FIELD EDUCATION HANDBOOK
2015-2016

BSW PROGRAM
MSW PROGRAM
FIELD INSTRUCTORS
FIELD LIAISONS

University of Kansas
School of Social Welfare
Twente Hall
1545 Lilac Lane
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-3129
Field Education Office: 785-864-2268
www.socwel.ku.edu
fieldeducation@ku.edu
Mailing Address:
Field Education Office
University of Kansas
School of Social Welfare
105 Twente Hall
1545 Lilac Lane
Lawrence, KS  66045-3129

Website:
www.socwel.ku.edu  (School of Social Welfare Website)
fieldeducation@ku.edu  (Email)

Phone Numbers:
Field Education Office -- (785) 864-2268
School of Social Welfare -- (785) 864-4720

Field Education Staff:                         email:                  Phone:
Jennie Marsh, LMSW, Director               jmarsh1@ku.edu          (785) 864-2366
Alberta Wright, Office Manager          fieldeducation@ku.edu      (785) 864-2268
Cathy Accurso, LSCSW, Associate Director  cathy@ku.edu             (913) 897-8489
Kelly Jones, LMSW, Associate Director     kellyjones@ku.edu         (785) 864-2663
Christina Boyd, LSCSW, LCAC, Director of  c011m335@ku.edu          (785) 628-5917
Western Kansas MSW Program

Field Liaison Information:
A current list of the 2015-2016 Field Liaisons and their contact information can be found at the
School of Social Welfare’s website under Resources – For Field Liaisons.
2015-2016 Field Education Calendar
Practicum Schedule & Assignment Due Dates

Fall 2015  August – December

August 24  Classes begin
Aug. 24 – Aug. 28  Practicum begins for all students
September 7  Labor Day Holiday
October 5  Learning Contract due to Liaison
Oct. 10- Oct. 13  Fall Break
November 9  Professional Writing Sample due to Liaison
Nov. 25 – Nov. 29  Thanksgiving Recess
December 10  Last day of classes & Last day of practicum for fall semester
December 10  Mid-year evaluation/Time Sheets/Supervision Log due to Liaison

Spring 2016 January – May

January 4 – January 8  Practicum begins for all students
January 19  First day of classes
January 22  Learning Contract Revision due to Liaison
March 7  Professional Writing Sample due to Liaison
March 14 – 20  Spring Break
April 18  End of the year evaluation/Time Sheets/Supervision Log due to Liaison
April 22  Practicum Ends for spring semester
May 5  Last Day of Classes
May 13  BSW Recognition Ceremony & MSW Hooding Ceremony
2015-2016 Field Education Calendar
Seminars & Workshops

Fall 2015

August 28  Foundation Strong: Preparing for Success in Field Practicum
Attendees: MSW Foundation students (Mandatory)
Where: Regnier Auditorium, Edwards campus
        12600 Quivira Rd, Overland Park KS
When: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM
**This seminar counts for six hours of practicum.

October 2  The Margaret Schutz Gordon Lecture
Attendees: Field Instructors, Field Liaisons, Preceptors, Students
Where: Alderson Auditorium, Kansas Union
        1301 Jayhawk Blvd, Lawrence KS
When: 9:00 AM-12:00 PM (Lecture)
       1:00 PM-4:00 PM (Afternoon workshops)

December 4 Fall/Winter Field Education Forum
Attendees: Field Instructors, Field Liaisons, Preceptors
Where: TBD
When: 9:00 AM-4:30 PM

Spring 2016

March 4  Spring Field Education Forum
Attendees: Field Instructors, Field Liaisons, Preceptors
Where: TBD
When: 9:00 AM-4:30 PM

April  Social Work Day- Date to be Determined
Attendees: Open to the public
Where: TBD
When: TBD
## Contents

**Introduction:**
- Overview of KU’s School of Social Welfare Program .................................................. 1
- Bachelor of Social Work Program 2
- Master of Social Work Program 2
- The Field Practicum 4

**Chapter 1  Building an Effective Educational Partnership** ........................................... 6
- Roles and Responsibilities 6
- Getting Started in Practicum 12
  - Contact Requirements: Field instructors, Field Liaisons, Students 12
  - Student: Agency Orientation 13

**Chapter 2  Field Education Policies and Procedures** .................................................. 14
- Practicum Completion Plans 14
- Minimum Clock Hour Requirements 16
- Policy on Leave and Attendance 17
- Guidelines for supervision and evaluating student performance 18
  - Field Supervision 18
  - Providing Feedback to Students 19
- Writing Assignments for Field Practicum (Student) 20
  - Policy on Assignments 20
- Grading 21
- Change of Grade and Grade Appeal 22
- Grounds for Dismissal 22
- Protocol for student performance concerns 22
- Practicum Conflict Protocol 24
- Practicum Disruptions/Replacements 24
- Nondiscrimination Policy 26
- Critical Incidents 26
- Sexual Harassment 27
Chapter 3: The Learning Contract (Overview) ................................................................. 28
  ▪ Developing the learning contract ................................................................. 28
  ▪ Learning Contract by Student Level ......................................................... 29

Chapter 4: Evaluating Student Progress and Performance in Field Education ....... 31
  ▪ Mid-Year and Final Evaluations (of the student) ..................................... 31

Appendix A: Developing a Safety Plan .......................................................... 34
INTRODUCTION

This Handbook puts forth the policies, procedures, and expectations for the Field Education component for all levels of the curriculum in the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas in the BSW and MSW degree programs. The Mission Statement of the KU School of Social Welfare provides the overarching framework for all educational activities, including field education. The Mission statement reads:

In the BSW and MSW programs, our practice-centered approach is designed to secure the students’ understanding of the concepts of empowerment and well-being, and is guided by four thematic foundational principles:

- **A focus on people’s strengths**
- **An understanding of human diversity**
- **The promotion of social and economic justice**
- **The development of a critical perspective**

The School has a commitment to practicing educational approaches that directly and explicitly enhance the connection of theory and concepts to the needs of clients and the demands of everyday practice. This commitment flows from the values and ethical principles of the profession and is enriched by our commitment to these four themes.

**Strengths:** A perspective that recognizes, mobilizes and supports the inherent strengths of individuals, families, neighborhoods, organizations and communities to discover and develop their own and communal resources and assets in their struggle for a better quality of life.

**Diversity:** Understanding, valuing and engaging the broad range of differences and commonalities that are brought to the interaction between social workers, clients and the social environment and that are reflective of clients’ culture, ethnicity, race, geography, gender, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities, particularly when those differences are the cause for discrimination.

**Social and Economic Justice:** A commitment to promoting fairness, equality of power and equity of resources based on a complex understanding of the effects of economic, political and social structures on people’s life chances, particularly as it relates to economic inequality and the allocation of necessary social resources.

**Critical Perspective:** The capacity to engage in a deliberate and continuing examination of the assumptions underlying the theories, methods and approaches used by social work in understanding and responding to human needs.

Using these themes as a foundation, to prepare social work practitioners at the generalist and advanced levels and to advance the empowerment and well-being of individuals and communities: the mission of the University of Kansas, School of Social Welfare is threefold; to educate students, to conduct scholarly inquiry, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems.
Bachelor of Social Work Program

The BSW program of the KU School of Social Welfare prepares graduates for beginning generalist social work practice. The program defines generalist practice as:

“… maintaining a focus on the interface between systems (i.e. individual, families, groups, organizations, and communities), with particular emphasis on:

- The strengths inherent in these systems.
- The need to understand the role of gender, culture, sexual orientation, disability, race, and class in all phases of the social work process.
- The promotion of social and economic justice for those disenfranchised on the basis of the attributes listed above.
- The assumption of a critical perspective regarding different ways of knowing.”

Generalist practice uses multilevel methodology, depending upon the needs of the client system, and incorporates a knowledge, value, and skill base that is transferable between and among diverse contexts and locations.

Master of Social Work Program

Social work graduate professional education is grounded in the liberal arts. It articulates a coherent, integrated professional foundation based on knowledge, values, skills, and perspectives thought by the profession to be essential components of all social work practice. In our program conceptualization, this foundation curriculum anticipates content in the advanced concentration portion of the curriculum. Reciprocally, the MSW advanced curriculum is built upon the professional foundation.

During the concentration year, students learn more advanced theories and frameworks for either clinical social work practice or social administrative and advocacy practice. They are expected to be able to practice in an autonomous, highly differentiated, and sophisticated manner, with applications to deeper, more complex, and more difficult practice situations.

Building the Foundation:

The foundation level of the MSW program provides students with a generalist practice framework upon which the advanced level curriculum is built. The framework emphasizes that students will be able to apply a broad professional knowledge base, core social work values, and a wide range of social work roles and skills across practice settings and size of client systems—individual, family, group, organization and community. It means that they will be able to enter, participate in, and contribute to the network of relationships in the profession’s person-environment configuration and domain of work. It further means that they will have the ability to point their work toward the achievement of social work purposes—advancing the empowerment and well-being of individuals and communities and promoting social and economic justice. In effect, foundation practice is a strengths-based practice, a culturally sensitive practice, a just and ethical practice, and a practice with a critical perspective.
Advanced Concentrations:
The MSW program has two advanced concentrations: (1) Clinical Social Work Practice and (2) Social Work Administration and Advocacy Practice (SWAAP). Each concentration has a set of program objectives realized through classroom courses and a corresponding field practicum. Advanced social work practice builds on and further develops foundation practice in an area of concentration. Advanced practitioners are able to select, apply, and evaluate interventions based on the strengths and needs of client systems, with full consideration of their social contexts. A critical perspective enables them to synthesize and ethically apply a broad range of knowledge as they practice and make professional decisions.

Clinical Social Work Practice Concentration:
Clinical social work practice is the professional application of social work theory and methods to the treatment and prevention of psychosocial problems, disability or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders. Clinical practice includes the application of assessment and diagnostic strategies, the formation of a treatment plan, interventions based on that plan, and the evaluation of the success of the intervention. Strategies used may include psychotherapy, counseling, client advocacy, systemic and organizational interventions, consultation and other clinically appropriate interventions with individuals, families, couples, groups, and social systems.

Relying on the social work frame of reference and consistent with the mission and themes of the School of Social Welfare, the clinical concentration builds on the foundation curriculum to provide a practice-centered curriculum that integrates a recognition of the clients’ strengths and the crucial importance of practice informed by the client’s culture, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and other identity-related experiences. In our program, it also includes a commitment to social and economic justice, and a critical perspective in examining underlying assumptions (held by the practitioner and by society) about human need and potential. A critical perspective is also called for in the application of advanced clinical and other theoretical approaches in particular client situations.

Social Work Administrative & Advocacy Practice Concentration:
The KU School of Social Welfare offers an advanced level MSW concentration in Social Work Administrative and Advocacy Practice. Students may complete this program in either Kansas City or Lawrence. The focus of this program is client and community centered administrative and advocacy practice. Specialized course content is delivered by qualified faculty in conjunction with experienced practicum field instructors.

The social work administration and advocacy practice curriculum is based on the assumption that the principal justification for a human service agency is to improve the well-being of the client system(s) it serves. From this perspective, the raison d’ etre of social work administrators is client well-being, and the principal function of an administrator is to facilitate that well-being. It is the primacy of the client system that unifies the work of all social workers.

Social work administrators realize this goal through such major activities as designing programs, managing resources, managing people, managing information, and influencing relations with relevant external environments. Through these clusters of activities, administrators provide direction, provide the necessary tools and resources, remove obstacles to performance, and create reward-based environments.

Client-centered administration refers to the degree to which client systems and their well-being shape each of these activities. For example, all administrators manage information. The client-
focused administrator, however, would do so by making client outcomes and empirically-based practices the centerpiece of the information system and focus on the creation of a learning organization environment. Similarly, all administrators attempt to interact with the external environment in beneficial ways. Client-centered administrative practice would place these activities in the context of client well-being, with an advocacy orientation that would seek to amplify the client’s voice. This orientation toward client well-being is not a separate function, rather an ethic that directs how administrative activities are carried out.

The Field Practicum

The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. During the senior year of the BSW program the curriculum focuses on helping the student develop the knowledge and skills for generalist social work practice. During the foundation year of the MSW program the curriculum focuses on helping the student develop a generalist perspective of social work practice, in preparation for advanced level study in either the Clinical Social Work Practice or Social Work Administrative and Advocacy Practice Concentration.

The field practicum at both the BSW and Foundation level of the program engages the student in supervised social work practice to develop a generalist foundation and provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting. This includes classes in Policy, Research, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Direct Practice and Community and Organization Practice. During the Advanced year of the MSW program, the curriculum focuses on helping students develop specialized skills in either the Clinical Social Work Practice or Social Work Administrative and Advocacy Practice Concentration, and provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field.

All Levels of students in field practicum will address ten core competencies and a subset of practice behaviors associated with each competency specific to the level (BSW, Foundation, Clinical and SWAAP); more information can be found in the Learning Contract Supplements for specific information about the Practice Behaviors for each level.

1. Identify as a professional social worker.
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice informed research.
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
9. Respond to contexts that shape practice.
10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
Since every student comes to the practicum with unique professional and life experiences and different skills, and every agency provides different learning opportunities, the learning objectives are operationalized through the development of each student’s Learning Contract.

The Field Education Office anticipates that this handbook will serve as a useful resource for students, field instructors, field liaisons, and faculty to clarify the learning objectives, policies, and procedures guiding field education. However, the handbook’s utility is primarily determined by those who interpret and use it. We welcome your comments and suggestions to improve it as a tool for student learning.

Best Wishes,

Jennie Marsh, LMSW, Director of Field Education
Cathy Accurso, LSCSW, Associate Director of Field Education
Kelly Jones, LMSW, Associate Director of Field Education
Christina Boyd, Director of the Western Kansas MSW Program
Alberta Wright, Office Manager
fieldeducation@ku.edu
Chapter 1
BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Roles and Responsibilities:
School-Agency-Student

The field education partnership includes multiple participants – the Student, the Field Instructor, in some settings a Preceptor, the Field Agency, the Field Liaison, the Field Education Office, and the School of Social Welfare. Open, regular communication among these participants can support each participant in fulfilling his/her role in the educational process.

The Student

While the School and the agency can provide an educational environment and learning opportunities, the student has the overall responsibility for his or her own learning in the classroom and the field agency. The student’s openness to learning and active engagement with learning activities are essential qualities for a successful practicum experience.

Specific responsibilities of the Student in the field practicum include:

- Provide the Field Education Office with practicum planning information in a timely manner. This means that materials are completed on the date specified or specific arrangements have been made when the information will be provided.
- Actively collaborate with the Field Education Office in the field placement process, and provide prompt feedback to the Field Education Office about the outcome of placement interviews.
- Become familiar with both the rights and responsibilities of the educational process. If a student is asked to engage in an activity he/she doubts will enhance professional learning, then the student should openly discuss the activity with the Field Instructor. The Field Liaison may be consulted by the student and the Field Instructor for assistance in determining the appropriateness of a learning activity. On the other hand, students are encouraged to be open to a wide range of learning activities and to question their own assumptions about what might be gained from the experience.
- Students are expected to be professional in their interactions with agency staff, clients, and student colleagues; conducting themselves within the guidelines provided by the agency, the School of Social Welfare, and the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Students have primary responsibility for developing a written learning contract that meets the guidelines defined by the School of Social Welfare.
- Students are expected to be familiar with and to adhere to the due dates specified in the field education calendar. This includes completing and submitting required writing assignments to the Field Liaison.
- Complete written work expected by the agency and the School in a timely manner. The Field Liaison may require additional work on the Learning Contract and writing samples if they are unsatisfactory.
If a student does not think his/her learning needs are being met, then it is the student’s responsibility to discuss this with her/his **Field Instructor**. If the student does not think that his/her Field Instructor is responding to her/his concerns, then it is the student’s responsibility to discuss this with the **Field Liaison**. If the student does not think that his/her Field Liaison is responding to her/his concerns, then it is the responsibility of the student to discuss this with the **Director of Field Education**. The student should anticipate continuing discussion with his/her field instructor in an effort to resolve concerns about learning needs within the practicum.

Students at the BSW, Foundation MSW, and Clinical Concentration are expected to be engaged in direct practice assignments and activities for a minimum of 50% of the hours required for field practicum. ***Direct practice in this case means client work. This could include:

- Working with clients one on one or in groups
- Advocacy on behalf of a specific client
- Case staffings
- Paperwork regarding specific clients

It does not include administrative functions that do not involve specific clients but instead involve processing aggregate data, policy advocacy, etc.

**The Field Instructor**

The Field Instructor is the agency’s representative to the School, just as the Field Liaison is the School’s representative to the agency and the student. The agency delegates to the Field Instructor the responsibility of serving as the Student’s **primary** supervisor.

Qualifications to be a Field Instructor include an MSW degree (BSW degree for BSW students) from an accredited school of social work, practice competence in one or more professional areas, an expressed interest in being a Field Instructor, a willingness to accept the Field Instructor’s role and responsibilities within the School’s field education program, and at least two years of post-MSW/BSW experience. In rare circumstances, a Field Instructor with less than two years’ post-MSW experience can be considered with extensive pre-MSW experience. The Field Instructor has the following responsibilities:

- Orient the student to the agency, the staff and field instruction.
- Inform the student of safety concerns that need to be considered in the agency and practice, and develop a safety plan with the student.
- Provide the student with information about mandatory reporting laws and social workers’ responsibilities within the agency.
- Actively collaborate with the student and Field Liaison in the development, implementation and ongoing use of the student’s field practicum learning contract.
- Take overall responsibility for the student’s educational experience in the agency and coordinate student-learning experiences with other staff.
- Schedule weekly field instruction conferences with the student (about 1-1½ hours for 30 weeks). A minimum of 30 hours of field instruction is expected. When
multiple students are placed in an agency, group supervision may be used in addition to individual supervision. However, group supervision cannot replace the use of regular individual supervisory meetings.

- Abide by the **NASW Code of Ethics** in your relationships with clients, colleagues and students and include discussion about the Code of Ethics in the weekly field education conferences with the student.
- Provide the student with ongoing feedback on his/her performance.
- Support the student’s initiative, when needed, in gaining access to additional learning experiences and resources within the agency and professional community.
- Maintain an ongoing evaluation of the student’s progress and complete written evaluations of the student at the end of each semester – including recommendation of a grade to the Field Liaison.
- Confer with the Field Liaison for mutual planning, review and evaluation of the field experience.
- Inform the Field Liaison promptly of any problems in the field placement and, when necessary develop a plan of remedial action with the Liaison and the student.
- Protect the confidentiality of student records as dictated by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and not release or disclose records regarding the student (other than to University) without prior written consent of the student or where required by law.
- Participate in School sponsored field education meetings.
- When new to field instruction, attend the required training programs for new field instructors sponsored by the School of Social Welfare.
- Carefully plan activities so that students at the BSW, Foundation MSW, and Clinical Concentration are provided with a minimum of 50% of practicum hours in direct practice activities. ***Direct practice in this case means client work. This could include:
  - Working with clients one on one or in groups
  - Advocacy on behalf of a specific client
  - Case staffings
  - Paperwork regarding specific clients
  It does not include administrative functions that do not involve specific clients but instead involve processing aggregate data, policy advocacy, etc.

**The Field Agency**
The Field Practicum Agency is a social service agency or human services setting that is able to offer the educational opportunities needed to support the School’s curriculum and is able to provide a qualified field instructor to guide the student's learning. Agency participation in field education is voluntary. Agencies enter into a partnership with the School to provide field
education because of their interest in professional social work education and their conviction that being part of the educational process enhances both the agency and the profession. The agency’s basic responsibility is to provide conditions in the agency that support the achievement of professional social work competencies and practice behaviors. The School selects agencies based on their ability to provide these conditions. The agency has the following responsibilities:

- Demonstrate a commitment to social work practice and social work education.
- Accept students without regard to age, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.
- Provide a qualified field instructor.
- Provide the field instructor with sufficient time and resources to carry out field instruction responsibilities with the student and with the School of Social Welfare.
- Provide the resources and the range of learning experiences necessary for the achievement of field education competencies.
- Adopt an educational orientation toward the student, viewing the student as a learner and developing professional rather than as an apprentice or a staff member.
- Provide the student with resources necessary to carry out learning assignments such as adequate workspace, clerical support, access to relevant agency records and documents. Travel reimbursements may be provided to students for authorized activities according to agency policy.
- Provide students with appropriate training regarding agency policies and procedures guiding professional practice and protecting client confidentiality. This includes the agency’s adherence to all pertinent state and federal laws and regulations guiding protecting client information.
- Provide vital and timely information to the School, such as a written description of the agency’s services and learning opportunities for students, confirmation of field placements, and updates on staff and program changes affecting field education.
- For agencies having several students in placement, delegate a staff member to serve as the field education coordinator within the agency and as the contact person to the School.

**The Field Liaison**

The Field Liaison is the School’s representative to the agency and the student. The liaison is either a full time faculty in the School of Social Welfare, or a qualified social worker who has been hired to fill this role. Every practicum placement has a liaison assigned by the school.

The liaison’s basic responsibility is to monitor the educational progress of the student and assist the field instructor and student in fulfilling the academic requirements for field practicum. The Field Liaison has the following responsibilities:

- Initiate early contact with the field instructor and student, in order to clearly communicate availability and roles as an educational resource.
- Consult with the field instructor and student in developing and implementing the Learning Contract.
• Provide written feedback to the student on the Learning Contract and other written materials completed by the student.

• Visit the field agency at least twice during the practicum year – minimum of one time each semester. For field agencies geographically distant from the campus (120 miles or more), the minimum visitation is one onsite visit and two planned, extended telephone or video conferences.
  o Site visits should take place after the first three weeks of practicum are complete, and before the last two weeks of practicum. Exceptions can be made in cases when scheduling is difficult due to illness, cancellations, etc. The Liaison should keep their supervisor (Director or Associate Director of Field Education) informed if a formal site visit falls outside of the schedule above.
  o The Liaison should complete a Site Visit Form for each student and submit to his/her supervisor.

• Respond to requests from field instructors and students for information and assistance within 48 hours.

• Monitor progress by initiating contact with student and field instructor at least once each month.

• Assign end-of-semester grades to students in collaboration with the field instructor, based on an informed judgment of the student’s performance as indicated in mid-year and the final practicum evaluation.

• Inform supervisor (Director or Associate Director of Field Education) of situations jeopardizing the student’s progress in practicum (e.g., unsatisfactory performance, agency-student mismatch). Submit an Agency Meeting Form, including the written plan that details the agreed upon plan of action to remedy the problem situations.

• Assist students and/or field instructors in the resolution of field related problems.

• Participate in School sponsored field education programs for liaisons.

The Preceptor
In some field practicum agencies a staff member, who serves as an important auxiliary education resource for the student, may be designated as a Preceptor. In collaboration with the Field Instructor, the Preceptor works with the Student on specific educational tasks in the Preceptor’s area of expertise. It is expected that many staff will participate in the student’s education, but the relationship with the Preceptor is ongoing and is a formal arrangement between the Field Instructor, the Preceptor, and the Student. The Field Instructor maintains responsibility for the Student’s educational program and integrating the work the Student is doing with the Preceptor into the Student’s overall learning.

There are no degree qualifications to be a Preceptor. The Preceptor may be any staff member who is able to be an educational resource for the student, including an experienced social worker, a new social work graduate, or other professional and non-professional helpers. Students may expect the Preceptor to:
  • Model a way of working with clients and staff by inviting the Student to observe, question, discuss and participate in the work the Preceptor is doing;
• Contribute ideas, facts and other relevant data about his/her own practice and the workings of the agency;
• Provide feedback to the Student on the student’s performance;
• Provide feedback to the Field Instructor on the student’s performance, as specified in the formal agreement between the Student, Preceptor, and Field Instructor;
• Consult with the Student and Field Instructor in writing the learning contract and specifying the learning opportunities that may be available to the student.

The Field Education Office:
The Field Education Office’s basic responsibility is the organization, implementation and evaluation of the field education program. The Director of Field Education is charged with this responsibility. In addition to the Director of Field Education the office includes the (2) Associate Directors of Field Education, the Office Manager, and the Field Liaisons. The Field Education Office has the following responsibilities:

• Establish criteria and recruit a network of qualified field agencies and field instructors to participate in the field education program.
• Match students with agencies participating in field education.
• Assign a Field Liaison to each agency, whose purpose is to serve as the link between the School/Field Education Office, the Agency the Student.
• Establish and conduct educational programs for field practicum participants.
• Provide orientations for students about the field practicum requirements.
• Provide orientations for field instructors and liaisons.
• Provide educational events (Field Forums) for field instructors, field liaisons, and academic faculty.
• Coordinate annual events, i.e., Margaret Schutz Gordon Lecture.
• Prepare a written Handbook of field practicum policies, programs and procedures for all field education participants.
• Establish ongoing and periodic opportunities for field practicum participants to evaluate the field education program.
• Issue documentation of continuing education credits for attendance at School sponsored field education programs and for providing field instruction.

Responsibility for Placement of Students
Because Field Practicum is an essential requirement of the BSW and MSW degree programs, the Field Education Office bears responsibility for the placement of students with approved field practicum sites and qualified field instructors. Students should not initiate contact with an agency representative to negotiate a field practicum without the explicit authorization of the Field Education Office (an Associate Director or Director of Field Education). Student interests in fields of practice, client populations, and social problems will be used in the placement process. Reasonable efforts will be made to address student needs based on transportation resources, proximity to agency, and family care requirements. Students are
welcome to recommend an agency that is not currently participating in field education by providing complete contact information. An Associate Director of Field Education will contact the agency to determine if the agency’s resources and staff will meet the qualifications for a field education site. Students’ preferences for a specific agency will receive consideration in the planning process whenever possible. However, the Field Education Office cannot guarantee that students will be placed in a preferred agency setting.

Placements are based upon the abilities of agencies to provide learning opportunities consistent with the required professional competencies defining the BSW, MSW Foundation, Clinical, and Social Work Administrative and Advocacy Practice requirements. A student attempting to establish a placement with an agency without the direct authorization of the Field Education Office is at risk for fraudulently representing him/herself as an agent of the School of Social Welfare. This action constitutes an ethical violation and may result in a request for an Academic Review Committee meeting.

**Getting Started in Practicum**

In the first few weeks of the field practicum it is critical that the student, field instructor and field liaison develop mutual expectations around not only when to communicate, but also develop an understanding of the different styles and expectations around communication.

**Contact Requirements: Field Instructors, Field Liaisons and Students**

- Students and Field Instructors have a mutual responsibility to contact each other prior to the start of the practicum, and to arrange an initial orientation meeting/start date.

- During the latter part of August, and prior to the beginning date of practicum, all Students who are in practicum will meet their Field Liaisons at Field Orientation. During this meeting:
  - Field Liaison will give students his/her contact information and share her/his general approach to the Field Liaison role.
  - The Student should inform the Field Liaison of the preliminary arrangements made with their Field Instructor concerning agency orientation and the start of Practicum. Additionally, they should share their contact information as well as any special needs or issues that may affect his/her learning in the Practicum.

- It is expected that Field Liaisons will contact the Field Instructor during the first 2 weeks of the student starting practicum to provide information about the best ways to communicate about student progress, and to initiate a beginning relationship with the field instructor.

- It is expected that Field Instructors will provide a minimum of 1-1½ hours of supervision each week to the Student.
  - A minimum of 30 hours of field instruction is expected. When multiple students are placed in an agency, group supervision may be used in addition to individual supervision. However, group supervision cannot replace the use of regular individual supervisory meetings.

- It is expected that Field Liaisons will meet with the Student and the Field Instructor--at the field agency--at least once each semester. For field agencies geographically distant
from the campus (120 miles or more), the minimum visitation is one onsite visit and two planned, extended telephone or video conferences.

- It is expected that the Student and Field Instructor will be available for supervision and meetings with the Field Liaison.

- Students, Field Instructors and Liaisons need to keep each other informed about any events that might influence the student’s field placement. Early identification of issues is critical in preventing problems, so please communicate openly. Please contact the Field Education Office for additional support when there are unresolved issues, or when you need help brainstorming an intervention or solution.

**Student: Agency Orientation Suggestions**

The agency and field instructor are expected to provide the student with an orientation at the start of practicum. Some suggestions that prior students have found helpful include:

1. **Manual:** Develop a brief orientation manual that includes:
   - Organizational chart
   - Agency procedures
   - Map of the agency
   - Paperwork / timesheet procedures
   - Confidentiality guidelines
   - Ethics
   - Community agencies/resources
   - Agency contact information and staff phone numbers
   - Sample release of information forms
   - Sample of other forms
   - Other helpful resources for working with the agency client population
   - Ideas for how to engage with students
   - Local restaurants etc. for out of town students

2. **Other sites/agencies:** It is important for students to spend some time not only learning about the site where they will be assigned, but to also visit other sites within the organization and collaborating agencies. For example, the student may be assigned to work with families and children, but it also important for them to visit the senior service center within the agency.

3. **Important meetings/trainings:** Students are often included in staff meetings, case conferences, team meetings, and some board meetings. Many agencies have found it helpful to include students in staff training opportunities. All of these components help students to more fully understand the organization and the community as a context for professional practice.

3. **Safety issues:** Field Instructors play a significant role in helping students to become familiar with the agency’s safety procedures. It is not unusual for students to have concerns about personal safety. However, many students find it difficult to discuss these directly with the Field Instructor, especially at the beginning of their experience in the agency. Take time to discuss and review a safety plan with the student. Suggested guidelines for Developing a Safety Plan are included at the end of this Handbook Appendix A. Please also see the section on Critical Incidents (pg. 26) and Sexual Harassment (pg. 27), and plan to discuss these with students.
Chapter 2

FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Practicum Completion Plans

There are two basic options for completing practicum requirements.

**Concurrent Practicum**
- The student will “concurrently” be taking the required practice courses and the Practicum during both Fall and Spring semesters.
- Students end Practicum for the fall by the end of final exam week in December.
- Students resume regular Practicum schedules before spring semester classes start.
- The Field Practicum year ends just before the end of spring classes. (See the Field Education Calendars at the front of this handbook for specific dates).

Full-time students complete the required practicum hours at the same time they are taking the other required courses. Part-time students complete practicum during the year when they are enrolled in the required practice courses.
- BSW students enroll in SW 601 (practicum) concurrently with SW 610 and 612
- MSW Foundation students enroll in SW 701 concurrently with SW 710 and 711
- Clinical Concentration MSW students enroll in SW 801 concurrently with SW 810 and 811
- SWAAP Concentration MSW students are required to develop an individualized plan if completing the advanced level part-time. SW 804 and the required SWAAP Concentration courses must be taken concurrently with the plan developed with their advisor.

**Employment Based Practicum**

Another approach to the Concurrent Practicum is an Employment Based Practicum (EBP). Students already employed in a social services agency or program may apply for an Employment Based Practicum well in advance of the fall semester start date. Eligibility is determined by:
- The student must have been employed with the agency at least 6 months, though 12 months or more is ideal.
- The agency must be able to provide professional learning opportunities for practicum that are completely separate and different from the student’s employment responsibilities.
- The professional learning opportunities in the agency must fit the requirements for the student’s level and/or concentration.

---

1 This chapter should be read in conjunction with the School of Social Welfare MSW and BSW Student Handbooks. These handbooks provide additional information about the School’s policies and procedures.
• The agency must be willing to support a flexible employment schedule and reduce employment expectations/hours to make room for the hours required for field practicum.
• The agency must be able to provide a qualified field instructor, who is not the student’s employment supervisor.

Accepting Employment with Practicum Agency
Also important to note is that students completing a traditional, non-employment based practicum cannot accept employment within the practicum agency before mid-April when most of the educational requirements will be completed. If a student accepts employment within his/her practicum agency earlier in the academic year, either the practicum will be disrupted or the student will be required to suspend employment until mid-April. A disrupted practicum is likely to result in delayed completion of degree requirements. Replacement at another agency may not be feasible until the following academic year.

Practicum with a former Employer
A student who wishes to pursue a practicum with an agency at which he/she worked within the last year may contact the Director of Field Education to discuss a modified EBP application. In this situation the student’s application would need to demonstrate that the agency could provide practicum learning assignments clearly different from the recent employed position.

Concurrent Practicum Exception
In rare instances, students may need to apply for a Concurrent Practicum Exception. This involves the student taking the required coursework first, then completing practicum in the summer or academic year immediately following. Qualifying for a Concurrent Practicum Exception requires that:

1. The student already works in a social service agency that provides the opportunities to support the required practice course work.
2. The student has completed the Concurrent Practicum Exception Form and received written approval from the MSW Program Director and the Director of Field Education for these alternative arrangements. This form is available either from the Field Education Office or through from the School’s website.
3. The student has satisfactorily completed the required practice courses prior to the Practicum; and
4. The student enrolls for academic credit during the semester(s) in which they are completing their Practicum.

As part of the application for a concurrent practicum exception, a student must identify his/her plan for completing the required practicum hours. The most common plan of completion is the summer block practicum, although a student may complete the required hours over the course of two consecutive semesters (fall and spring).

A Block Practicum may be arranged by the Field Education Office when a student has had a concurrent practicum exception approved. In this plan, the student is in practicum 40 hours a week until the required number of hours have been completed (12 weeks for foundation MSW students, 18 weeks for advanced level MSW students). A block practicum cannot be
completed as an Employment Based Practicum, and thus, students employed full-time must either take a leave-of-absence from their position, or resign. With the approval of the Director of Field Education and the MSW Program Director, a student may apply for an Employment Based Practicum as part of the Concurrent Practicum Exception only when the practicum is to be completed over a fall and spring semester and not as a block.

Minimum Clock Hour Requirements

BSW Students and MSW Foundation Students:
- Must complete a total of 480 hours in practicum
- 16 hours a week for 15 weeks per semester (30 weeks total)
- 50% of practicum hours must be spent in direct practice***

MSW Clinical and MSW SWAAP Students:
- Must complete a total of 720 hours in practicum
- 24 hours a week for 15 weeks per semester (30 weeks total)
- For clinical students, 50% of practicum hours must be spent in direct practice***
- For Clinical or SWAAP students who are interested in reducing the weekly schedule, an alternate schedule may be approved by the Director of Field Education. This typically involves reducing weekly hours from 24 to 16 and extending practicum hours into the summer weeks.

***Direct practice in this case means client work. This could include:
- Working with clients one on one or in groups
- Advocacy on behalf of a specific client
- Case staffings
- Paperwork regarding specific clients
It does not include administrative functions that do not involve specific clients but instead involve processing aggregate data, policy advocacy, etc.

All Practicum Students:
- Schedule should include a full 8 hour day every week, in order to learn the agency context for practice. On rare occasions, an 8 hour day is not possible for the student or agency due to operating hours, etc. In these cases, the alternate schedule should be worked out with the field instructor and reported to the Field Liaison.
- Schedule should be approved by the field instructor and should put student learning (not agency coverage, etc.) as the top priority
- Students’ practicum assignments and hours must be completed in the agency or agency sanctioned locations. Examples of agency sanctioned locations would be another agency where the student is scheduled to spend the day, a location at which the agency is conducting an off-site support group, etc.
• Students will maintain an ongoing written record of their Practicum hours using the **Cumulative Practicum Time Sheet** and the **Field Supervision Log** on a weekly basis (available on the School’s website). An up-to-date Time Sheet and Field Supervision Log is due to the Field Liaison with the mid-year Evaluation and the Final Evaluation. The Field Instructor and the Field Liaison can request a review of a student’s Cumulative Practicum Time Sheet or Field Supervision Log at any time during the Practicum year.

**Policy on Leave and Attendance**

1. **Attendance:** Students are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct as the professional employees in their Field Education agency. Once the Student and Field Instructor have agreed to a schedule of attendance, students are expected to commit to this schedule unless they are ill, have an emergency or have negotiated an exception with the Field Instructor. In this case, the student is expected to inform the Field Instructor, and others affected by the Student’s absence immediately so that his/her responsibilities can be covered. If the student is unable to adhere to the agreed schedule on an ongoing basis, adversely affecting both the agency and the student’s learning, the Field Liaison should be informed immediately. The Field Liaisons will convene a meeting with the Student and the Field Instructor so that a plan can be formulated to support the student’s consistent attendance and successful completion of the practicum.

In rare cases a student may continue to have difficulty maintaining a regular schedule for Field Practicum following the implementation of a corrective plan. Persistent absences may necessitate a disruption of the placement. An Academic Review Committee may be convened to review the individual circumstances. The student is at risk of receiving an Unsatisfactory grade for Field Practicum.

2. **Sick/Family Leave:** Students in a Concurrent Practicum are allowed sick/family leave each semester equal to the number of hours they are in field each week. For BSW/MSW Foundation Students, this equals 16 hours/semester, and for Advanced level MSW students, this equals 24 hours a semester. Students in a Block Field Practicum are allowed the same number of hours as those in a Concurrent Practicum. Students are required to make up time for any absences that exceed the allowable number of hours. It is expected that students will behave in a professionally responsible manner, by providing advance notice of an anticipated absence, and making appropriate arrangements for their absence. This allowed time for sick leave or family needs does not carry forward from the fall to the spring semester. In other words, unused time allowed for the fall semester cannot be added to the time allowed for the spring semester. Also, this leave time cannot be used to end practicum early during the fall or the spring semester.

3. **University Holidays/Breaks:** With the exception of Winter Break (see #4), if a student is scheduled to be in Practicum on a day that the University is closed (such as Fall, Thanksgiving, or Spring Breaks) or classes have been cancelled, students are not required to attend practicum. These hours **do not** count towards the student’s total clock hours. As with sick/family leave, it is expected that students will behave in a professionally responsible manner and make appropriate arrangements for their absence long before University holidays/breaks.

Students may choose to attend Practicum during KU breaks, but these hours may not be used to complete the Practicum early. **Rather, these hours may be used to reduce the**
weekly hours expected during the remainder of the semester.

4. **Winter Break**: Since the Winter Break is especially long, the Field Education Office sets its calendar based on an early January start date for the spring semester of field practicum. It is expected that the student will be back in Practicum by the early January start date.

5. **Inclement Weather**: Students are expected to attend Practicum during inclement weather if the agency is open and staff social workers are reporting for work. If the agency closes due to inclement weather when a student is scheduled to be in attendance, the student is not required to attend Practicum. These hours do not count towards the student's total clock hours.

If the agency remains open during inclement weather and the student decides it is not safe to travel to the agency, the student should act in the interests of preserving personal safety. The student should promptly notify the field instructor or the designated agency contact about the decision not to attend Practicum. The student may use the allowed leave time for this absence or the student should plan to make-up the missed hours with a schedule approved by the Field Instructor.

6. **Study Abroad**: If the student attends a study abroad program during the time practicum is in session, the student does not receive practicum hours. Again, students are expected to behave in a professionally responsible manner and make appropriate arrangements for their absence.

7. **Activities**: The Field Education Office supports students in using time for the following activities to count toward completion of the total clock hours required for Field Practicum. It is essential that the student has discussed these opportunities with the field instructor well in advance of the event and the field instructor agrees to support the student’s attendance.

   a. Attendance at school-sponsored educational programs. Examples of school-sponsored educational programs include the Margaret Schutz Gordon Lecture, Social Work Day, membership on the School’s curriculum committee, the Dean’s Student Advisory Committee, Field Education Student Advisory Committee, or search committee.

   b. Attendance at field agency-authorized educational programs.

**Guidelines for Supervision and Evaluating Student Performance**

**Field Supervision**: Field supervision is the primary means through which a collaborative relationship is developed between the Student and the Field Instructor, and also the means through which expectations are clarified and performance evaluated. This is a time to reflect on the activities of the past week – not just to report what you did, but also to discuss learning points, share successes and struggles, and identify any specific needs you may have. This regular supervisory meeting is
different from the informal contacts that the Student may have with the Field Instructor and other agency staff. **It is a planned, scheduled time that is set aside to discuss the Student’s social work practice. The School of Social Welfare expects that the Student(s) and Field Instructor will meet weekly for approximately 60-90 minutes.** When multiple students are placed in an agency, group supervision may be used in addition to individual supervision. However, group supervision cannot replace the use of regular individual supervisory meetings.

Here are some suggestions to help make the field instruction time most effective:

1. Meet weekly, throughout the year, at a regularly scheduled time with few or no interruptions;
2. For each meeting, the student should be encouraged prepare an agenda of important experiences he/she wants to discuss;
3. Use this time to focus on the student’s practice (questions, experiences, and concerns about practice), rather than as a time to schedule tasks;
4. Regular reviews of the student’s Learning Contract can help to track progress, revise assignments when needed, and preserve a focus on student learning.
5. The student can be encouraged come prepared with her/his written process recordings, and video or audio-tapes, if this is something the student has chosen to utilize.
6. The Field Instructor can review the student’s written process recordings, video and/or audio-tapes and provide balanced feedback, discussing the student’s strengths and skill sets needing more practice for improvement.
7. The student and Field Instructor should work to develop an open, honest and professional relationship. Part of this relationship will include determining the most effective way to give each other feedback.
8. Students are encouraged to use mistakes as an opportunity to learn. Field Instructors can assist the student to explore concrete steps for improving professional skills.
9. The student and Field Instructor should discuss the strategies that are most helpful in facilitating the student’s learning. Developing and trying new learning strategies is encouraged.
10. The student will use the NASW Code of Ethics to guide to his/her professional learning and within the agency and within the community.
11. The student should discuss what she/he is learning in classes with the Field Instructor. Students should discuss classroom assignments with the Field Instructor for suggestions and guidance, especially when class assignments are based on experiences occurring within field practicum.

**Providing Feedback to Students**

It is extremely important to monitor and evaluate student progress throughout the practicum. In addition to the feedback the Field Instructor provides on a regular basis through supervision meetings, some additional mechanisms have been established to more formally evaluate student progress on an ongoing basis. These include:

1. Initial Learning Contract (developed at the beginning of the student’s practicum)
2. Site visits (conducted by the Liaisons once per semester)
3. Mid-year evaluation (due near the completion of the Fall Semester)
4. Professional Writing samples completed by the student; fulfilling agency standards and demonstrating technical writing proficiency

5. Spring semester Learning Contract Revision

6. End of the year evaluation. It is important that along with the numerical ratings that the field instructor provide written feedback to the student. The final evaluation becomes the official record of the student’s completion of this degree requirement and is retained by the School.

The above feedback mechanisms are required by the School, and are expected to be completed with the input and review of the field triad: the student, the field instructor and the field liaison. Any of these parties can request to meet to further discuss the student’s progress.

It is expected that Students who have satisfactorily completed Field Education and degree requirements will meet minimum qualifications for licensure. Therefore, a Field Instructor should NOT recommend a passing grade for a student if the Field Instructor is not willing to give a positive recommendation to the state licensing agency.

**Writing Assignments for Field Practicum (Student):**

- **Agency documentation (Professional Writing)** is designed to contribute to the ongoing work of the agency. These forms of writing include: client assessments, clinical summaries, client progress notes, court reports, working memoranda, position papers, and formal email communication. The major purpose of this type of writing is to communicate with others about the work accomplished. These written documents typically belong in agency files. With this type of writing, not only is the content critical, but so is the technical skill. Attention to spelling, grammar, punctuation, appropriate usage, and professionalism is imperative. Consistent with the agency’s policies protecting the confidentiality of client information and the principles within the NASW Code of Ethics, all identifying client information should be **changed or blacked out** before sharing professional writing samples with the Field Liaison.

- **Learning Contract:** This is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

**Policy on Assignments**

1. **Required to complete practicum:** The writing assignments listed in the Field Education Handbook and field practicum calendars are required for the satisfactory completion of Field Practicum at all levels (BSW, Foundation, Clinical, and SWAAP). These assignments include the Practicum Learning Contract and professional writing samples. The Field Practicum writing assignments are used to assess student attainment of professional writing skills. Evaluation of writing proficiency is included in the Field Practicum Evaluation of Student Progress.

   If a required writing assignment is not completed by the end date for field practicum, no grade will be submitted. If a past due writing assignment is not completed before the start of Field Practicum in early January (spring start date for Field Practicum) or by one month following the end date for field practicum (end of the spring term or end of summer block practicum), a grade of Unsatisfactory will be submitted for field practicum.

2. **Extension:** If a student needs an extension of a due date for a required writing assignment, the extension must be requested before the actual due date specified in the
Field Practicum Calendar, and the extension requires approval from the student’s Field Liaison.

- A new date must be set. Students are responsible for completing the required work by the newly specified due date.
- If a student’s written work does not satisfactorily address the expectations for the assignment, the Field Liaison will provide feedback and require continued work on the assignment to attain a satisfactory level of completion. The time allowed for satisfactory completion should be limited to one week from the date the Field Liaison provides feedback and the request for continued work to the student.

3. Late or missed assignments:
   - The first late assignment without an approved extension will result in an official written warning to the student from the Field Liaison. The warning will include a reminder that the on-time completion of practicum writing assignments is a requirement for successful completion of Field Practicum. This warning will be sent directly to the student with courtesy copies sent to the field instructor and the Director of Field Education.
   - A second occurrence of a missed or late writing assignment may result in a required meeting of the student with the student’s Field Liaison and the field instructor. A plan will be drafted at this meeting to address timely completion of all assignments. A copy of the plan will be provided to the student. The field instructor and Field Liaison will retain copies of the plan. A copy will be forwarded to the Director of Field Education.
   - A third occurrence of a missed or late writing assignment may result in further action to be determined by the Director of Field Education, which could include a recommendation for the student’s dismissal from field practicum and the corresponding practice or SWAAP course to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and the appropriate Program Director (BSW or MSW). This could result in a significant delay in the completion of degree requirements of up to one full academic year. Because credit is not given for partial completion of Field Practicum, a second full practicum at the same level will be necessary to fulfill practicum requirements.

Grading

1. **Credit:** Students receive academic credit for Field Practicum only after they have completed the total number of clock hours and all required assignments in SW 601, SW 701, SW 801 or SW 804.

2. **Grades:** Grades are recommended by the Field Liaison in consultation with the Field Instructor, and assigned by the Field Education Office. Grading for Practicum occurs two different times during the year. A student is assigned a Pass/Progress (P) or Unsatisfactory (U) at the end of the first semester, and then a student is assigned a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) at the end of the Practicum.

3. **Incomplete:** An Incomplete (I) may be given when a student has made satisfactory progress, but has insufficient clock hours or unfinished learning assignments for completion of the
Practicum due to illness or other factors beyond the student’s control for which an exception has been granted by the Field Instructor and the Field Liaison, and has been approved by the Director of Field Education. A plan of completion needs to be submitted to the Field Education Office when an Incomplete is assigned.

4. Unsatisfactory grade:
   
   o If a Student receives an Unsatisfactory grade at the end of first semester, no academic credit is awarded for Field Practicum. The Director of the BSW or the MSW Program and the Director of Field Education will meet with the student to discuss the student’s future in the program (Academic Review Committee).
   
   o If a Student receives a P grade at the end of first semester and an Unsatisfactory grade at the end of second semester, the student may not receive academic credit for Field Practicum. The Director of Field Education and the Director of the BSW or the MSW Program, the Student and other appropriate individuals will meet to discuss the student’s future in the program.
   
   o An Unsatisfactory grade in Practicum may be assigned if a student engages in behavior described under “Grounds for Dismissal” in the next section. In these instances a recommendation for immediate dismissal will be communicated directly to the Dean of the School. The Dean’s Office notifies the student of the decision to dismiss.

Change of Grade and Grade Appeal
Please refer to the University Senate Rules and Regulations regarding Academic Work and Its Evaluation- Article II, Section 3, for more information about change of grades and appeals.

Grounds for Dismissal

Grounds for Dismissal are specified in the School of Social Welfare’s BSW and MSW Student Handbooks. Each Handbook states:

Behavior that is illegal, does not adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, or reflects other forms of inappropriate professional behavior will be grounds for dismissal from the BSW and MSW program. This could include, but is not limited to sexual or racial harassment or harassment concerning sexual orientation, threatening behavior, plagiarism, theft and sexual misconduct with clients. This is inclusive of all behavior related to the status of students in the School of Social Welfare: interactions with clients, agency staff, faculty and students.

Students are responsible for reading the School of Social Welfare’s Student Handbook and the NASW Code of Ethics. Students will be held responsible for knowing the information about professional conduct specified in these documents.

Protocol for Student Performance Concerns

If the student’s behavior does not meet the criteria for immediate dismissal, the following procedures must occur before an Unsatisfactory grade will be assigned in Field Practicum:

1. The Field Instructor must inform the Student of the specific aspects of his/her performance which are not satisfactory. It is usually appropriate to begin with a face to face conversation about the concerns. However, significant concerns or repeated concerns that are not improving after discussion with the student should be immediately communicated to the Field Liaison. When a practicum agency and field instructor are willing to address problems that arise in field practicum to continue the placement, a change of placement is usually not considered.
2. **Efforts are directed to developing a plan to constructively address problems and concerns.** The Student, Field Instructor and Field Liaison are expected to meet to develop a behaviorally specific, time-limited plan to help the Student improve performance and satisfactorily fulfill expectations. The Liaison can request the presence of his/her supervisor at this meeting. The plan should be documented on the Agency Meeting Form and should be behaviorally specific so that the Student, Field Instructor and Liaison can readily assess and monitor the Student’s progress toward attaining a passing grade. The plan should specify:
   a. Presenting issues and goal/s.
   b. Action steps by student, and/or field instructor, and/or field liaison.
   c. Specific dates for evaluation of progress toward goal/s.

All parties should sign the written plan. The Field Liaison will inform his/her supervisor if the Student is in danger of disrupting from practicum, or receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation.

3. **The Field Liaison is expected to be actively involved in any situation where the Student is in danger of disrupting from practicum or receiving an unsatisfactory grade.** The Field Liaison will offer consultation during this period to the Student and the Field Instructor and will promptly inform his/her supervisor. The Field Liaison may require specific documentation from the Student and/or the Field Instructor to assist in addressing the identified problems. Students are expected to cooperate fully with the Field Liaison and Field Instructor to address performance difficulties.
Conflict Protocol

Conflict Arises with Student or Field Instructor
(Direct discussion of the issue by student and field instructor)

Notify and meet with the Field Liaison to address the problem and develop a plan.

Complete an Agency Meeting Form including a written plan and follow-up date. Send completed form to Director of Field Education.

Field Instructor, Student and Field Liaison meet to evaluate progress on the plan.

If Satisfactory Progress is accomplished, the Field Liaison notifies his/her supervisor (Director or Associate Director of Field Education) and continues to monitor progress. If Satisfactory Progress is NOT accomplished, the Field Liaison notifies his/her supervisor (Director or Associate Director of Field Education).

The Field Liaison is responsible for consulting with his/her supervisor (Director or Associate Director of Field Education) in situations where Satisfactory Progress has not been achieved, or where the Field Instructor or Agency discontinues the practicum to assess the situation and determine student progress in the BSW/MSW Program. In cases of a Practicum Disruption a Practicum Disruption Form needs to be completed.

Practicum Disruptions

It is expected that the student will remain in the same Practicum for two semesters, or for the entire block Practicum. A change in Practicum may be considered under the following circumstances:

1. Unanticipated changes within the field agency that makes it impossible for the agency to continue to support the educational needs of the student, such as budget cuts, staff changes, and loss of clients. In these instances the Field Instructor needs to inform the Field Liaison immediately. The Field Liaison will then immediately contact the Field Education Office and arrangements will be made for the student to be placed in a different Field
Education agency. When the change in Practicum is due to changes in the Field Education agency, the student will be given credit for the hours they have accrued.

2. If a significant mismatch has occurred between the student and the field agency or Field Instructor that was not apparent during the placement interview, a change in placement may be considered. In order for a change to be considered:
   
   • The student and Field Instructor should first discuss any difficulties with one another, and then invite the Field Liaison to meet with them if the problem cannot be resolved.
   
   • If the Field Liaison agrees that there are irreconcilable differences for either the student or the agency, then the Field Liaison will immediately inform his/her supervisor (Director or Associate Director of Field Education) and complete a Practicum Disruption Form.
   
   • Depending on the circumstances, a student may be placed as soon as possible in a new agency, or the student may be required to delay her/his Practicum until a Field Education agency is available that meets his/her educational needs.
   
   • Credit for hours accrued prior to the disruption will be determined by the Field Education Office based on all of the factors in the particular situation.

3. In situations where the Practicum is disrupted, the Director of Field Education may request a meeting of an Academic Review Committee. This will involve a meeting with Student, the Director of the BSW or the MSW Program and any other appropriate individuals at the discretion of the appropriate Program Director. The intent of the Academic Review Committee is to clarify the circumstances leading to the disruption of the placement and to develop a plan for the Student’s continued progress in the program.

4. In situations where a Student commits an act, or series of actions that result in the Student being terminated from the Practicum, the Student will lose all credit for the Practicum. The Director of Field Education will ask the Director of the BSW or the MSW Program to convene an Academic Review Committee meeting and a plan of action will be developed.

**Replacement Following Practicum Disruption**

When a disruption occurs and a decision is made to re-place the student with a new practicum agency during the current academic year, a period of three practicum weeks may be added to the required hours remaining. This will be determined by the Director of Field Education based on a review of the situation. This period of time is intended to provide the student, the field instructor, and the agency with a reasonable period of time for the student’s orientation and development of a new Learning Contract.
**Nondiscrimination**

Along with the expectation that students abide by standards set forth in the School of Social Welfare's Student Handbooks, it is also expected that other members of the University community uphold the University’s non-discrimination standards.

Pursuant to an agreement with the Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, the University of Kansas is required to include the following nondiscrimination statement in University, including departmental, online and print publications:

The University of Kansas prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, age, ancestry, disability, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, gender identity, gender expression and genetic information in the University’s programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of the Office of Institutional Opportunity and Access, IOA@ku.edu, 1246 W. Campus Road, Room 153A, Lawrence, KS, 66045, (785)864-6414, 711 TTY.

This value commitment is also part of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. This Code “protects the rights of every student and describes responsibilities or expectations for student conduct. As such, it forms a significant part of the rules of the campus community. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the policies that govern student conduct. This information may be found at: [http://policy.ku.edu/student-affairs/student-rights-responsibilities-code](http://policy.ku.edu/student-affairs/student-rights-responsibilities-code)

If a student believes that his/her rights have been violated the student is encouraged to seek consultation from a faculty consultant on harassment and discrimination. Or, as with any member of the University community the student has the right to contact the Office of Institutional Opportunity and Access. [http://ioa.ku.edu/](http://ioa.ku.edu/)

**Critical Incidents**

For purposes of this policy, “critical incident” is defined as:

- Injury to the student and/or client under the immediate care/supervision of the student
- Threat of violence to a student by a client or agency staff
- Abusive behavior by the student towards a client or agency staff
- Law violation by the student
- Any event that could have a profound impact on the student

In the event of a critical incident, the student should:

1. Obtain medical attention, if needed
2. Immediately notify his/her field instructor of the incident
3. Establish with the field instructor if further action (law enforcement involvement, etc.) is needed
4. Contact the Field Liaison and/or the Director of Field Education within 24 hours of the incident and report:
   - What happened
   - Who was involved
   - Where/when it happened
The Field Instructor should:
1. Contact with Field Liaison and/or the Director of Field Education within 24 hours of the incident to report what happened, including how the agency is handling the incident.

The Field Liaison should:
1. Contact the Director of Field Education with any report of a critical incident.

The Director of Field Education should:
1. Make contact with the student to ensure that resources and appropriate referrals are made.
2. Plan with the student to ensure his/her physical and emotional safety are addressed at the field practicum placement.
3. Plan with the agency regarding how to reduce the risk for critical incidents involving students in the future.

**Sexual Harassment**

As stated by the University of Kansas Office for Institutional Opportunity and Access (IOA), “The University of Kansas prohibits sexual harassment and is committed to preventing, correcting, and disciplining incidents of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual assault.” The School of Social Welfare shares this strong commitment.

IOA defines sexual harassment as:
Behavior, including physical contact, advances, and comments in person, through an intermediary, and/or via phone, text message, email, social media, or other electronic medium, that is unwelcome; based on sex or gender stereotypes; and is so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a person’s academic performance, employment or equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from University programs or activities or by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment. Sexual Harassment may include but is not limited to:
1. Unwelcome efforts to develop a romantic or sexual relationship;
2. Unwelcome commentary about an individual’s body or sexual activities;
3. Threatening to engage in the commission of an unwelcome sexual act with another person;
4. Stalking or cyber stalking;
5. Engaging in indecent exposure; voyeurism, or other invasion of personal privacy;
6. Unwelcome physical touching or closeness;
7. Unwelcome jokes or teasing of a sexual nature or based upon gender or sex stereotypes; and
8. Sexual Violence

If a student experiences any form of sexual harassment while at a field practicum setting, he/she is strongly encouraged to notify his/her field instructor, any Field Education Office staff including the Director, an Associate Director, or a Liaison, and/or the IOA Office at: IOA@ku.edu or (785) 864-6414.

For more information about sexual harassment and available resources, please visit the IOA website at https://sexualharassment.ku.edu/.
Chapter 3

The Learning Contract

The Learning Contract is the required agreement made between the Student, the Field Instructor and the Field Liaison about what the Student is going to learn and how he/she will accomplish this learning. The Learning Contract should describe specifically what the Student will be doing for Field Practicum, and how the assigned activities will engage the Student with the competencies and practice behaviors identified by the School. The Learning Contract also serves as the basis for the ongoing evaluation of Student progress in Practicum. Remember that the Learning Contract covers two semesters and may be modified as new learning opportunities become available. It is not expected that every practice behavior will be fully attained during the first semester.

Learning Contract Templates for each program and student level can be found online at the School of Social Welfare’s website. The templates can be opened from the website and information can be immediately entered to write a draft of the contract.

Steps when Developing the Initial Learning Contract

1. After the initial orientation is completed, the student will write the initial draft of the Learning Contract. Students and the Field Instructor should brainstorm specific tasks and activities. Ideas may also surface while shadowing the Field Instructor, Preceptor, or others during the first weeks in the agency.

2. Once the initial draft is developed, the Field Instructor will review the Learning Contract and offer any additional feedback and suggested revisions.

3. When the initial Learning Contract is agreed to by the Student and Field Instructor, it is emailed to the Field Liaison.

4. The Field Liaison will review it and offer and suggestions and/or request revisions. If questions arise in the process of writing the initial Learning Contract, the Student, Field Instructor and Field Liaison are encouraged to consult with each other.

Using/Revising the Learning Contract

Weekly supervision sessions offer a good opportunity for ongoing review of the Learning Contract. Areas in need of improvement, and/or additional learning opportunities the student wishes to have should be identified during the Mid-year Evaluation. At the beginning of the spring semester, the Learning Contract should be revised/updated. This update does not require rewriting the entire Learning Contract, but it does require reviewing it to determine:

- Which practice behaviors/learning objectives still need to be addressed;
- Which tasks outlined in the Initial Learning Contract require additional practice opportunities to attain basic competence;
- What new learning opportunities are now appropriate and available based on the Student’s progress during the fall semester and considering new practice learning experiences that may not have been available when the Initial Learning Contract was first written.
After the spring revision of the contract has been completed, the same review process as detailed in the prior section should be used.

**Learning Contract by Student Level**

The **BSW Practicum** is designed to help Students develop the skills for generalist practice and provide them with the opportunity to integrate knowledge obtained in the classroom with the realities of practice in the agency and community settings.

The **Foundation Level MSW Practicum** is designed to provide Students with a generalist perspective that will provide them with the opportunity to integrate knowledge obtained in the classroom with the realities of social work practice in agency and community settings. The Foundation Level MSW Practicum is intended to foster a professional social work identity and to prepare Students for Advanced Level learning in either the Clinical Concentration or the Social Work Administrative and Advocacy Practice Concentration.

The **Advanced Level MSW Clinical Concentration Practicum** focuses on helping the student develop the knowledge and skills to apply social work theory, methods, and values to the treatment and prevention of psychosocial problems, disability, or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders. Clinical practice includes the application of assessment and diagnostic strategies, the articulation of a treatment plan that may include psychotherapy, counseling, client advocacy, systemic and organizational interventions, consultation and evaluation, and other clinically appropriate interventions with individuals, families, couples, groups and social systems. The Practicum engages the student in supervised social work practice to develop these skills and provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting. This includes classes in Clinical Social Work Practice, clinical practice strategies with diverse populations, specialized knowledge in a field of practice or client population (health/mental health, children & families, aging, schools), and macro level interventions used by clinical social work practitioners.

The **Advanced Level MSW Social Work Administration and Advocacy Practice Practicum** focuses on helping the student develop the knowledge and skills to manage and develop human service agencies that improve the well-being of the clients it serves. Social work administrators do this through professional activities that include designing programs, managing resources, managing people, managing information, and influencing relationships with relevant community organizations and stakeholders. The Practicum engages the student in supervised social work practice to develop these skills and provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting. This includes classes in designing social work programs, financial management, advanced policy and programs, personnel management and assessing and managing client outcomes.

For all BSW and MSW students, the Learning Contract for each level contains ten core competencies, with each competency containing practice behaviors specific to the student’s level. The competencies and practice behaviors contained in the Learning Contract are interwoven throughout the curriculum at each level and address the Council on Social Work Education’s accreditation standards. It is expected that in numerous instances, classroom
assignments may also be appropriate tasks for field practicum. Students are strongly encouraged to share their course syllabi and assignments with their Field Instructors.

The template for the each level’s Learning Contract is available at the School of Social Welfare website. It is in a format that supports direct entry of information. Be sure to save an electronic copy of your Learning Contract, including any revisions or updates.

If you have difficulty accessing the contract template, please contact the Field Education Office at fieldeducation@ku.edu and a copy of the document will be sent to you via e-mail. You may also call the Field Education office at 785-864-2268. Although the contract templates are identical for each student, the content of the contract will vary with the individual student and the practicum agency. Even students placed in the same agency or the same service program should have Learning Contracts that include individual variations in learning goals, assignments, activities, and procedures to evaluate progress.
Chapter 4
Evaluating Student Progress and Performance in Field Education

Mid-Year and Final Evaluations of Student Performance

Formal evaluation of Student progress in the Practicum occurs twice – first at the end of Fall semester when the Student has completed approximately 1/2 of the required Practicum hours-- and again at the end of Spring semester when all of the required Practicum hours and assignments are completed. The same evaluation instrument is used for both semesters and is part of the same document as the Learning Contract.

Each practice behavior needs to be evaluated, using the rating scale provided in the Learning Contract guide/supplemental materials. Along with the rating of Student performance, the Field Instructor should write a brief narrative identifying the Student's areas of competency and areas for growth. If a Preceptor is involved in the Student's Field Education learning, the Preceptor should also be involved in the evaluation of the Student's performance in relevant areas.

If you have difficulty accessing the document, please contact the Field Education Office at fieldeducation@ku.edu, and a copy of the document will be sent to you via e-mail. You may feel free to call the Field Education office at 785-864-2268.

The Field Liaison must have the evaluation before a grade can be assigned. For the final evaluation, original signatures from both the Student and the Field Instructor must be included. If the Field Liaison has not received the written evaluation by the time grades are due, then she/he will not assign a grade. All Field Education requirements (hours, learning assignments, writing assignments, and completed evaluations) must be completed before a final grade can be submitted. Students without a grade assigned at the end of the year are not allowed to graduate, or progress to the advanced level of the program. The student could also be at risk of receiving an Unsatisfactory grade if an approved plan for an Incomplete has not been established before the end of the semester.
Appendix A

Developing a Safety Plan*

Work related violence against social workers is a fact of life. It is pervasive and must be addressed by every school of social work, agency and individual worker. Violence includes physical assault, verbal assault, harassment and the threat of assault. Many occurrences of violence can be anticipated and their impact lessened; some may be prevented entirely. If agencies have well conceived safety policies and procedures in place, client and worker safety will be maximized and the agency's liability will be minimized.

NASW Massachusetts Chapter's Committee for the Study and Prevention of Violence Against Social Workers recommends that every agency and private practitioner develop safety policies and procedures that address prevention, intervention and aftermath strategies. Listed below is an outline of requirements for developing a comprehensive policy and safety plan. This outline is general. Each agency or private practice must develop specific guidelines that address their unique characteristics.

I. Safety Plan of Action

A written safety plan specific to the function and layout of each agency, or branch or division of an organization must be developed. Both staff input and expert consultation are important in the planning. Each safety plan must be detailed and comprehensive so that all staff members, clinical and non-clinical, know what to do in case of emergency. The plan must be reviewed and practiced on a regular basis if it is to be useful. A comprehensive safety plan should include:

- How to recognize signs of agitation.
- What to do at first signs of agitation.
- Code words and phrases to signal for help without increasing the client's agitation
- Format for ongoing assessment of a client's level of dangerousness.
- Format for intervention including:
  - When and how to attempt de-escalation.
  - When and how to use non-violent self-defense, physical evasion, force deflection and disengagement skills.
  - When and how to call security or police.
  - When and how to evacuate building.

* All information in this section is taken from the National Association of Social Workers website at: http://www.socialworkers.org/profession/centennial/violence.htm.
II. Exterior and Physical Layout

- Maintain and furnish the facility so that it presents an organized, calm and respectful appearance to clients. Pay particular attention to the waiting area.
- Ensure adequate lighting inside and out.
- Be aware of traffic patterns with special attention to where clients can go unescorted. If the location of bathrooms and coffee area allows unescorted clients to walk through the building, be aware of the risks.
- Establish a risk room where potentially violent or agitated clients can be seen. This room should be furnished in a sparse, neutral manner, and located in a centrally located area with ready access to help.
- Evaluate the need for safety equipment including buzzers and alarms in offices.
- Furnish offices to allow a comfortable distance between client and worker and to permit easy exit for both. Eliminate items that may be thrown or used as weapons.
- Routinely inspect exterior and interior layout and all safety equipment to ensure all is in working order.

III. Rules, Regulations and Procedures

- Establish a format for taking a required history of violence as a part of regular intake procedure.
- Establish a format for communicating violent history to staff when current danger exists.
- Ensure adequate staffing at all times; no one should work in a building alone.
- Communicate safety policies to clients, when indicated.
- Orient new students to safety policy and plan.
- Formulate and post a policy re: providing services to clients who carry or have guns and weapons.
- Formulate and post a policy re: providing services to clients who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Provide ongoing supervision, consultation and training in:
  - details of the safety policy and plan with regular updates.
  - assessment of the client's potential to become violent.
  - treatment and clinical interventions with violent clients.
  - de-escalation techniques.
  - non-violent self-defense, physical evasion, force deflection and disengagement skills.
  - Tarasoff decision - the duty to warn and protect.
  - aftermath of client violence.
- Address institutional practices that unintentionally contribute to client violence.
- Develop a policy on home visits which include:
  - leaving itinerary with office staff so worker location is known at all times.
➢ phoning the office frequently when in the field.
➢ providing portable phones and other safety equipment.
➢ providing options for escorts: staff or police.
➢ giving permission not to go when risk of violence is high.

- Establish relationships with security and police. Let them know what you do and what you need from them.
- Design a program to address the aftermath of client violence. Address the physical and emotional needs, short and long term, of the assaulted worker, worker's family, coworkers and affected clients as well as a format for debriefing and communicating with all staff following an occurrence of violence.
- Develop a format to address the consequences of violent behavior with the client. Include the effect of the violence on services. Develop a format to determine when and how legal action against the violent client will be taken.
- Log and communicate to staff all work-related occurrences of violence including threats.
- Re-evaluate policies, procedures and training needs following an occurrence of violence.
- Develop a "Risk Assessment" tool and train all staff to use it.

THE KU SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WELFARE EXPECTS THAT THE FIELD INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENT WILL REVIEW THE AGENCY SAFETY PLAN AS PART OF THE ORIENTATION PROCESS.