (e.g., observation, extensive reading and discussion, hands-on involvement in tasks, etc.):

Required Competencies & Behaviors for MSW Specialization Practicum

Competency #1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Behavior A: understand and identify the role of a social worker in cross-disciplinary settings.

Behavior B: identify opportunities to assume leadership roles in the creation, implementation, and/or evaluation of research-informed intervention programs.

Behavior C: apply social work ethical principles to the design, implementation, and/or evaluation of research-informed intervention programs.

Behavior D: engage in reflective practice.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Competency #2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Behavior A: recognize and manage personal biases as they affect the professional relationship in the service of the clients'/constituents' interests.

Behavior B: understand the many forms of diversity and difference and how these influence the relationship with clients/constituents.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Competency #3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Behavior A: articulate the potentially challenging effects of economic, social, cultural and global factors on client/constituent systems.

Behavior B: advocate at all practice levels for the creation and implementation of intervention programs that promote social and economic justice and diminish disparities.

Behavior C: act as a change agent to promote social, economic, and environmental justice and diminish the impact of injustices.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.

- b.
- c.

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

Behavior A: apply critical thinking to evidence-based interventions and best practices.

Behavior B: contribute to the theoretical knowledge base of the social work profession through practice-based research.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Competency #5: Engage in Policy Practice

Behavior A: recognize the interrelationship between clients/constituents, practice, and organizational and public policy.

Behavior B: collaborate with colleagues, clients/constituents, and others to advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice to effect policy change.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

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

Behavior A: engage collaboratively with agency and community partners in developing programs to address a range of human and societal needs.

Behavior B: demonstrate the skills required for effectively engaging with clients/constituents.

Behavior C: collaborate with multidisciplinary colleagues in program design and development.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

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

Behavior A: apply appropriate theories of human behavior and the social environment in assessment of clients/constituents.

Behavior B: evaluate, select, and implement appropriate assessment instruments, adapting them as appropriate to client/constituent circumstances.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

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

Behavior A: apply knowledge of the social constructions, dimensions, and intersections of the multiple aspects of human diversity to the implementation of research-informed interventions.

Behavior B: identify, evaluate, and select effective and appropriate intervention strategies.

Behavior C: develop and implement collaborative, multidisciplinary intervention strategies.

Behavior D: engage diverse groups appropriate to the area of focus in the design of intervention programs.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

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

Behavior A: apply research skills to the evaluation of intervention programs.

Behavior B: identify and utilize appropriate evaluation tools for specific interventions.

Learning Activities to achieve above behaviors and competency:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Appendix E: Policy & Procedures Regarding Termination from Field Placements

Policy Regarding Being Dropped from the MSW Program for Failure in Field Placements (rev. 08/21/15; terminology updated 09/16/24)

If a field placement is discontinued at any point prior to the end of the placement due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will receive a grade of “no credit” for that quarter and no field hours for that quarter will be credited to the student’s overall required total. With the approval of the Field Faculty, and in consultation with the student’s faculty advisor, students are allowed to repeat a Field Education placement for which they have received a grade of “no credit” at a different placement site. The conditions of the second placement (e.g., total number of hours to be repeated; when the new placement can begin) are at the discretion of the Field Faculty, in consultation with the student’s faculty advisor. If the second placement also is discontinued due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will be dropped from the MSW program.

Procedures

- 1) If a student is terminated from a practicum placement for unsatisfactory performance, they will receive a grade of “no credit” for the quarter, and will meet with the assigned Field Faculty member, along with the student’s faculty advisor. If those two roles are one in the same, the student may bring a different social work faculty member to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be twofold: a) to discuss the behaviors and conditions that led to the student being terminated from the placement; and b) determine whether a second attempt at a practicum placement is warranted, and how the student will change behaviors to make the new placement successful.
- 2) The student may appeal the grade of “no credit” to the Dean of the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice in the same manner prescribed for appeal of classroom grades. There is no grade appeal beyond the Dean of the School.
- 3) The Field Faculty member will attempt to re-place the student at a different agency and may inform the agency of the conditions under which the original placement was discontinued. The Field Faculty member will have the authority to determine the number of hours which the student must repeat, when the new placement can begin, and other logistics related to the re-placement of the student. The student will be informed in writing by the Field Faculty member that this will be their final opportunity to be successful in a field placement, and that an additional termination from a field placement will result also in being dropped from the Social Work Program.
- 4) If the student is discontinued from the second placement for unsatisfactory performance, they will be dropped from the Social Work program and the student will receive a written notification from the program to this effect.

5) The student may appeal the drop from the Social Work program to the Dean of the School who will, in consultation with the Social Work members of the Faculty Council determine whether the student's drop is warranted. The student may access other existing University of Washington procedures, if any apply, to appeal the drop if they so choose.

6) The Social Work Division of the UW Tacoma School of Social Work and Criminal Justice may revise this policy at any time. Students will be notified of changes via e-mail and through the program's website. This policy is effective upon approval by program faculty.

Approved by AG: 7/22/15

Approved by Graduate School: 8/7/15

Approved by Social Work faculty: 9/17/15

Approved by full faculty: 9/25/15

Effective: Autumn quarter, 2015

Terminology updated: 09/16/24

Appendix F: Information regarding U.S. Dept. of Labor Standards for Practicum placements

This is to share with you updated information regarding social work student field education placements and the US Fair Labor Standards Act.

Are UW social work students in field education placements employees due compensation?

UW School of Social Work position:

The SSW has reviewed the question of whether social work students in field education placements are employees due compensation. After seeking consultation from the UW Assistant Attorney General's office, reviewing guidance by the US Department of Labor (DOL), and reviewing relevant court decisions, our analysis is that **University of Washington social work students in field education placements are not employees**. Our position is consistent with recent court decisions and the US Department of Labor's updated guidelines (updated January, 2018).

Background:

The issue of whether "interns" must be paid for services provided and whether previous DOL guidelines are binding has been litigated in the case of *Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures*. That case involved a non-student plaintiff intern who performed non-education related tasks for a private movie studio company. While a lower court first ruled in favor of the intern plaintiffs, a July, 2015 federal appeals court concluded that the lower court had misapplied the DOL guidelines, and described the guidelines as outdated and not binding federally. The appeals court ruled that (even in the for-profit, private sector company) interns are not considered employees if the intern is the "primary beneficiary" of the placement. They also ruled that determining whether an intern is due compensation should be based on the totality of the circumstances, on a case by case basis, and based on a wide range of factors. The court decision outlined 7 factors to help determine the primary beneficiary, but added that this list was not exhaustive.

Following the 2015 appeals court decision and subsequent decisions which also relied on the primary beneficiary test, the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division issued a revised Fact Sheet #71 in January 2018. The following is an excerpt from that document, in italics.

Courts have used the "primary beneficiary test" to determine whether an intern or student is, in fact, an employee under the FLSA [Fair Labor Standards Act]... Courts have identified the following seven factors as part of the test:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.

2. *The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.*
3. *The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.*
4. *The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.*
5. *The extent to which the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.*
6. *The extent to which the intern’s work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.*
7. *The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.*

Note: The FLSA exempts certain people who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency or who volunteer for humanitarian purposes for non-profit food banks. WHD also recognizes an exception for individuals who volunteer their time, freely and without anticipation of compensation, for religious, charitable, civic, or humanitarian purposes to non-profit organizations. Unpaid internships for public sector and non-profit charitable organizations, where the intern volunteers without expectation of compensation, are generally permissible.

See <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm> for the full DOL fact sheet.

Social work field placements are designed for students to be the primary beneficiaries:

The clearest examples of primary beneficiaries are students in educational programs. In social work education, students are the primary beneficiaries of the field education placements: social work students receive academic credit for the field placement, their field placement is both a graduation and degree requirement, and field activities are structured with a defined learning contract and evaluation component for the education of the student.

Social work field placements are educational and part of core academic curriculum:

Although the term “intern” is sometimes used in social work education, social work field education placements are established for the education of the student and differ from most private sector internships. We use the term “field education” or “practicum”, since this term denotes a course in a specialized field of study that is designed to give students supervised practical application of previously or concurrently studied theory. Practicum courses are characteristic of professional education (e.g., of doctors, pharmacists, and social workers), where the demonstration of practice competence in real-world settings is a requisite to obtaining a degree. The MSW practicum is fundamentally educational in nature, expressly designed to meet the goals and objectives of the MSW curriculum and the learning needs of students. Students are placed in practicum courses, on a set schedule, for the sole purpose of advancing their education, and not as a job placement or a transition to post-graduation employment. In practicum courses, the student learns and practices social work skills under

supervision of the field instructor, who evaluates the student according to achievement of practice competence—in other words, the student is evaluated as a student, and not as an agency or university employee.

Like all accredited social work programs, the School's MSW curriculum is centered on core Competencies and associated Behaviors that graduates are expected to master. The integration of classroom- and field-based coursework is central to social work's pedagogy, which recognizes the two components as interrelated and of equal importance to developing requisite competence for professional social work practice. Under the School's curriculum structure, complementary classroom and field based courses are taken concurrently, so students may bring the knowledge, values and skills taught in the classroom into the practice setting and to share practice experiences from the field into the classroom. Classroom- and field-based courses are designed to support increasing professional mastery over the duration of the program. Both classroom- and field-based courses are required classes for which students receive course credits and grades, and that students must pass in order to graduate.

May social work students receive financial support for activities undertaken as field education?

Social work students are permitted to be paid as employees while in field education placements (some professional degree programs do not permit this). However, the Council on Social Work Education, which accredits schools of social work in the US, requires additional oversight in these cases, which are referred to as "Agency of employment" field education placements. For example, in placements where students are also employees, the student must have a different work supervisor and field instructor. Further, any activities and responsibilities that count towards field education credits must be related to building social work Competencies and be outlined in the field learning contract. Social work students at the UW SSW are permitted to hold Work-study positions, which are similar to Agency of Employment placements.

Field agencies may offer financial support to students. We recommend that field agencies that choose to financially support students do so with field stipends/awards. The SSW itself has pursued and been awarded multiple federal training grants to support stipends for social work students in field education. Placements offering field stipends / awards are highly sought after by students as this support helps reduce student debt, and we encourage agencies to offer stipends where they have the resources to do so.