



**FIELD EDUCATION  
PROGRAM MANUAL  
2020-2021**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

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## **PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL**

The purpose of this manual is to describe the structures, goals and expectations, the roles and responsibilities, and the policies and procedures that form the basis for, and guide Field Education, an integral part of the USM School of Social Work curriculum. It is intended to assist students, faculty, staff, field liaisons, and field instructors in clarifying, coordinating, and implementing the various aspects of the field instruction process.

Field Education is an educationally directed program offering students opportunities to practice and test the classroom skills, theories, and principles while working in a social work agency under the supervision field is intended to be a “magical environment”, a safe and supportive place where students are initiated into the traditions of social work practice. It is a place where what they have been taught in the classroom finds its way through “coaching” and their “doing” into their emerging professional persona.<sup>1</sup> Students learn how to deliver services with the guidance and direction of a qualified field instructor.

## **School of Social Work Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

We are committed to fostering, sustaining, and **strategizing toward racial inclusion, diversity, and equity** (S.T.R.I.D.E.). As a school, we will adhere to this commitment by taking strong positions, taking action, providing help, and being clear on expectations from all affiliated with the School of Social Work at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). This statement is couched within the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. Lastly, this statement is intended to offer our position, plans of action, and expectations for students, staff, faculty, and field partners.

## **What is Our Position?**

All students, staff, and faculty are welcome in any School of Social Work setting. We disavow all racism, xenophobia, homophobia, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, classism, ableism, and hate speech or actions that attempt to silence, threaten, and degrade others. We recognize that discrimination can be direct or indirect and take place at both institutional and personal levels. Expressions or actions that disparage a person are contrary to the mission of S.T.R.I.D.E. and the school and will not be tolerated.

## **How do we Implement Action behind our Position?**

We are committed to supporting our students and fostering an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. We will work to promote an anti-discriminatory environment where everyone should feel welcome. During class, your instructors will not shy away from the uncomfortable. The faculty urge you to have the courage to be uncomfortable in class discussions. In exchange for your courage, we will work to ensure a classroom environment that supports your taking these intellectual and emotional risks.

### **What does Providing Help Look Like?**

If you feel that our courses, programs, or department fall short of this commitment, we encourage you to engage in dialogue with your instructor, staff, or administrator. Your instructors will always be in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said or done that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to an instructor, administrator, or university partner about it. Alternatively, you may file a Statement of Complaint with the **Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Employment Opportunity** in person or online at: <https://forms.usm.edu/human-resources/view.php?id=13153>. You may also contact the **Office of Multicultural Programs and Services (Hattiesburg Campus)** to submit complaints in person or online at: <https://www.usm.edu/student-affairs/cares.php#report>.

### **Our Expectations**

We expect that learning needs will be addressed both in and out of class. The diversity that students bring to class will be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. Courteous behavior and responses are expected at all times. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. We expect you to be able to disagree without becoming disagreeable. Civility and respect for the opinions of others are very important in an academic environment.

### **University ADA Policy**

If a student believes that they have a disability which is covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and makes them eligible to receive classroom or housing accommodations, they should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information regarding the registration process. Disabilities covered by the ADA may include but are not limited to ADHD, learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic health disorders, temporary illnesses or injuries and pregnancies. Students should contact ODA if they are not certain whether their documented medical condition qualifies for ODA services. Students are only required to disclose their disability to the Office for Disability Accommodations. All information submitted to ODA by the student is held with strict confidentiality.

#### Hattiesburg Address:

The University of Southern Mississippi  
Office for Disability Accommodations  
118 College Drive # 8586  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

#### Gulf Coast Address:

The University of Southern Mississippi on the Gulf Coast  
Office for Disability Accommodations  
730 East Beach Blvd  
Long Beach, MS 39560

Voice Telephone: 601.266.5024 or 228.214.3232 Fax: 601.266.6035

Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the Mississippi

Relay Service at 1.800.582.2233 (TTY) or email ODA at ODA@USM.EDU.

### **Mental Well-Being Statement**

USM recognizes that students sometimes experience challenges that make learning difficult. If you find that life stressors such as anxiety, depression, relationship problems, difficulty concentrating, alcohol/drug problems, or other stressful experiences are interfering with your academic or personal success, consider contacting Student Counseling Services on campus at 601-266-4829. More information is also available at [HTTPS://WWW.USM.EDU/STUDENT-COUNSELING-SERVICES](https://www.usm.edu/student-counseling-services). All students are eligible for free, confidential individual or group counseling services. *In the event of emergency, please call 911 or contact the counselor on call at 601-606-HELP (4357).*

### **Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting**

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create and maintain a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a faculty member. I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on USM's campus with certain University officials responsible for the investigation and remediation of sexual misconduct. The information will remain private and will only be shared with those officials necessary to resolve the matter. If you would like to speak in confidence, resources available to students include Confidential Advisors with the Shafer Center for Crisis Intervention, the Counseling Center, Student Health Services, and Clergy. More information on these resources and University Policies is available at <https://www.usm.edu/title-ix/index.php>

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## **THE PURPOSE OF FIELD**

The field practicum is guided by a number of important principles pertaining to social work education. Knowledge, values, and skills first defined and learned in the classroom are reinforced and refined through professionally supervised practice. Curriculum content areas are, further, most effectively and most fully absorbed under conditions of planned and supervised integration and synthesis. Undergraduate and graduate students alike bring with them to the field practicum varied social, cultural, educational, and experiential qualities, about which they must become critically aware if they are to flourish as competent and effective practitioners following graduation. Educational opportunities and resources provided by field instruction must, moreover, address the promotion of social justice and institutional change, as well as the enhancement of social functioning of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities. Our field practica also provide students with an initiation into the traditions of the social work profession and the practice of the social work community. It provides students an intermediate space (Schon, 1987) between the “real” practice world and the academy. In this place they can learn particular ways of seeing, thinking, and doing that are consistent with social work practice and increase their professional social work confidence.

The educational activities which support the field component of the curriculum are the responsibility of the Field Education Office. A key element for the field program is the interaction between the community-based field sites and the field liaisons who monitor the students’ progress in their placements. Approximately 200 social service agencies serve the Field Education Office by providing diverse placement sites and day-to-day field teaching and supervision by qualified field instructors. These agencies are a critical component of the field curriculum and carry a large share of responsibility for the education of students in the field.

## **THE FIELD EDUCATION OFFICE**

The Field Education Office serves both the undergraduate and graduate programs. A full time Field Education Coordinator manages all aspects of field placement and serves on the school’s administrative team.

The responsibilities of this team include the following:

1. Assign students to field placements.
2. Review agency and field instructor applications.
3. Obtain and renew agency affiliation agreements.
4. Ensure compliance with Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) educational policy and accreditation standards (EPAS) requirements.
5. Consult with faculty, students, field instructors, field liaisons, and agency administrators regarding field policies and procedures.
6. Conduct on-going evaluation of the field curriculum.
7. Provide field instructor training on the school’s curriculum, field supervision, practice behaviors, and other relevant content.

### **Responsibilities of the Field Education Coordinator**

1. Recruit and assess social service agencies as field instruction sites;
2. Establish and maintain cooperative relationships between the School and social service agencies;
3. Consult with agency administrative personnel on matters involving the provision of adequate field instruction, selection and training of field instructors and maintenance of field instruction standards;
4. Interpret the School's mission, goals, objectives, and philosophy of education and field education standards to the community and community agencies;
5. Develop seminars and staff development experiences for field agencies and field instructors;
6. Approve assignment of students to specific agencies following consultation with students, advisors, field office personnel, and field instructors; and,
7. Consultation with field liaisons, advisors, field instructors and students in situations involving student performance concerns.
8. Provide training for field instructors;
9. Revise field instructor training materials to keep current;
10. Assist with student interviews and placement activities as needed.
11. Initiate contact with the Field Instructor and the student.
12. Conduct at least one agency site visit or make one agency contact during the semester.
13. Assess and monitor the quality of supervision provided to the student.
14. To be available to the Field Instructor and the student to deal with problems that may occur during the course of the placement.
15. Mediate if problems arise between students and field instructor or between student and other agency staff.
16. Review and sign the learning plan.
17. Review the mid-semester evaluation.
18. Review the end-of-semester evaluation.

### **Responsibilities of the Field Education Specialist**

1. Maintain all records pertaining to agencies, field instructors, and students;
2. Facilitate communication to students, agencies, field instructors, and faculty;
3. Maintain current information on agencies approved as field instruction sites;
4. Assist with preparation for field instructor training and field-related workshops; and,
5. Assist with field interviews as needed.
6. Assist with student interviews and placement activities as needed
7. Assist with agency and field instructor recruitment

## **Field Setting Contact**

The field office staff are responsible for making contact with field agencies by face-to-face site visits, phone calls, emails, or zoom. During these visits the field office staff along with the field instructor, task coordinator and student communicate what the student is accomplishing during the field placement and supervision. If there are any areas of concern during placement, these can also be addressed during this time. The field office offers continuing education opportunities to field instructors to keep them aware of what the student is learning in the classroom.

## **FIELD COURSES**

### **BSW Program**

Undergraduate students enroll in SWK 430, Field Education, and SWK 431, Field Seminar, during their final semester. Students in SWK 430 must complete a minimum of 420 hours by attending field placement 32 hours per week.

**SWK 430. Field Education** (9 hrs.) Prerequisites: Must have completed the required university general education curriculum, the social work core, and the professional foundation. The student must have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Co-requisite: SWK 431. This internship in a social service agency provides experience in direct service to client systems and enhances and develops generalist practice skills. This course is the only one in the social work curriculum where students earn a Pass/Fail grade.

**SWK 431. Field Seminar** (3 hrs) Co-requisite: SWK 430. The seminar enables students to further develop generalist practice skills and integrate professional knowledge, values, skills and theory with practice.

Please refer to the Undergraduate Bulletin and the BSW Program Handbook for more detailed information on courses and degree plans.

### **MSW Program**

Graduate students' field courses depend on the students' enrollment status: full time, part time, or advanced standing. All graduate students must have 900 field hours in order to graduate. Advanced standing students must provide documentation of undergraduate field hours that will be used toward the 900 required hours.

### **MSW Full Time Students**

#### **First Year**

**SWK 659.** (2 hrs.) Full Time Field Education I. Students attend field placement three days per week. Students attend biweekly group sessions that process field experiences to assist with developing a professional identity. Students should complete a minimum of 300 field hours.

## **Second year and Full Time Advance Standing**

**SWK 661.** (1 hrs.) Full Time Field Education II. Students begin field at a different agency, attending three days per week

**SWK 662.** (1 hrs.) Full Time Field Education III. Students continue at the same agency as SWK 661, attending three days per week.

## **MSW Part Time Students**

### **First Year**

**SWK 626.** (1 hr.) Part Time Field Education I. Students attend field placement two days per week. Students attend field placement three days per week. Students attend biweekly group sessions that process field experiences to assist with developing a professional identity

**SWK 627.** (1 hr.) Part Time Field Education II. In the semester following SWK 626, students continue at same agency for two days each week. Students continue to attend field placement three days per week. Students attend biweekly group sessions.

By the end of SWK 626 and SWK 627, students need to have accumulated a total of 450 field hours.

## **Second Year and Part Time Advanced Standing**

**SWK 641.** (1 hrs.) Part Time Field Education III  
Students attend a new field placement two days each week.

**SWK 642.** (1 hrs.) Part Time Field Education IV  
Students attend a new field placement two days each week.

By the end of SWK 641 and SWK 642, students need to have a total of 450 hours.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin and the MSW Program Handbook for more information on courses and degree plans.

## **Advanced Standing**

Student with a BSW degree and meeting other requirements may matriculate the MSW program in the second year. Students are required to provide proof of the number of hours successfully completed for undergraduate field. The undergraduate hours and the graduate hours must total a minimum of 900 hours. Adjustments to normally required field hours may be necessary in order to meet this requirement.

## **No Credit for Life Experience**

Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given in lieu of the field placement or any other required social work course.

## **THE FIELD PLACEMENT PROCESS**

### **Tk20**

Before entering field students need access to Tk20, the School of Social Work's field tracking and assessment software. Access can be purchased (a one-time fee) through the university bookstore or directly from Tk20. For more information about purchasing Tk20, please contact the field education office. To learn more about Tk20, please visit their website at [usm.tk20.com](http://usm.tk20.com)

### **Eligibility for Field**

Undergraduate students must have completed all coursework per the degree plan and have a GPA of 2.5. Graduate students must have a GPA of 3.0 and be ready for field according to the student's plan of study.

### **Application**

Field office staff will distribute information to students about the placement application and interview process during classes the semester before entering field. At that time, students will be given a deadline for completing a field application in Tk20. Students are to upload a current resume to Tk20 as part of the application process.

### **Interviews**

Students will then schedule an interview with the field office during the next two to three weeks. Students are expected to bring to this interview completed applications, unofficial transcripts, and resumes. Interviews may not be held if any of this information is missing or incomplete. **Field placement activities will not begin until the application and the field office interview are complete.**

The interview with the field office will give the placement staff a better understanding of the student's educational needs. The student will have the opportunity to ask specific questions about field placement and to provide the interviewer with any additional information deemed helpful to the placement process. Information is provided to the student with signature obtained in Tk20 on documents (see appendix) about confidentiality, responsibilities, background checks, and other possible agency requirements. Any costs associated with background checks and other agency requirements are the responsibility of the student. The University does not pay for background checks, drug tests, TB tests or other needs of an agency. The University does provide professional liability insurance for the student.

At the end of the field office interview time period, the field office staff begins the placement process. **Students are not to contact agencies or arrange their own placements.** The field office will notify students of the agency and field instructor assigned to them. The student then arranges for an interview with the agency and notifies the field office after the interview is completed. If the agency accepts the student, the confirmation of placement form is completed and returned to the field office. This completes the placement process. Note: Student concerns arising from an agency interview will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Field Education Coordinator and other staff involved.

The student will be formally notified of the assigned field agency and field instructor prior to the beginning of the semester they enter field. Students are asked to be patient because the placement process for the number of students entering field takes time. The agency and field instructor availability may change one semester to the next requiring time to develop other field sites. Obtaining affiliation agreements between the university and a new agency also takes time.

Different factors enter into the selection of an agency for a student; however, the main factor is finding a match for the student's educational needs. As such, students' preferences for agencies or populations cannot be guaranteed.

**IN NO CASE MAY A STUDENT SEEK TO ARRANGE A FIELD PLACEMENT OR EXPLORE A PLACEMENT POSSIBILITY WITHOUT FIRST INVOLVING THE COORDINATOR OF FIELD EDUCATION.**

**Field Agency Responsibilities**

Eligible agencies are those that provide social work practice opportunities for students and employ social workers who meet field instructor requirements. Students may be considered for agencies that do not have social workers only if a qualified off-site field instructor (usually faculty) agrees to provide weekly supervision and an experienced person holding a degree in a related profession (e.g., psychology, recreational therapy) provides daily onsite supervision.

A field agency/organization enters into an affiliation agreement with the University of Southern Mississippi before a student is placed.

Responsibilities of the agency per the affiliation agreement are listed below.

1. Field Education experience facilities will be provided without regard to age, race, color, creed, national origin, or gender of the parties involved.
2. Provide available space, instructional materials and social work experiences to the student(s) for the learning purposes. Provide adequate orientation of said agency to the student(s). Provide a planned educational experience to the social work student(s) in accordance with the Field Education Manual of the School of Social Work.
3. Honor student class attendance and school requirements.
4. Inform the geographical faculty liaison of any changes in policy and/or procedures, which may affect student learning experiences and/or opportunities. Inform the geographical faculty liaison of any changes in the employment status or assignment of the assigned field instructor, which may affect student learning experiences and/or opportunities.
5. Inform field coordinator immediately of any inappropriate conduct of the student.

6. Allow social work field instructor time to meet with the student(s) on a weekly basis. Allow social work field instructor to complete and submit in Tk20 mid-term evaluation and an end-term evaluation for each semester a student is placed within the agency.
7. Allow social work field instructor to attend Field Education training.
8. Retain full responsibility for the care and welfare of all clients when students are in training.
9. Honor the University and School of Social Work policy that prohibits students from transporting clients in the student's personal vehicle.

### **Field Instructor Responsibilities**

The School of Social Work uses the title of field instructor to designate those individuals who supervise the activities of social work field students. Field Instructors need to have an MSW from an accredited school of social work and at least two years practice experience. For BSW students and students in the first year of the graduate program, a field instructor may hold a BSW from an accredited school of social work plus two years practice experience. Exceptions to this requirement are made on a case by case basis. For example, the School of Social Work and the Field Education Office value many grandfathered social workers who have the knowledge and skills from years of practice experience.

All agency field instructors must be experienced in the job, complete field instructor training, and agree to provide one hour of supervision each week. Field instructors will complete the learning agreement, evaluations, and, as necessary, performance improvement plans.

The Field Instructor's responsibilities include the following:

1. Adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, especially section 3.02, Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings, Education and Training. (See appendix.)
2. Interpret the field instruction program to other members of the agency staff in order to create a climate conducive to learning and facilitate the use of agency resources which will help meet the learning needs of the students.
3. Orient the student to the agency.
4. Provide a minimum of one hour of individual supervision per student per week and select appropriate learning assignments for the student.
5. Assist the field student in adding responsibilities or assignments to the learning plan. The field liaison will serve as a consultant in the procedure and should always receive a copy of the plan and confer with field instructor regarding the plan, as needed.
6. Provide opportunities to develop practice behaviors. Establish a plan of reviewing and evaluating student's progress in order to assess adequately.

7. Complete the mid-semester evaluation of the student and review with the student.
8. Complete the end-of-semester evaluation of the student and review with the student.
9. Report concerns to the field liaison or to the field office in a timely manner. Field instructors have the option of implementing performance improvement plans as they deem necessary.
10. Understand that field instructors function as both professional social workers and as educators. By being part of the adjunct faculty corps of the School of Social Work, boundaries appropriate to these roles are encouraged.

### **Task Coordinator**

Some agencies may use a Task Coordinator in addition to a Field Instructor. A Task Coordinator is under the direction of the Field Instructor and may provide instruction and supervision regarding the daily tasks at the agency. The Task Coordinator is usually a social worker but may have a degree from a related profession. The Task Coordinator may provide feedback to the student and field instructor but does not conduct weekly supervision meetings or formally evaluate the student.

### **Student Responsibilities**

The primary role of the student is to meet the educational objectives of the field curriculum as an active participant in an agency setting. Students are assigned to affiliated agencies where they are administratively responsible to an agency supervisor (the Field Instructor) and where they are expected to comply with agency policies and procedures. Students are also expected to comport themselves in accordance with the profession's standards of ethical performance.

The student's responsibilities include the following:

1. Assist in developing and implementing the learning plan.
2. Ensure the learning plan is signed and uploaded to TK20
3. Adequately prepare for weekly supervision
4. Follow agency policies and procedures, especially confidentiality.
5. Abide by the NASW and State of Mississippi Codes of Ethics.
6. Adhere to standards and/or guidelines of the agency's monitoring or accrediting bodies.
7. Accept supervision and feedback from the Field Instructor and agency staff.
8. First consult with the Field Instructor if problems occur in the placement; notify field liaison if a resolution cannot be reached.
9. Complete the required minimum contact hours.
10. Complete evaluations of field agency and field instructor in TK20.



## **FIELD AT PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT**

The field education program is designed with the belief that a more meaningful and integrated learning experience can take place if students are provided with a wide variety of field learning experiences. However, the School does recognize that expenses and the extremely limited amount of student financial aid are contributing factors in allowing some students to pursue graduate education. It is believed that agencies which have an on-going investment in a valued employee may be willing to make further commitment to the employee's professional development if the student is allowed to remain in employee status while in field placement within the agency.

This arrangement is possible only if planned learning experiences are sufficiently different from the job responsibilities that the student has been performing. The new and different learning experiences must be educationally focused; must be in keeping with the student's specific educational needs; must meet the requirements of the School and the Council on Social Work Education; and, can in no way diminish the educational quality of the field learning experience.

The student must be placed within a different unit of the agency and with an MSW field instructor who has never functioned as that student's supervisor in any work setting. A student already employed in a social service agency or an agency that provides social work services may, under certain circumstances, be allowed to complete field practica at the place of employment.

The following conditions must be met before an arrangement of this type can be considered.

1. The agency must be formally affiliated as an approved placement site with the USM School of Social Work.
2. The student's field assignment duties and responsibilities must be significantly and qualitatively different from his or her employment duties and responsibilities and must be in a different department, division or program of the agency.
3. A qualified, approved Field Instructor who is an employee of the agency but not the student's employment supervisor must supervise the student's practicum activities.
4. The student must be granted an appropriate amount of employment release time to complete the required number of clock hours for the semester.

A student wishing to do a field placement at place of employment must state this intent on the application. At the field office interview, the requirements will be discussed. The student will be given an Employment-based Field Placement application to complete and have signed by appropriate staff of the employer. **Each consideration for this type of placement is reviewed on a case-by-case process. The Field Education Coordinator will have final approval.**

The student's field instructor will be an MSW employee of the agency other than the student's regular employment supervisor. When this is not possible

within the agency, utilization of an experienced field instructor from another agency can be considered. The School has the responsibility of approving the field instructor. The agency must agree in writing to accept an MSW field instructor from outside the agency, if necessary, to complete the placement for the student.

Rationale for the field instructor being an MSW other than the employment supervisor is that a field instructor who is not the employment supervisor is more likely to concentrate on learning objectives and processes rather than on the completion of agency tasks and can be more objective about a student's performance. Standards and scheduling for this placement must be the same as for any placement: the setting must be able to provide the required types of learning experience to meet the expectations of a field placement.

## **GENERAL FIELD PLACEMENT POLICIES**

### **Attendance at Field Agency**

Absences from the field agency must be reported in a timely manner to the field instructor or the field instructor's designee.

The field course syllabus provides information about attendance at the field agency relative to the course requirements. In general, however, any student – no matter which program or which field class - missing 32 hours of field must report this to the field office immediately. This much time is difficult to make up and will require a meeting with the appropriate program coordinator. Missing 32 hours or more at the field agency may result in the student being asked to withdraw from the field course.

### **Tardiness**

When possible, tardiness to the field agency must be reported to the field instructor or the field instructor's designee.

### **Contact Hours**

Students are expected to negotiate their field schedule (specific days of the week, specific hours, etc.) with the Field Instructor. A breakdown of the amount of time per week to be spent in field is contained in the previous section "FIELD COURSES". Students may not complete the internship before the end of the semester. All students must complete the required number of contact hours. A contact hour is defined as time spent at the agency or time spent on behalf of the agency. Students follow the university academic calendar meaning that the student does not have to attend field during university scheduled breaks and holidays. If the student works at the agency during these times, the student may count the hours. The student may find that it is necessary to attend field placement during breaks in order to achieve the required number of contact hours.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the required number of contact hours is achieved. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the Field Instructor to make up any lost time. When a student determines that achieving the required hours cannot happen, the student must notify the field office immediately. Only hours in field will be counted. The only exception will be when the field agency and/or the university is closed due to a disaster.

### **Positive Background Checks**

The School of Social Work does not require background checks of its students. However, students need to know that background checks are required by more and more field agencies. Agencies differ in their requirements for type of background checks and types of offenses that prohibit internship. Students need to understand that a positive result on a background check may result in not being able to complete the field education requirements for graduation.

### **CHANGES AND INTERRUPTIONS IN FIELD**

Sometimes it is necessary to consider the removal of a student from a field placement after the start of the semester. A student may be removed from a site for the following reasons:

#### **Agency Request**

Documentation of:

- Failure of the student to abide by NASW and/or State of Mississippi Codes of Ethics.
- Failure of the student to abide by agency and/or accrediting body policies, procedures, rules, or regulations.
- Lack of satisfactory demonstration of the learning plan practice behaviors.
- Repeated, unexcused tardiness and/or absence of the student.
- Lack of student's progress in correction of identified deficiencies.
- A student who is asked to leave a site under any of the above conditions will be subject to removal from the program and forfeiture of all completed hours at the discretion of the Field Coordinator in consultation with the School's Administrative Team and other relevant persons.

#### **Field Education Office Request**

- Evidence that the field site is not providing an adequate learning experience and/or adequate supervision for the student.
- Agency closure, agency restructuring that does not support internship requirements, and/or resignation or termination of the Field Instructor (departure of a Field Instructor will result in removal of a student only if satisfactory alternative arrangements for qualified supervision cannot be made).

In the above instances the student, the Field Instructor, and the Field Coordinator will consider the particular needs of clients as transition plans are made. The student may be given credit for some or all completed hours at the discretion of the Coordinator of Field Education. Credit will be granted, however, only if it is determined that the quality and integrity of the learning experience at the new site will not be compromised.

- Failure of the student to abide by USM School of Social Work field policies and procedures.

A student who is removed from a placement for this reason will be subject to a failing grade and forfeiture of all completed hours depending on the circumstances and at the discretion of the Field Coordinator, the appropriate program coordinator, and other relevant persons.

### **The Performance Improvement Plan**

If at any point in the practicum a student's performance falls below an acceptable level, a Performance Improvement Plan should be completed. This plan is a tool designed to address problematic behaviors and/or situations that may arise. This allows the student the opportunity to correct the identified behavior(s) and successfully complete the practicum. This plan should be implemented as soon as a need for change is identified to allow time for the student to address concerns and successfully complete the internship.

### **Transfer to another Agency**

A request by a student to be moved from the assigned field agency to another agency (after the start of the semester) for any reason other than those cited above will be considered on a case by case basis.

In all cases, transfer of a student from one agency to another during the course of a semester (regardless of circumstances) is dependent on the availability of an appropriate alternate site and cannot be guaranteed.

### **Student Request Withdrawal from Field Course**

A student who wishes to withdraw from field after the start of the semester must first consult with Field Education Coordinator. Once it has been determined that withdrawal is appropriate, University procedures regarding dropping courses must be followed (refer to the current University undergraduate or graduate Catalog and/or the current Registrar's Bulletin for specific procedures and grading policies).

A student may have legitimate extenuating, personal circumstances (as determined by Field Education Coordinator in consultation with other appropriate persons) that preclude completion of the placement in the semester for which the student is registered in the course. In such an instance, the student may be given a grade of "I" if late enough in the semester and will be required to re-enroll in the field course the following semester to complete the remaining hours at the same agency (if possible). In all such instances the integrity of the field experience must be a primary consideration.

### **SELECTION OF FIELD AGENCIES AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS**

The School of Social Work is always willing to have community agencies express interest in becoming field instruction sites. We welcome new agencies that reflect the diverse populations they serve. We seek affiliations with agencies and field instructors that prepare and provide the student with social work values, ethics, knowledge, skills and cultural competencies in working with a wide range of clientele. Exploration may be initiated by either the agency or by the School to

assess whether an agency would be appropriate for providing the type of field instruction that would carry out the objectives of the field education program.

### **Agency Affiliation Criteria**

Potential settings are visited and carefully reviewed by the Field Education Coordinator. In order to be approved for affiliation by the School of Social Work for the purpose of providing field instruction to social work students, agencies must meet the following criteria:

1. Agencies must be related in their purpose and function to the mission, goals, and objectives of the School of Social Work.
2. The agency administration supports the philosophy of professional education and is interested in and willing to commit staff time to student instruction
3. The agency offers a professional climate conducive to learning; staff relationship and morale contribute to a favorable climate for professional development.
4. Agencies' philosophy of service must be compatible with the philosophy, values, and ethics of the Social Work profession.
5. Agencies must be clear about their programs and services offered.
6. Agencies' programs must offer students a wide range of learning opportunities to work with client systems (individuals, groups, families, communities and organizations from various cultural, ethnic, social, religious, and sexual orientation backgrounds).
7. Agencies must have qualified Field Instructors or be willing to allow outside field instructors to work with their personnel.
8. Agencies must have been in operation for at least two years at the time of affiliation
9. Agencies must not be dependent on students to fulfill basic staffing needs.
10. The agency maintains and observes policies with respect to nondiscrimination in relation to clients, staff, students, and faculty.
11. Agencies must make reasonable arrangements for students with regard to space and equipment.
12. Agencies must agree to the execution of a written School/Agency Affiliation Agreement between the University of Southern Mississippi and the agencies' representative duly authorized to enter into contractual agreements.
13. Agencies must be willing to provide some release time for field instructors to attend field orientation sessions and field instruction continuing education seminars and workshops.

## **Agency Affiliation Process**

1. The Field Education Office is informed that an agency is interested and potentially suitable and eligible to provide field instruction to social work students and provides an Application for Agency Affiliation and an Application for Field Instructor Approval to the interested agency.
2. The agency returns the completed applications and resumes for all potential Field Instructors to the Field Education Office.
3. If, after a review of the paperwork, it is determined that the agency meets affiliation criteria, a site visit may be scheduled for the purpose of verifying suitability and availability of space.
4. The administrative assistant manages the Affiliation Agreement process, notifying the Field Education Coordinator of delays or problems.
5. If the agency is denied approval for affiliation, the agency is notified of the decision in writing.

## **Updating Agency Information**

The Field Education Office at the University of Southern Mississippi is consistently updating agency records. The Agency Update Information form is available to those agencies that have a current affiliation agreement on file with the University and the School of Social Work.

We strive to keep agency information current, so this will help maintain an open relationship between the University and the Agency. If at any time your agency information changes, please contact the Field Education Office, so necessary revisions can be made.

## **Field Instructor Criteria**

Generally, Field Instructors are social workers who are employed in social agencies or other institutions and have some experience in supervision and recognition for competence in their work. There must be a willingness to accept and apply the educational objectives of the curriculum of the School of Social Work. They are considered adjunct faculty by the School even though their time and expertise are donated. In a few instances, field instructors are members of the School faculty who are assigned the responsibility for field instruction. They are required to spend at least one hour per week with each student in individual supervision. New field Instructors must attend training prior to supervising a student.

## **Eligibility Criteria to Supervise Students**

In order to be eligible to supervise the professional must possess:

1. A Master of Social Work degree from a school accredited by the Council of Social Work Education
2. A Bachelor of Social Work degree from a school accredited by the Council of Social Work Education – only for undergraduate and first year graduate students

3. Two years postgraduate social work experience
4. At least six (6) months within their current position

Helpful attributes for field instructors include:

5. Solid record of successful practice and a willingness to participate in refining existing skills and develop new ones to model for students.
6. High standard of professional ethics and values and the ability to incorporate those values and ethics with students in practice
7. Imaginativeness and creativity in developing field experiences related to field instruction course objectives.
8. A willingness and ability to organize time for instructing students, meeting with field coordinator, and attending meetings for field instructors.

In the relatively uncommon circumstance that no properly credentialed social worker is available within the agency to provide field instruction, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective by asking a faculty member to serve as field instructor.

## **DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION**

The field education experience involves much documentation: orientation to field, learning agreement, mid-term evaluation, final evaluation, and contact hours. The School of Social Work uses Tk20 software as an online tool to manage these field documents.

### **Tk20**

Students are assessed a one-time fee associated with Tk20 and will have access to their Tk20 field records for seven years after graduation. Field instructors will submit time sheets, learning agreements, and evaluations through Tk20. Tk20 training is included in all field instructors training. For more information, please contact the field education office. To learn more about Tk20, please visit their website at <https://usm.tk20.com/>

### **Orientation to Field**

The student is responsible for making arrangements through the field instructor to complete the orientation to the agency. The student uploads the Orientation to Field Form (copy included in the appendix) to Tk20.

### **Learning Agreement**

The Learning Agreement is uploaded into Tk20 by the student and consists of two parts: (1) the agency's social worker job description and (2) the field course practice behavior list. The purpose of including the job description is to identify the social work tasks and responsibilities the student will be learning.

Some field instructors may want to circle those items that directly pertain to the student. In lieu of an agency job description, the field instructor may create a list of social work tasks and responsibilities to guide the internship. The Learning Agreement (see copy in appendix) has a section for adding other learning tasks the

field instructor and/or student wish to include. An example is the student has an interest in understanding the agency’s grant process.

The field course practice behavior list presents the focus for student development. These are the competencies that the field instructor will use to evaluate the student. Both the student and the field instructor should use the list as a guide for weekly supervision discussions:

1. What opportunities did the student have during the week to demonstrate the practice behaviors?
2. What opportunities need to be created in order for the student to use the knowledge and skills associated with the practice behaviors?
3. Feedback from the field instructor on student’s performance on particular practice behaviors.
4. Questions from the student regarding practice behavior challenges.

**Evaluations**

Each field course requires a mid-term and a final evaluation. All evaluations use a 10-point scale for five descriptions (2 points per description) of each practice behavior. The field instructor completes the evaluation and reviews with the student. The School of Social Work encourages field instructors to accurately rate the students and avoid the natural tendency to inflate a rating. The School believes that ratings in the ‘highly achieved’ category (ratings of 9 and 10) are exceptional and, thus, be reserved for exceptional performance. Also, the School’s experience is students value and want honest feedback. All involved with field education – field instructors, USM School of Social Work, and students – have an obligation to our profession to develop or become competent social workers.

Sometimes circumstances are such that a student has not had the opportunity to exercise knowledge and skills for a particular practice behavior. In such circumstances, the field instructor needs to leave the item blank, i.e., no rating is given. The field instructor can make a remark on this item in the comments section of the evaluation.

Following is an example of an evaluation of one practice behavior. The complete evaluations can be found in the appendix.

	<b>Not Achieved</b>	<b>Minimally Achieved</b>	<b>Moderately Achieved</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Highly Achieved</b>
	<b>Score of 1 or 2</b>	<b>Score of 3 or 4</b>	<b>Score of 5 or 6</b>	<b>Score of 7 or 8</b>	<b>Score of 9 or 10</b>
<b>1. (PB 1.1) Make ethical decisions by applying the standards</b>	No evidence that the student understands the concept or knows how	In supervision, the student discusses the need for making ethical decisions by	Student demonstrates making ethical decisions by appropriately applying one or more	Student demonstrates making ethical decisions by appropriately applying one or more	Student demonstrates making ethical decisions by appropriately applying one or more



<p><b>of the NASW Code of Ethic, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.</b></p>	<p>to apply ethical decisions using any of the following : the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations , models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, or additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context</p>	<p>appropriatel y applying one or more of the following: the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, or additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context</p>	<p>of the following on at least one occasion: the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, or additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context</p>	<p>of the following on at least three occasions: the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, or additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context</p>	<p>of the following consistently: the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, or additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context</p>
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**Contact Hours**

Field Instructors need to document contact hours in Tk20 on a weekly basis. All persons involved need to monitor hours to assure completion of the required number.

**Student Evaluation of Field Experience**

At the end of the semester, the student will complete a Student Evaluation of Field Experience in Tk20. This evaluation is intended to provide feedback to the field office on the learning opportunities at the field agency. Evaluation information is not shared with the field agency or field instructor without permission from the student.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*Will I be expected to perform as a social worker right away?*

No. During field instructor training, we ask that students follow a four-step process:

1. Orientation to the agency (see Orientation Form in appendix).
2. Observing agency activities, client services, meetings, etc. The student and field instructor should process all observations.

3. Student conducts social work tasks in presence of field instructor or designee.
4. Student begins independent work.

*Can I add holiday and break time to my field hours?*

No.

*I worked during the holiday. Can I count my hours?*

Yes.

*Don't hours worked during the holiday get doubled?*

No.

*My agency is closed for a holiday that the university doesn't recognize. I was supposed to work that day. Do I get to add these hours?*

No. You may need to arrange with your field instructor to make up these hours.

*Are there weekend and weeknight placements available?*

Field placement takes place during normal business hours, i.e., Monday through Friday during the day. Field opportunities with non-traditional business hours are essentially non-existent. Students need to prepare to participate in weekday field assignments.

*I do not have a car. Can I get a placement within walking distance from where I reside?*

We cannot guarantee that an eligible field placement agency is located near your residence. Arranging travel to and from a field agency is the student's responsibility.

*I don't think my agency is providing enough services for clients. What do I do?*

The services an agency provides or does not provide are impacted by many factors. Talk to your field instructor about your agency's mission, goals, and scope of services.

*Why can't I get the field placement that I want? I need to be placed at a certain agency so I can add it to my resume for future work in that area.*

Field sites are selected first and foremost for educational purposes. The number of students being placed at any given time precludes placements based on personal desire.

APPENDIX  
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\*Student evaluations can be found within the Microsoft Excel document provided via email and at Field Instructor Training and Student Field Orientation.

*\*Items are in Tk20.*

## **STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

### **For Social Work Students Entering Field Education**

As a student in the School of Social Work, you will be exposed to personal and private information of clients' lives both in your classes and your Field Education placements. The confidential nature of the relationship between client, student worker, and agency is a fundamental privacy right of the client and an ethical and legal responsibility for the student, social worker, and the agency. Confidentiality is the basic means through which social workers protect their clients' privacy. Responsibility for confidentiality resides with the social worker and is supported by the ethics of the profession as established in the NASW Code of Ethics (1996).

Use of clients' private information from case records and from student contact with clients is supported for teaching/learning purposes only by Field Education placement agencies. However, students must understand and adhere to the agency limitations for use of such records and client information. The School of Social Work and Field Education agencies expect students in Field Education placements to adhere to the following policies:

1. Client records should not be physically or electronically taken from the agency.
2. Placement Field Instructor approval is necessary for use of client records/information in the classroom or in Field Education seminars.
3. All identifying information must be deleted from the client record by the use of pseudonyms or "whiting out" identifying information brought into class.
4. Any client information used for teaching/learning purposes in the classroom or Field Education seminars shall be kept confidential and shall not be discussed outside those two approved-for-use settings.
5. Any client information used for research in course work shall assure privacy for the client by nonuse of any identifying information at any point in the research.
6. Prior agency approval shall be obtained before using any client information resulting from research done while in a Field Education placement.

As a student in the School of Social Work , I understand that any breach of this Student Confidentiality Agreement will result in my being requested to appear before the Student Performance Committee of the School of Social Work for consideration of disciplinary action, and may result in my dismissal from the School of Social Work..

## CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK INFORMATION

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An amendment by House Bill 1077 to Section §43-11-13, Mississippi Code of 1972, requires a background check of all employees, including students, at **covered licensed entities** to include hospitals, nursing homes, personal care homes, home health agencies, and hospices. This amendment became law July 1, 2003 and compliance was required by August 11, 2003. The background checks will be regulated by the State Department of Health and will require each new employee or student to be fingerprinted. All students who begin their clinical training after July 1, 2003 must have the background check done before or by January 1, 2004. All students hereafter will have to have the background check done prior to clinical training.

When a student is fingerprinted the student must present a picture ID and proof of social security number (if not on driver's license). A passport will also serve as photo ID. A birth certificate may be acceptable with a social security card and school photo ID. In addition the **covered licensed entity** will require the following information: program name, the current address, the telephone number, date admitted to the program, and projected date of graduation.

The felonies covered by the current law are: possession or sale of drugs, murder, manslaughter, armed robbery, rape, sexual battery, child abuse, arson, grand larceny, burglary, gratification of lust, aggravated assault, felonious abuse and/or battery of vulnerable adult or sex offenses listed in Section 45-33-23, Mississippi Code of 1972.

If the student's record is clear, the student will receive a notarized letter stating that the individual is "suitable for employment." This letter is valid for two years and can be presented to future employers during that period. Other licensed entities may or may not accept this letter. The student must keep the original letter. A replacement letter will cost \$10.

If a student's record is not clear, the **covered licensed entity** will receive a letter stating that there may be a disqualifying event. Only the student will receive a list of any criminal activity that was determined during the background check. It will be the responsibility of the student to reveal the nature of the criminal activity to the **entity** when the student is notified by the Mississippi State Department of Health that the background check has revealed criminal activity. The university will not be sent any materials from the background check. The **entity** will arrange an interview with the student to review the specifics of the situation and determine the nature of the criminal record. All aspects of a criminal record including misdemeanors and unresolved cases will appear on the background check and trigger a letter to the **entity**. Only felony convictions specified by HB 1077 can disqualify the student under current law. The **entity** has the right to "show mercy" and to take mitigating circumstances into consideration. The **entity** can either grant a waiver or disqualify the students if a stipulated felony conviction is found. During the review process confidentiality will be maintained. If after review by entity, it is determined that the student is disqualified for clinical training at the **entity**, the university will only be informed that the student is disqualified from clinical training at the **entity**. The university may determine that the student

cannot maintain student status in the specific program, since clinical training is an essential part of the program.

**I understand that I must undergo a criminal background check for stipulated felonies and be cleared by the covered licensed entities to which I am assigned. I also understand that if a felony conviction is present, I may not be able to complete the degree, because I may not be able to perform a social work clinical practicum. I further understand that I must bear the cost of the background check (estimated cost up to \$125).**

## **OFFICIAL AGREEMENT**

### **For Social Work Students Entering Field Education**

I understand that participation in Field Education requires adherence to certain professional standards. I agree that while participating in Field Education:

1. I will adhere to the Codes of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers and the Mississippi State Board of Social Work Examiners.
2. I will follow all laws of the State of Mississippi.
3. I will comply with all agency policies and procedures. I agree to review all agency policies and procedures within two weeks of beginning the practicum.
4. I will adhere to the USM Student Code of Conduct and abide by the Academic Dishonesty policy.
5. I will come fully prepared and participate actively in all scheduled meetings with the Agency Field Instructor. I agree to meet at least weekly with the Field Instructor for supervision and notify the Field Instructor if I have to miss any supervision sessions. I understand that it is my responsibility to arrange supervision meetings.
6. I will submit all seminar assignments to the Agency Field Instructor prior to the date these assignments are due in seminar. I understand the Field Instructor must approve and sign all seminar assignments before the seminar instructor will accept them. Late papers will be penalized based on the USM School of Social Work policies.
7. I will come fully prepared and participate actively in all scheduled seminar classes and will complete all seminar assignments and turn them in on the due date.
8. I will comply with the USM policy for not using my vehicle for transporting clients.
9. I will conduct myself in a professional manner at all times. This includes being punctual, reliable, and responsible in all field education assignments, as well as interacting in a professional manner with all clients and co-workers.
10. I will set a schedule of my hours at the agency and adhere to the schedule. I will submit the schedule to my seminar instructor by the second seminar meeting.
11. I will negotiate a learning contract with my Field Instructor and submit it in writing to the seminar instructor.
12. I will comply with all policies, procedures, expectations, and consequences set forth in the "Social Work Field Education Manual."
13. I understand that I must maintain a Cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.5 with BSW and 3.0 with MSW programs. I must also make a Social Work "Passing" Grade throughout my enrollment in the field program.

I understand that failure to comply with this agreement could negatively affect my standing in Field Education and the Social Work Program. Any violation of this



contract could result in dismissal from the program. I understand that dismissal from an agency for poor performance or inappropriate behavior could result in my having to repeat Field Education or other consequences. Refusal to sign this agreement will preclude participation in Field Education.

**STUDENT RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM**

I authorize the School of Social Work, School Field Personnel and Coordinator of Field Education to consult with field agencies in the development of the student's field instruction placement.

I release from any liability any and all individuals and organizations who provide information in good faith and without malice concerning my professional competence, values, legal history, oral and written communication skills, ethics, character, student records and other related information in the development of a field instruction assignment placement, and I hereby consent to the release of such information.

**Agreement in Tk20**

1. I have received and read the Student Confidentiality Agreement
2. I have received and read the Official Agreement
3. I have received and read the Student Release of Information
4. I have been informed about the Criminal Background Check Information.  
I am responsible for the cost of the criminal background check. A negative history may prevent me from continuing in the program
5. I am responsible for the cost of any exam, shots, or procedures the agency requires before placement can begin.
6. I am responsible for my own transportation to and from my field placement. University policy states I cannot transport clients in my personal vehicle.

**The University of Southern Mississippi  
School of Social Work  
Field Education**

**Employment-based Field Placements**

- For a student to complete field practicum at the place of employment, the following conditions must be met:
- The agency is an approved placement site with the USM School of Social Work.
- The student's field assignment duties and responsibilities must be significantly and qualitatively different from his or her employment duties such as in a different department, division, or program of the agency.
- A qualified, approved Field Instructor who is an employee of the agency but not the student's employment supervisor must supervise the student's practicum activities.
- The student must be granted an appropriate amount of employment release time to complete the required number of clock hours for the semester.

Please see the Field Education Coordinator for any situations that do not satisfy these conditions.

**Approval process:**

- The student and employment personnel complete the Employment-based Field Agreement. It is the student's responsibility to initiate this process.
- The Field Education Coordinator will review the placement plan as stated on the submitted form and either approve, approve with modifications, or reject.
- When approved, the Field Education Coordinator will notify the student.

Remember that field placement where you work is not guaranteed.

The University of Southern Mississippi  
School of Social Work  
**Employment-based Field Placement Agreement**

*Revised 4/08*

Please print information.

**I. STUDENT INFORMATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**II. AGENCY INFORMATION**

Agency Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Agency Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Director \_\_\_\_\_

Director Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Director E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**III. STUDENT'S CURRENT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

Position Title \_\_\_\_\_ Hire Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Department \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Provide brief description of student's CURRENT job duties

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**IV. STUDENT'S PROPOSED FIELD PLACEMENT INFORMATION**

Position Title \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Supervisor Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Field Instructor Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Credentials \_\_\_\_\_  
Field Instructor Job Title & Department \_\_\_\_\_

Field Instructor Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Field Instructor E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Provide brief description of student's PROPOSED FIELD PLACEMENT job duties

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Provide a proposed weekly schedule, indicating what days/hours will be regular work responsibilities (mark with "W") and what days/hours will be field placement responsibilities (mark with "F").

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							
Comments							
_____							
_____							

**This agreement meets the approval of the Current & Proposed Work Supervisors, Field Instructor, and Student.**

Current Work Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Work Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Field Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This agreement meets the criteria established by the School of Social Work.**

- Approved
- Not approved, reason :

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator of Field Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**The University of Southern Mississippi  
School of Social Work  
Field Education Office**

**ORIENTATION CHECKLIST FOR SOCIAL WORK INTERNS**

As you go through orientation at your agency, check the items below after you have read or discussed them with your field instructor. It is the student's responsibility to know and understand the agency and its policies and procedures applicable to interns. Please discuss questions of any of the following with your field instructor.

**Agency Overview**

- Review agency mission/purpose statement
- Tour of agency
- Introductions to colleagues, support staff, and administration
- Review organizational structure
- Review the role of the agency within the community
- Review emergency, safety, and security procedures

**Agency Policies**

- Work schedule, including lunch and breaks
- Office procedures including use of equipment and supplies
- Telephone and communication/computer utilization
- Intake/admissions/eligibility
- Client record/charting
- Confidentiality, release of information
- Client emergency protocol
- Child or elder abuse reporting protocol
- Agency policy regarding harassment
- Agency policy regarding discrimination
- Agency policy regarding Americans with Disabilities Act

**Field Instructor/Student Responsibilities**

- Supervision schedule
- Student preparation for supervision
- Methods of assessing student performance
- Time sheet review

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
FIELD EDUCATION LEARNING AGREEMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

The Field Education Learning Agreement consists of two parts:

1. Part 1. A job description from the field agency
  - a. Job duties
  - b. Job responsibilities
  - c. Other tasks assigned
2. Part 2. Practice Behaviors
  - a. Provides information about expected outcomes
  - b. Provides structure to field supervision sessions

How Part 1 works

A field student is expected to learn and perform the agency job duties and responsibilities assigned to the student by the field instructor. Together, the field instructor and student should add to the agency's job description to ensure the student duties align with the core competencies and practice behaviors.

*NOTE: Please be sure that specific tasks, activities, and responsibilities are listed; avoid generalities.*

How Part 2 works

Both the student and the field instructor will be given a list of the practice behaviors which the student is expected to learn and/or demonstrate during the performance of the assigned tasks at the agency. It is these behaviors (i.e. the demonstrated knowledge and skills) upon which the student will be evaluated. A detailed plan that shows how each practice behavior will be demonstrated and evaluated should be included in Part 2.

During the performance of the assigned job, the student can refer to the listed practice behaviors and reflect upon what has been learned or performed. During weekly supervision, the field instructor and student will use this list as a basis for their discussion of how, where, why, and to what extent the student is progressing toward achieving the outcomes.

**The agency job description and receipt of the Practice Behaviors Worksheet represent the agreement entered into by the Student and the Field Instructor during a specific semester for the express purpose of social work education in a human service agency setting. These learning agreement documents are part of the contractual agreement between the Agency and the School of Social Work. The signatures of Student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Liaison indicate that this learning agreement will give collaborative direction to the work and progress expected of and with the student during this semester.**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
FIELD EDUCATION LEARNING AGREEMENT  
Please complete and return by end of first week of placement.**

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Agency \_\_\_\_\_





**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
FIELD EDUCATION OFFICE  
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Field Instructor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Field Seminar Instructor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Identify/Describe area of concern with student's performance in behavioral terms.

Identify/Describe what the student must do to correct the behavior(s) identified above.

Identify the time frame/date by which the corrected behavior(s) is to occur.

Identify/Describe the consequences to the student if the desired behavior(s) change does not occur.

Document any previous discussions with this student that have occurred about this issue.

Student and Field Instructor will meet on (date)\_\_\_\_\_ to evaluate student progress toward desired behavior(s). (EVALUATIVE CONFERENCE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Field Instructor Signature/Date

**DOCUMENTATION OF EVALUATIVE CONFERENCE**

Describe how the student did or did not demonstrate the desired behavior(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Field Instructor Signature/Date

**Submit original to the Field Liaison and a copy to the Field Education Office**

STUDENT EVALUATION OF FIELD PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Semester \_\_\_\_\_

Field Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Field Instructor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Task Coordinator Name \_\_\_\_\_

Not Applicable

*Note: Some placements do not have a task coordinator; if so, then check “Not Applicable”.*

**Rating scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree      2 = Disagree   3 = Somewhat Disagree**  
**4 = Somewhat Agree   5 = Agree      6 = Strongly Agree**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>RATING</b>
The physical facilities (e.g., office space, telephone, work materials) were adequate.	_____
Agency policies and practices overall were complementary or conducive to social work service delivery and to my learning processes	_____
Other agency staff were friendly and helpful	_____
This has been an appropriate setting for learning opportunities in the INDIVIDUAL system.	_____
This has been an appropriate setting for learning opportunities in the SMALL GROUP system.	_____
This has been an appropriate setting for learning opportunities in the FAMILY system.	_____
This has been an appropriate setting for learning opportunities in the AGENCY system.	_____
I was offered sufficient opportunity to observe the role of the agency in the community	_____
I was offered sufficient opportunity to consider external or environmental factors (in addition to internal or individual, family, or group emotional, cognitive, behavioral factors) as part of assessment processes.	_____

I was offered sufficient opportunity to be able to take part in activities about the process of community planning or change efforts. \_\_\_\_\_

This agency setting offered appropriate opportunities to learn the practice behaviors for which I was evaluated. \_\_\_\_\_

I believe this agency setting should be utilized as a field placement for future students:

With little or no changes     With only MAJOR changes (*specify in comments*)

At the MSW level only     At the BSW level only

Do not use again

**Rating scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree  
4 = Somewhat Agree**

**2 = Disagree 3 = Somewhat Disagree  
5 = Agree 6 = Strongly Agree**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>FIELD INSTRUCTOR RATING</b>	<b>TASK COORDINATOR RATING</b>
Spent sufficient length of time providing supervision	_____	_____
Provided scheduled, regular supervision conferences	_____	_____
Available (in person or by phone) as needed	_____	_____
Provided clear and adequate training for the responsibilities assigned to me	_____	_____
Helped me relate my field experiences to a theoretical framework, knowledge, and value base	_____	_____
Received guidance for identifying and resolving challenges	_____	_____
Allowed to be an active participant in selecting learning goals	_____	_____
Received timely and constructive feedback	_____	_____
Overall, a good mentor	_____	_____

Comments:

**Please check one box below.**

- I give permission for any or all of this evaluation to be shared with the agency, field instructor, and task coordinator.
- I do not give permission to share any part of this evaluation with the agency, field instructor, and task coordinator.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Field Office**  
**118 College Dr. #5114**  
**Hattiesburg, MS 39406**  
**601-266-5569**  
**Field Placement Confirmation Form**

Form to be completed by student

**Student Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Status (BSW/MSW & FT, PT, Advanced Standing – FT/PT): \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency Information**

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Agency Field Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Task Supervisor (if applicable):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures: The signatures below confirm that the student and field instructor agree upon a field placement at the above agency and that the field instructor can provide a minimum of one hour of supervision per week.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Field Instructor/Agency Representative Signature

Date