



***MSW PROGRAM***  
***FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL***

**2020-2021**

## **FOREWORD**

This manual is dedicated to the numerous field setting personnel and field instructors who collaborate with us each year to develop quality field education placements for our social work students. These individuals have graciously and generously given of their time, expertise, and wisdom.

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## **Introduction**

This *MSW Program Field Education Manual* has been prepared to assist master of social work (MSW) students, program faculty, field instructors, and field placement setting personnel in understanding the objectives and requirements for the field education component of the MSW program at Southern Adventist University (Southern). It summarizes the current educational policies and procedures for the MSW program and provides guidelines and instructions for field placement assignments.

## **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The social work program makes specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning environment in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity are practiced. Social work education builds upon professional purposes, values, and ethics; therefore, the program commits to offering a learning environment that is nondiscriminatory and that reflects the profession's fundamental tenets.

It is the policy of the School of Social Work (SOSW) at Southern Adventist University that all aspects of the MSW program will be conducted without discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. The School of Social Work and its faculty fully adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics*. We welcome students of different backgrounds, seeking to enrich our program through diversity.

## **Program Location & Contact Information**

The School of Social Work is located in Daniells Hall, 4891 Jones Drive, on the campus of Southern Adventist University. Parking is available in an adjacent parking lot. Both the parking lot and Daniells Hall are handicapped accessible.

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**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**  
**MSW PROGRAM**  
**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Southern Adventist University's Master of Social Work program is to prepare advanced generalist practitioners within a Christian learning environment for service and excellence in evidence-based social work practice.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN FIELD EDUCATION**

The effectiveness of Southern's School of Social Work MSW field education program depends on the important roles and responsibilities carried out by:

- the School of Social Work program administration
- the director of field education
- the faculty field liaisons
- the field education placement setting personnel
- the field instructors
- the task supervisors
- the MSW students in the field practicum

This section of the Southern's School of Social Work *MSW Program Field Education Manual* is intended to describe these roles and responsibilities in order to facilitate understanding and effective interaction that supports a meaningful and successful field education experience for MSW students preparing to join the social work profession as advanced generalist practitioners. The responsibilities outlined in this section are also included in the MSW Field Education Placement Setting Contract agreement.

### **School of Social Work**

The MSW program administration in the School of Social Work develops and oversees the MSW field education program. In order to maintain a meaningful field education experience for MSW students, the School of Social Work program agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To appoint a director of field education from the School of Social Work to be the primary liaison between the university and the placement setting.
2. To consult on the assignment of students to the field education setting to ensure appropriate learning opportunities for students that also fit the setting's service functions.
3. To provide the field instructor with information about the student, the curriculum, and school policies, assisting the field instructor and task supervisor through consultation and conferences when needed.
4. To designate a member of the faculty to serve as liaison to the field education setting.
5. To coordinate meetings of field instructors and faculty to integrate field instruction with the total curriculum.
6. To provide field education training to field liaisons, field instructors, and task supervisors.
7. To provide liability insurance for students completing their field education.



*Note: Although the university provides liability coverage for the student while in field, the liability insurance does not provide any coverage for the student's automobile even if using for field related activities. Nor does the liability insurance provide any health/medical coverage if student should become ill or sustain an injury in the field.*

## **Director of Field Education**

The director of field education is a faculty member in the School of Social Work who reports to the program's dean and who is responsible for the overall coordination of field education instruction within the framework of the curriculum developed by the program. The director of field education for the student's placement agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To make initial contact with perspective agency, conduct preplacement assessment, and to direct students regarding agency interview.
2. To assist the field instructor in the understanding and development of the instructor's role in relation to the program's goals and competencies.
3. To assist the field instructor and student with the creation of experiential learning activities and with the ways and means of meeting the goals of the student learning plan.
4. To schedule and document conferences with the student for supervising, instructing, supporting, and reviewing progress toward meeting program goals and competencies.
5. To consult with the field instructor regarding the student's progress.
6. To submit the student's final grade for the social work practicum course.

## **Field Liaison**

Within the MSW program the field liaison role falls under the director of field education. When the director of field education is unable to act as the liaison, the MSW program may assign field liaisons to students in the field education practicum. The School of Social Work assigns a full-time or adjunct faculty member as a field liaison for each student in the field education program. The faculty field liaison agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To complete field liaison training.
2. To maintain contact with the field instructor and carry out at least one site visit during the practicum cycle.
3. To maintain telephone and email contact as needed.
4. To interpret the connection between classroom curriculum and practicum for the field instructor.
5. To provide, as necessary, supervisory support for field instructors.
6. To ensure that the educational focus of the field placement is maintained.
7. To ensure that learning activities are appropriate, and where they are not appropriate, to assist the field instructor in developing additional assignments.

8. To provide feedback on the student's progress toward proficiency in the program competencies.
9. To respond to problems raised by student or field instructor and to bring to the attention of the director of field education any student who is experiencing difficulties in practicum.

## **Field Education Placement Setting**

If a setting partners with the School of Social Work program by providing placement opportunities for students to fulfill their field education requirements, the field education setting representative agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To consider for acceptance student(s) of the university who are eligible for the social work field practicum and have expressed interest in this setting, without discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. The field education experience consists of a 400-clock hour practicum in the foundation year and a 500-clock hour practicum in the advanced year.
2. To participate with the director of field education and student(s) in pre-placement conferences for the review of field setting learning opportunities and arrangement of student hours and instruction schedules.
3. To appoint a qualified professional staff member to serve as field instructor or task supervisor and provide adequate time and resources for her/him to perform the responsibilities of the field instructor as described below.
4. To provide opportunities for students to engage in the full range of social work service provision on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice for foundation-level practicums, or opportunities for students to engage in specialized social work service provision for advanced-level practicums.
5. To provide needed physical space, equipment and access to needed resources for the student(s) during the field practicum.
6. To provide coverage for the student(s) under the setting's automobile and/or liability insurance policy as appropriate for volunteers within the setting. The student(s) will be covered under the university's student liability insurance policy, but some settings may choose to include the student(s) under their volunteer liability policy as well.
7. To sign and submit any agency-specific agreements necessary to initiate partnership with the Southern's School of Social Work.

## **Field Instructor**

The emphasis of field instruction is on the development of a sound educational practicum experience. In working toward this, the field instructor serves as an administrator, educator, and model. The field instructor agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To supply the program with a current CV or résumé each academic year that a student is in placement at the request of the Office of Field Education.
2. To assume on-site responsibility for the student's field education experience (including the responsibilities of the task supervisor, listed below, when there is no task supervisor utilized in the placement).
3. To collaboratively assess the learning needs of the student within the context of the program's competencies and to establish appropriate learning activities.
4. To assign tasks that are suitable in terms of the student's capacity to carry out functions in the field education setting, recognizing the student as a developing professional.
5. To prepare and conduct individual weekly *one-hour* scheduled supervision conferences with the student.
6. To help the student integrate theoretical knowledge and knowledge from previous experiences with the student's present practice, challenging the student to expand professional skills, knowledge, and values.
7. To confer frequently with the task supervisor and director of field education regarding the student's progress.
8. To advocate for student access to learning experiences within the field setting and the professional community.
9. To meet program requirements by attending meetings for field instructors including the mandatory annual field instructor training, writing evaluations on student performance, and signing and submitting field-related papers.
10. To contact the faculty liaison/director of field education where there are concerns.

## **Task Supervisor**

In cases where a qualified field instructor is not available within the field setting, Southern's School of Social Work provides the opportunity for students to utilize a task supervisor as the person they are immediately responsible to in the field setting. However, all students must have an approved field instructor who meets with them weekly for supervision in order to reinforce the social work perspective. The School of Social Work will assign a qualified field instructor in those situations where a task supervisor is used. The task supervisor is not required to have a social work degree. The task supervisor agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To complete field instructor training(s) provided by the School of Social Work.
2. To orient the student to the field placement setting, familiarizing the student with the setting's structure, policy, objectives, accountability mechanisms, and relationship to the community.
3. To review safety procedures with the student, especially those that may be unique to the setting and its clientele.

4. To work closely with the student in the delivery of services by scheduling the student's work assignments, integrating the student's work with the work of the setting's personnel, and assisting the student in meeting professional standards in the workplace.
5. To collaborate frequently with the field instructor and student regarding the student's progress.

## Student

The student agrees to the following responsibilities regarding field education:

1. To complete online Field Module.
2. To complete Student Field Assessment Form located in the online Field Module.
3. To schedule preplacement meeting/conference with director of field education.
4. To schedule an interview with perspective agency AFTER receiving directive from the Office of Field Education.
5. To submit the following required field documents with signatures on Sonia:
  - a. Field Placement Setting Contract
  - b. Field Education Confidentiality Statement
  - c. ~~Ask field instructor if résumé has been uploaded~~
6. To wait for and review confirmation email from the Office of Field Education. Unless this email has been sent, the School of Social Work does not consider the placement as confirmed. (The unconfirmed field student may not be covered with liability insurance. *Students who begin working in field agencies prior to confirmation may not be permitted to use those hours to complete their field work requirements.*)
7. To secure transportation to and from the field education placement setting and assume responsibility for mileage costs not covered by the field setting.
8. To prepare a field education learning plan with the field instructor's input, revising it as necessary.
9. To assume professional responsibility and appropriate accountability for assigned client services and other field activities.
10. To initiate and participate in weekly supervisory conferences with the field instructor, prepare and submit a weekly journal to document field work, share reactions to and questions about the field education experience, and advise the field instructor of new learning needs.
11. To participate in selected field setting activities (e.g., staff meetings, conferences, in-service training, and committee work), when these are not in conflict with campus-based courses, seminars, or other commitments.
12. To obtain field setting approval for the use of any case material or records outside of the setting while maintaining accepted standards of confidentiality.
13. To inform the field instructor of classroom assignments that relate to field instruction and share material when relevant.

14. To connect with their field liaison for a site visit during the 400 or 500 practicum.
15. To confer periodically with the director of field education about learning experiences and any problems or concerns related to the field education assignment.

## **FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES, CRITERIA, AND PROCEDURES**

This section of Southern's School of Social Work *MSW Program Field Education Manual* specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field education settings and field instructors, placing and monitoring students, maintaining field liaison contacts with field settings, and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness. This information also describes how these field education elements are congruent with the program competencies.

### **Selecting Field Education Settings and Field Instructors**

The director of field education initiates and maintains contact with community agencies and service providers in order to facilitate the development of collaborative educational agreements. After identifying a potential field setting, the director of field education proceeds to the next step in the selection process by meeting with personnel and determining the eligibility of a setting social worker to become a field instructor. When a field setting meets the program's criteria for setting selection and a qualified field instructor agrees to accept students, the director of field education and the setting's personnel will discuss and complete any necessary paperwork. Once the setting is secured, the field instructor undergoes mandatory training (face-to-face/online).

#### **Field Setting Criteria**

In order to be eligible as a program field setting, the setting must offer adequate field education opportunities for students as evidenced by the following criteria:

1. The setting employs a qualified MSW social worker who can serve as a field instructor, or is willing to make provision for qualified supervision to complement agency services (see field instructor qualifications below).
2. The setting provides services that will expose students to the experiences required in the program's field learning plan and meet the program's competencies for field instruction.
3. The setting can offer opportunities for students to engage in social work services, assuming a workload of a foundation- or advanced-level social worker under the supervision of a field instructor.
4. The setting can offer opportunities for students to engage in the full range of social work service provision on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice for foundation-level practicums, or opportunities for students to engage in specialized social work service provision for advanced-level practicums.
5. The setting will accommodate for one hour of weekly field instruction per student.
6. The setting is able to supply adequate workspace, equipment and access to needed resources for students to learn and perform their duties in a professional manner.

7. The setting will provide release time for field instructors to attend trainings and workshops offered to supervisory personnel working with students.

*Note: In order to make the best matches available, the MSW Program recommends placements based on having screened perspective settings and students. Students and agency field instructors accept the placement after an on-site interview of the student.*

### **Consecutive Placement Settings**

Field placements are educational experiences that serve the purpose of broadening the student's preparation for generalist practice through experience in a variety of service delivery systems. It is the policy of the School of Social Work that students do not continue in one agency for two consecutive placements. This is to ensure that students have exposure to a variety of learning experiences and applies to BSW graduates who enter the MSW program and MSW first-year students entering the second year.

Additionally, students may not complete both field placements as a negotiated part of paid employment. If one field placement is completed in an organization in which the student is employed, the other field placement must be completed in a setting in which the student is not a paid employee. Students should make appropriate arrangements with their employers and others to ensure the availability of sufficient time and/or financial resources to allow one field placement away from their paid employment.

### **Field Instructor Criteria**

Field education settings, when possible, shall supply a qualified field instructor as defined by the following criteria:

1. The field instructor must hold an MSW degree from a Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)-accredited social work program. In the event that a field instructor does not hold an accredited MSW degree, the School of Social Work will assume responsibility to reinforce a social work perspective. This will be accomplished through oversight by the Field Education Office.
2. The field instructor must have at least two years of experience in the field setting or be approved by the program.
3. The field instructor may not have any documented NASW sanction in force on record.
4. The field instructor must have adequate time available to supervise and engage with the student and agree to provide one hour of direct field education supervision weekly.

In cases where a qualified field instructor is not available within the field setting, Southern's social work program provides the opportunity for students to utilize a task supervisor as the person they are immediately responsible to in the field setting. Task supervisors must have at least one year of social service experience. However, all students must have a fully-credentialed

field instructor who meets with them for a minimum of *one hour* per week for field supervision, in order to reinforce the social work perspective. The School of Social Work will work with the student to identify a qualified field instructor in those situations where a task supervisor is used.

### **Dual Relationship Policy**

When assigning field instructors to students, the School of Social Work adheres to pertinent standards in the *NASW Code of Ethics* concerning dual relationships and conflicts of interest. In the context of field education, dual relationships occur when a field instructor maintains a relationship with a student in more than one domain, whether professional or personal. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively. In the event that a dual relationship does exist, the student must petition for approval from the Field Education Office prior to field placement. The student will not begin to accrue hours until the field instructor has been approved.

### **Placing Students**

The MSW program ensures that students are properly prepared to enter the field education experience. Courses in the program curriculum reinforce specific areas of field readiness, including knowledge regarding the program's competency practice behaviors and the *NASW Code of Ethics*. The program has developed assessments that serve as field education placement criteria for foundation and advanced MSW students.

### **Foundation Field Readiness Criteria**

A foundation student must meet the criteria listed below to begin the foundation practicum experience. The student may not begin to accrue hours in the field until the director of field education has confirmed the placement. Criteria for eligibility are the following:

1. The student must have completed or registered for three of the following core courses: Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families (SOCW 509), Social Work Practice with Groups, Organizations, and Communities (SOCW 514), HBSE I & II (SOCW 511, 512), and Integration of Faith and Foundation Practice Seminar I or II (SOCW 541, 542).
2. The student must complete all the required foundation field readiness assessments at the program's benchmark level (see table below).
3. Submit in Sonia a Field Placement Setting Contract and Field Placement Confidentiality form.
4. *The School of Social Work requires Foundation MSW students to have a minimum GPA of 2.75 for eligibility to begin field. The SOSW will schedule an academic review with their school advisor for any student who receives a grade below the academic requirement to develop a plan to begin or remain in field.*



## Foundation Field Readiness Assessments

The overall goal of social work practicum experience in an advanced generalist program is for students to develop and gain expertise in assessment and intervention at all levels of client systems including individuals, families/groups and organizations/communities.

The foundation year practicum student's social work practice is a progressive continuum that begins with the observation of social work practice by professionals in the field and transitions to practicing alongside professionals. The social work practice experience culminates in the student's performance of autonomous social work practice at a foundation level (supervised by the practicum instructor and/or task supervisor).

### Foundation Practice Continuum

Social Work Autonomous Practice Expectations

1/3rd to 2/3rd hours...observing & skill building / last third 3/3rd practicing alongside

Assessment	Course Associated with the Assessment	Benchmark Proficiency
Ethical Standards Assessment	Orientation Module	Assessment at 95% or higher
Values and Professionalism Assessment	Orientation Module	Assessment at 90% or higher
Culture, Cultural Awareness, and Cultural Competency	Orientation Module	Assessment at an 80% or higher
Field Quiz	Orientation Module	Completion of MSW Field Practicum quiz at 90% or higher

## Advanced Field Readiness Criteria

An advanced student must meet the criteria listed below to be eligible to begin the advanced practicum experience. The student may not begin to accrue hours in the field until the director of field education has confirmed the placement. Criteria for eligibility are the following:

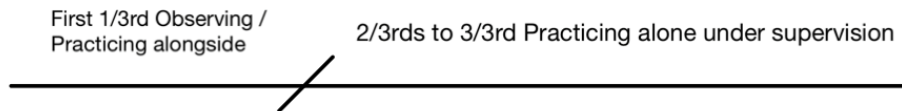
1. The student must be accepted into advanced standing or have completed foundation-level classes.
2. The student must complete the field orientation module that includes the advanced field readiness quiz which requires a 90% for passing.
3. Submit in Sonia a completed Field Placement Setting Contract, and Field Placement Confidentiality form.

4. *The School of Social Work requires MSW students to have a minimum GPA of 3.0 for eligibility to begin field. The SOSW will schedule an academic review with their school advisor for any student who receives a grade below the academic requirement to develop a plan to begin or remain in field.*

## **Advanced Field Readiness Assessments**

### **Advanced Practice Continuum**

Autonomous Advanced Practice Expectations



What is meant by autonomous practice? To answer this question, it is helpful to start with looking at the definition of the word “autonomous”. Autonomous is defined as having the ability to undertake or carry out activities independently. This definition includes being able to react and develop responses to situations with self-reliance. From a social work practice perspective, autonomous practice exists at different skill levels and with multiple systems. For instance, a bachelor’s prepared social worker is capable of autonomous social work practice at the BSW skill level. Social work autonomous practice expectations should always match the level of skill and preparation of the social worker. Autonomous social work practice becomes more complex as the skills and training level of the social worker grow from a BSW or foundation prepared social worker to an Advanced/MSW prepared social worker. Similarly, as practice skills and preparation (through observing and doing alongside) increase during the practicum experience, the social work student increases their level of autonomy in practice, eventually completing practice tasks on their own (under supervision).

As an example, we can consider the social work practice task of a clinical mental health assessment. If an advanced MSW student is in a setting where clinical mental health assessments are completed, the student would need practice experience through the field placement in order to complete the assessment autonomously, in addition to course material. In this situation the continuum of autonomous practice would start with observing clinicians completing assessments. Next, the student would participate, alongside a clinician, in completing the assessments. Finally, the student would complete assessments on their own, under supervision.

### **Other Readiness Considerations**

In addition to the competency-related readiness factors presented and assessed by the MSW program, information regarding confidentiality, safety practices in the field, and awareness about harassment are covered in the Integration of Faith and Advanced Practice Seminar courses, prior to or concurrent with, students entering their field practicum.

### ***Confidentiality***

Students are required to sign a Field Education Confidentiality Statement form in Sonia before starting their field practicum.

### ***Safety***

In addition to the material on safety covered in the seminar courses, the practicum setting is also strongly encouraged to review safety procedures with students, especially those which may be unique to the agency and its clientele. Specific questions about safety should be discussed with the agency, field instructor or director of field education. State and local laws will be followed.

### ***Harassment***

The School of Social Work will not tolerate any form of harassment including:

1. Sexual/physical harassment.
2. Emotional/verbal harassment.
3. Racial/ethnic harassment.
4. Cyber harassment.
5. Any conduct that intimidates, threatens, or endangers the health and safety of any person.

Students are encouraged to examine policy within the practicum setting regarding harassment and should notify the faculty field liaison and the director of field education immediately in the event there is any incident which appears to involve harassment.

### **Use of Social Media and Technology**

While at field practicum, students must refrain from checking their personal phones and devices for emails, phone calls, and text messages that are personal in nature and from conducting personal internet browsing from agency computers. Use of social media including text messaging, tweets, Instagram, and Facebook-type postings should never reference information or events related to field placement. **Work-related electronic documents that may be confidential in nature should not be downloaded or saved onto personal or home laptops, computers, or devices.** Other precautions should be taken to protect the boundaries between personal and professional and to protect the safety and privacy of the client and agency as well as the privacy of the social work student.

### **Special Placement Situations**

The majority of students will be placed using the regular placement procedures. A minority, however, may petition the Field Education Office for an exception, which includes employee-based, long-distance, early, and international placements.

### **Early Placement Opportunities**

The School of Social Work may partner with agencies that initiate an early placement process due to a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, competitive placement settings and/or

needs of the population served. Agencies and students should present compelling reasons of educational benefit to be eligible for an early placement.

### **Early Termination of Placement or Field Supervision**

Early termination is only considered under extenuating circumstances. It is very difficult to develop an adequate learning experience for a student in a new placement in mid-semester or mid-year, thus petitions for termination of placement must involve the director of field education. If the student or field instructor initiates a change in practicum, she/he must first contact the director of field education and participate in a formal problem-solving process meeting. If the problem-solving process results in the decision to terminate, the student and field instructor must complete a Termination of Practicum Petition form. Students may be subject to losing hours. A student may not be assigned a new practicum until she/he has approval from the director of field education. The student will be expected to complete an Appeal Plan prior to starting in a new practicum. Students should expect the entire change process to take at least four to six weeks.

### **Employment-Based Field Placement**

The Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) standards addresses the need to maintain the educational focus of the field experience to differentiate between job and field activities throughout the MSW program. In addition, the CSWE standards stress that such agencies commit the necessary resources to facilitate the student's progress in the educational program even though the student may also be an employee. CSWE standards also require that coverage of educational objectives for field be the foundation for decisions around a student's field experience.

Students who desire to have a field practicum in the setting where they are also employed must have worked a minimum of three (3) months, submit a completed Employment-Based Field Placement Application in Sonia, and be approved by the Field Education Office. To ensure the role of student as learner, it is incumbent upon the student to clearly differentiate between employment responsibilities and field education learning experiences. The contract states that the student will use non-work time to fulfill the assignments and educational experiences outlined in the student's learning plan. A job description and a clearly defined field education learning plan are required before the placement can be confirmed. The student's employer must agree in writing to allow the student to fulfill field education requirements in the employment setting. The student must be supervised by someone other than his/her employment supervisor.

Once the student has received approval from the Field Education Office with an employment-based practicum, the field instructor assures that the student's field placement is designed to provide them with opportunities to demonstrate developing competence in specific practice behaviors. Throughout the practicum experience, the director of field education and the faculty field liaison will collaborate with the field instructor to ensure the academic integrity of the

employment-based practicum. In situations where an employment setting does not provide sufficient opportunity for the student to demonstrate the competency practice behaviors, it will be necessary to make arrangements with additional social service settings where completion of the learning plan requirements can be accomplished.

### **Long Distance Placements**

The School of Social Work recognizes the importance of providing flexibility for students seeking field placements located beyond the university's greater community. It is the student's responsibility to find a placement, if not found locally. Students requesting to have a placement beyond 65 miles from the university's campus must submit a request in advance to the Field Education Office. The School of Social Work does not guarantee the student will be approved for a long-distance placement. The field instructor must be approved and have experience in supervising students.

Final approval of long-distance field placements for MSW social work students is an educational decision made by the Field Education Office. The decision will be made based on the following criteria:

- A. The student's perceived learning needs and preferences,
- B. The director of field education's assessment of the student's learning needs, which includes feedback from the social work faculty, and
- C. The student's extenuating circumstance.

Students are notified of long-distance placement approval via confirmation email from the Field Education Office.

*Note: Under no circumstances is a student to begin a long-distance field placement until after the field placement site has been confirmed by email. Unless this email has been sent, the School of Social Work does not consider the placement as confirmed. The unconfirmed field student may not be covered with liability insurance. Students who begin working in field agencies prior to confirmation may not be permitted to use those hours to complete their field work requirements.*

### **International Field Placements**

International placements apply only to advanced year standing field practicum.

The foundation year field practicum placement is an integral part of laying the groundwork for generalist social work practice. For this reason, foundation field practicum placements are required to take place within agency settings in the domestic United States.

Advanced students desiring an international field practicum experience must petition the director of field education. In order for an international practicum placement to be arranged and

approved, it must comply with all policies, procedures, and requirements pertaining to the field education program.

### **Field Hours at Practicum Setting**

It is expected that students will complete their field hours on site. (Exceptions would be project-based activities or prior approval from the director of field education to accrue hours away from placement.) Weekly supervision is required. Plan with your field instructor for vacation or other times she/he will be away.

Students in the foundation practicum are expected to accumulate a minimum of 400 field hours with a minimum of 10 hours per week. Advanced practicum students must complete 500 hours with a minimum of 13 hours each week\*. Student journals must reflect quantitative content that is consistent with the number of hours accrued each week. Students must follow rubric posted on eclass and in the course syllabus. If journal documentation is not descriptive or lacks detail, students may be required to redo the journal in order to receiving a passing grade.

\***Winter Starters** must reserve 150 hours for the fall semester to practice skills learned during the semester.

Practicum is designed to allow students to integrate knowledge gained from the classroom with the real-life experience and skill development that their field settings provide. It is for this reason that students are expected to be in their practicum settings over the course of two semesters. It is expected that students do not finish their practicum **more than four weeks** before the end of their 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.

### **Advanced Project Based Hours**

- **Description:** one of the innovative features of Southern Adventist University's field education program involves project-based experiences offered as practicum opportunities for Advanced standing MSW students. This was implemented in response to some agencies not being able to intentionally provide all opportunities needed for students to demonstrate the practice behaviors on their learning plans.
- **Experience:** The partners involved in the innovative project-based field experience include individuals who are Masters of Social Work and/or licensed social workers, agencies in the community, such as non-profits, community assistance programs, mental health community agencies, etc., and the city government. The innovation was implemented because of a discovered need. Students can work with their field placement agency or another agency to find out what they could do to benefit the client population. Implementation would first require that students have a field instructor as well as a task supervisor who would oversee their specific project. Often students are able to use an agency to meet the program's clinical requirements and then use project-based experiences in order to meet the requirements for the macro-level administration component.

- **Resources:** The effective function and operation of the project-based practicum experience requires the following resources:
  - Visits by the director field education to each project site/location,
  - Collaboration between the field instructor and task supervisor on monthly journals, mid-term and final learning plan evaluations,
  - Supervision by both task supervisors and field instructors to ensure that students are applying and making connections to their advanced-level learning plan,
  - Additional mileage costs associated with site visits, and
  - Additional investment of time

### **Bonus Hours**

Students may receive one hour maximum each week for Sonia documentation (journaling – if written prior to weekly supervision) and one hour maximum for self-care. These hours should be included in the total hours for the week and should be documented in the weekly journal. Students can only access bonus hours if they attend practicum that week. Bonus hours are not counted when students do not attend practicum.

### **Field Hours on Hold**

A student's hours will be placed on hold if submission deadlines for documentation are not met. When a student's hours are placed on hold, per the signed Field Agency he/she is still required to go to his/her practicum, but hours will not be counted. Hours begin accruing again once documents have been submitted. However, hours while on hold are not retroactive. After one occurrence of hours being placed on hold, the Office of Field Education may restrict a student from going to practicum until documentation is submitted and the field office is notified. If hours are restricted, a reinstatement meeting must occur.

If you miss practicum due to illness or vacation etc., this must be indicated in the journal and a zero placed in the number of hours accrued section. In addition, if your hours are on hold, you still need to write a journal complete with information of what you did at practicum even though the hours total is zero, as hours are not accrued during this time. Bonus hours cannot be counted during this time.

### **~~Accruing Field Hours for Class Assignments~~**

~~The preparation and implementation time for class assignments may not be used to accrue field practice hours, except for assignments that meet one of the following criteria:~~

- ~~1. An assignment that includes the implementation of a program or intervention in the field practicum setting that meets an assessed need, or~~
- ~~2. An assignment that makes specific use of a competency and practice behavior identified in the student's learning plan and documented in journals.~~

~~Students wishing to accrue practice hours for assignments meeting these criteria must petition the director of field education for approval.~~

### **Student Leave from Practicum**

It is understood that occasional illness or other emergencies may necessitate absence from the practicum. Students are expected to work out these arrangements with the field instructor.

If the absence is more than two weeks, the director of field education should be notified by the student or field instructor.

### **In-Progress (IP) in Field**

IPs are given until all field-related requirements have been met. Scores of 4 or higher are required by the end of the practicum year to receive a passing grade. Journal scores of 16 or higher are also required to pass.

### **Monitoring Students and Maintaining Field Liaison Contact with Field Settings**

Students are closely monitored in their field education experience. Field placements are evaluated to ensure they are providing a quality learning experience for students and that they facilitate the achievement of program competency practice behaviors. Monitoring the quality of field instruction may be accomplished through face-to-face, e-mail, electronic meetings (Zoom, Skype, etc.), and phone contacts among student, field instructor, director of field education, and field liaison.

### **Monitoring Students in the Field Setting**

Oversight of students in field education takes place through the Integration of Faith and Practice Seminar courses. The faculty who teach these courses monitor students' field placement experiences through specific class discussions and assignments.

While in the field setting, the student is assigned to a qualified and trained field instructor. It is a program requirement for the student and field instructor to meet for a minimum of *one hour per week* for direct supervision. The ongoing evaluation of a student's performance is an integral part of the field instructor's responsibilities. During weekly supervision, the field instructor and student discuss the documentation in the journal for that week. This may include performance strengths and weaknesses, progress towards achieving competence in the practice behaviors, and professional responsibility. It is advised that the field instructor submit comments in that week's journal during the supervision meeting in order to approve their time for the week.

The monthly document (Monthly Field Journal August, Monthly Field Journal September, etc.) is due to the director of field education by the first Sunday of the following month (example: August journal due first Sunday of September) for review, feedback and grading. PLEASE



NOTE: *Blank journal forms for subsequent months will not appear in Sonia until the field instructor has made the submission to the director of field education.*

### **Maintaining Field Liaison Contacts with the Field Setting**

The School of Social Work assigns a faculty field liaison to each student registered for practicum and, the field liaison must be either a full-time social work faculty member or an adjunct faculty member contracted as a field liaison. Field liaisons undergo training to prepare them to serve in their role as a primary contact person between the MSW program and the field setting.

Field liaisons will make field setting site visits during the course of the practicum cycle to assess the student's learning and to provide guidance and support to the field instructor. The field liaison is expected to visit the field setting at least one time during the foundation or advanced practicum cycle. In addition to the face-to-face visit(s), email correspondence or phone conferences may also be scheduled at the student's, task supervisor's or field instructor's request, in order to address concerns in the field placement. Electronic liaison visits may be utilized for students in long distant placement settings.

### **Evaluating Student Learning**

Evaluation is an important part of the educational process and should be ongoing throughout the year. The MSW Field Education Learning Plan is the primary tool for evaluating a student's progress. The field instructor evaluates and scores on the student's learning plan her/his progress twice yearly – mid-term at 200 or 250 hours and at completion of practicum 400 or 500 hours. These formal evaluations enable the school and the student to see how well the student is applying social work knowledge, values, and principles to practice. In addition to formal assessment methods, ongoing evaluation of a student's learning is achieved through weekly *one-hour* supervision meetings with the field instructor, as well as through field liaison site visits. The director of field education, in consultation with the field instructor and the field liaison, assigns the student a final practicum grade. Scores of 4 or higher must be achieved on the final evaluation for a student to pass the class.

### **Learning Plan Time Regulations for Field Practicum Students**

The learning plan is the foundation upon which the student's practicum experience is built. This document is primarily developed by the student and the field instructor. However, the director of field education or field liaison, may offer additional information with suggestions.

Students are required to submit the Individualized Field Education Plan (IFEP) in Sonia within two (2) weeks of the student's practicum. The IFEP supports the student and agency in discovering activities and projects for the learning plan.

The student is expected to submit their learning plan at the time of the first journal submission of practicum. If the student fails to submit the learning plan by the designated time (see syllabus), the student will cease to accrue field hours and the field instructor, task supervisor, and field liaison will be notified. *The student will be required to continue in the practicum placement, but will not accrue practicum hours until the learning plan has been submitted to the director of field education and has been approved.*

### **Mid/Final-Term Evaluation**

Student learning evaluation is guided using the MSW Field Education Learning Plan instrument on both the foundation and advanced levels and makes explicit what the student's learning activities will be. The field instructor can use the learning plan to direct the student to the educational opportunities (cases, projects, meetings, etc.) that are most appropriate for the student's current skills and which are related to program competencies and practice behaviors. The learning plan may be modified as mastery is achieved, new needs emerge, or additional field education experiences become available.

The field learning plan includes a built-in evaluation section that is to be used for mid-cycle and final practicum cycle assessment. The field instructor completes the assessment section of the learning plan and reviews the results with the student. The field instructor will include qualitative responses in the feedback section. These areas will require ongoing development.

The learning plan evaluation scale is as follows:

1. Unsafe Performance
2. Beginner Performance
3. Standard Performance
4. Professional Performance
5. Exceptional Performance

By the end of the field practicum experience each student is required to achieve a level of 4 or higher on each program competency in the learning plan evaluation to successfully complete the field education requirement. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the learning plan for the field instructor to review, provide feedback and sign in Sonia.

### **Field Instructor Evaluation of Student**

Ongoing evaluation of a student's performance occurs both informally and during structured weekly supervision appointments. Evaluation of the student's learning is accomplished during weekly face-to-face supervision through: (1) identifying performance strengths and weaknesses, (2) evaluating progress towards achieving mastery of the practice behaviors, and (3) verifying the weekly journal and time (form is in Sonia). The student writes journals each week to discuss with his/her field instructor. At the end of the month, the student submits the journal form in Sonia to be reviewed the field instructor and the director of field education.

### **Field Liaison Evaluation of Student**

Faculty field liaisons maintain contact with the student and field instructor and schedule visits in the practicum setting. The liaison visit is an opportunity to assess student learning, student/field instructor interaction, and the field setting in general. Feedback is solicited from both the field instructor and the student about their perceptions concerning the student's field experience. The field liaison records observations and data gathered from the setting visit on the Field Liaison Contact Form. This feedback is shared with the director of field education in Sonia. Field liaisons are assigned to students in Sonia.

### **Evaluating Field Setting Effectiveness**

The MSW program continually evaluates field placement settings to ensure they are providing a quality learning experience for students. Field settings effectiveness is monitored through both formative and summative means. These evaluation measures address how well the setting provides learning experiences that enable students to develop and demonstrate all of the program's competencies.

Formative evaluation of field settings occurs weekly through the information students share in the Integration of Faith and Practice Seminar class or in their weekly field journals. If students experience significant negative interactions or circumstances, they report those experiences to the seminar professor/field liaison. The professor/field liaison immediately informs the director of field education of any negative interactions or circumstances. The director of field education, in collaboration with the field team, determine whether or not the problem the student is experiencing is performance related. Some examples of non-performance situations that can result in negative field experiences are the following:

1. Inadequate setting resources or learning opportunities to support field education requirements.
2. Unanticipated "mismatch" of student and field education setting needs
3. Agency reorganization.
4. Personality or ideological clash between field instructor and student.

All reported negative experiences are followed up. The director of field education may set up an appointment with the student to discuss the situation in a more in-depth way than is done in the class setting or, if the situation falls outside the expected professional standards of the profession or seems to indicate that the setting is not meeting program criteria, the director of field education may contact the field setting to explore the situation from the perspective of the setting personnel. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the director of field education will set up a meeting with the student and setting personnel to determine a course of action. On rare occasions where an appropriate and equitable solution is not found, the director of field education may elect to change the student's placement.

Summative evaluations of field placements occur several times throughout the field experience. The field liaison visits provide opportunities for field setting evaluation and documentation. Students also give direct feedback about field settings at the end of their placement cycle through the Field Placement Evaluation, which is completed as part of their practicum class.

In the event that a field setting is thoroughly evaluated and the director of field education concludes that it does not meet the program's criteria as an effective setting for field education placements, the setting is removed from the program's roster. The setting may be reinstated after it is evident that the inadequacies have been appropriately addressed.

### **Unsatisfactory Performance in Field Setting**

The field instructor plays a pivotal role in identifying unsatisfactory performance early in the practicum experience and should discuss areas of concern with the student and notify the field liaison and director of field education immediately. If the student does not demonstrate measureable growth in the identified areas within a reasonable period of time, the field liaison and director of field education should be notified. A joint meeting with the student, field instructor, field liaison, and director of field education should be convened to develop strategies for remediation.

### **Field Education Non-Academic Dismissal Policy**

This policy addresses the issue of non-academic dismissal from field education and is separate from policies regarding academic standing. A student may be dismissed for failure to comply with non-academic standards, even though the student is in good academic standing.

The School of Social Work uses the *NASW Code of Ethics* as the standard for professional social work conduct. Prior to beginning field placements, students are required to sign a commitment to support and uphold the Code of Ethics. Consistent failure to demonstrate compliance with social work values, ethics, or professional behavior may warrant non-academic dismissal from field placement. Non-academic dismissal from the field may also result in dismissal from the MSW program.

Reasons for non-academic dismissal from field placement include, but are not limited to:

1. Insensitivity for human needs, inflexibility, inappropriate attitudes toward diversity, or lack of social consciousness.
2. Lack of professionalism.
  - a. Inability to establish and maintain positive and constructive interpersonal relationship with client and field instructor,
  - b. Inability to perform professional duties due to personal problems, refusal to accept and follow instructions through on field placement assignments,

- c. Attendance problems or failure to communicate with field instructor about schedule difficulties,
  - d. Consistent lateness,
  - e. Inability to meet deadlines or complete work.
3. Inability to demonstrate appropriate control of emotional involvement.
4. Inability to demonstrate professional assertiveness.
5. Inability to work as part of a collegial network.
6. Inability to recognize and resolve ethical conflicts and dilemmas within the social work practice.
7. Inability to prioritize duties or responsibilities.
8. Inability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries.

A student's right to appeal a non-academic field education dismissal will be granted through the standard procedure outlined in the School of Social Work *MSW Student Handbook*.