Office of Social Work Field Education

MSW Field Manual 2017

This Manual is dedicated with thanks to our hard-working agency-based Field Instructors, who give of themselves to help educate the next generation of social workers!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas State University</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Applied Arts</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Social Work</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSW Program</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Field Education Organizational Structure</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Responsibilities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Field Instructors &amp; Sites for Field Practicum</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Practicum at Place of Employment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Practicum Policies &amp; Procedures</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSW Advanced Practice Leadership Field Practicum Competencies &amp; Practice Behaviors</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSW Course Assignments</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions for Students for Enrolling in Field Practicum</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for Enhancing Safety &amp; Minimizing Risk in Field</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Contract</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Texas State University is a state-supported institution of higher learning. It is located in an ethnically and culturally diverse region in San Marcos, a small community of about 50,000 between Austin and San Antonio. Texas State University has gradually grown from a small teacher preparation institution to one of the largest public universities in Texas with an enrollment of over 39,849 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students.

Established in 1899 as Southwest Texas State Normal School, the legislature broadened the institution's scope and changed its name to reflect its expansion. In 1923, it was designated Southwest Texas State Teachers College; in 1959, the name was changed to Southwest Texas State College; and in 1969, the name was changed to Southwest Texas State University. In 2003, the Texas Legislature changed the name to Texas State University, effective September 1st.

Texas State University is part of the Texas State University System and is governed by two boards, a nine-member Board of Regents and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board provides oversight for all state-supported universities in Texas. Institutional policy must comply with state educational policy as interpreted by both boards.

University Mission
Throughout its rich history, Texas State has responded to the changing needs of our state. Today, Texas State is a comprehensive, culturally diverse university seeking designation as a Hispanic-Serving university that offers undergraduate and graduate instruction to citizens across Texas, as well as those from other states and nations. Texas State is also a metropolitan university, providing special service to the greater Austin-San Marcos-San Antonio region. Although the teaching-learning experience, supported by research and creative activity, is the heart of Texas State, we also encourage involvement in extra curricular activities and the development of leadership. We teach the skills that will prepare students as leaders for tomorrow's careers, and we introduce them to ideas and experiences that will broaden their lives forever as we pursue the following purposes:

Undergraduate Education
To provide undergraduate students with a broad base of knowledge, college-level competencies, and specialized courses of study selected from a comprehensive range of undergraduate programs.

Graduate Education
To provide graduate students the opportunity to expand their knowledge in a variety of specialized programs through research, creative expression, and advanced study.

Scholarship
To contribute to the greater body of knowledge in specific disciplines through research, scholarship, and creative expression.

**Service to State and Community**
To serve as a professional, educational, and cultural resource to the local area and the larger community by providing consultation, advice, and special services.

**Enriched Learning Community**
To develop a technology-enhanced learning community reflecting the rich diversity of the state.

**Campus Environment**
To sustain an environment for learning and professional development that is supportive, inclusive, and welcoming.

**Personal Growth**
To develop the full potential of each individual.

We fulfill this mission by adopting goals and implementing strategies that we identify in Texas State's Strategic Plan. We demonstrate our accountability through careful assessment and continuous improvement.

**Statement of Core Values**
The faculty, staff and students affirm that our University exists to enrich our minds and to humanize our hearts so that we may contribute to the betterment of humanity. We are dedicated to providing a curriculum and educational experience that develop our capacities, not only to analyze critically and think creatively, but to also reason ethically and feel compassionately. To guide us as we learn to evaluate consequences of our actions – not to indoctrinate either intellectually, morally, or religiously – we articulate the following core values:

- **The lifelong pursuit of academic excellence:** We value the seeking of knowledge, including the freedom to engage in meaningful debate and the responsibility to continually explore new possibilities for learning.

- **The nurturing of individuals:** We value the opportunity to develop the potential of every individual of our diverse community.

- **The cultivation of character:** We value the modeling and teaching of honesty, integrity, diligence, courage, compassion, fairness, and respect.

- **A continuing process:** We see the articulation of this statement as ongoing. Its publication should serve to keep dialogue continually alive.

- Through our shared vision and common values, we seek to accomplish our critical university mission.
College of Applied Arts

Mission Statement

The mission of the College of Applied Arts is to prepare undergraduate and graduate students for careers through programs of high quality in academic, professional and technical areas; to further faculty experience in teaching supported by quality scholarship; and to enhance our involvement with local, state, national and international constituencies. We do this by providing students with opportunities to collaborate with faculty, engage themselves with the community through internships, research and classroom projects.

The School of Social Work

Social work has been part of the University's curriculum since the first social work course was offered in the School of Sociology in 1975. Initially, social work was offered as a sequence in the sociology major. Later it developed as an academic minor, and eventually expanded into an academic major. The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program was first accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in 1978, with reaffirmation of accreditation offered in 1985 and 1992. The MSW program was authorized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in the Fall of 1994 (having earlier been authorized by the Texas State University System Board of Regents) with instruction to begin in the Fall of 1995). The MSW Program received accreditation by CSWE in 2000, and both programs have continued to receive reaffirmation successfully ever since.

In the 1970's in order to facilitate grant administration and initial CSWE accreditation, the social work program was administratively organized as an academic institute within the School of Sociology and Anthropology, named in honor of Walter Richter in the early 1980’s, the Walter Richter Institute of Social Work (WRISW). In Fall 1995, WRISW became the School of Social Work and continues to honor Walter Richter by establishing the Walter Richter Institute of Social Work Research. The School is located within the College of Applied Arts. Within this College, the School has its own Director, School Assistant Director, MSW Coordinator, BSW Coordinator, Field Director, and a field BSW and MSW coordinator, faculty, budget, and support staff. The School Director is directly responsible to the Dean in all matters. The Coordinators of Field, and of the BSW and MSW Programs, the social work "senior faculty" (i.e., tenured faculty), other social work faculty, and staff comprise the major decision-making body for academic issues relating to social work education at Texas State University.

Mission of the School of Social Work
The School of Social Work at Texas State University aims to educate skilled, ethical social workers who can effectively augment and lead human service efforts to enhance human well-being, alleviate poverty, and strengthen social justice. Partnering with diverse groups, the School intends to create and refine effective consumer-oriented intervention strategies, innovative organizational structures, and accessible social work educational endeavors. These efforts, reflecting shared responsibilities between public entities and private concerns, focus on serving people across the life span, particularly vulnerable, marginalized, and often forgotten people who are typically aided by public agencies.
The health and well-being of children and families across the life span are crucial to creating a compassionate, productive society. Therefore, the School educates students and supports faculty for leadership roles in developing more effective, innovative, and consumer-oriented services and organizations that reflect shared responsibilities between public entities and private concerns. To accomplish its mission, the School partners with diverse organizations and disciplines in the university, the community, the state, and the nation to enhance the well-being and productivity of the most disadvantaged members of society, including vulnerable children and their families.

This mission is fully consistent with the mission and goals of Texas State University, the Graduate School, and the College of Applied Arts. The fundamental goal of the School of Social Work is to prepare two levels of social work graduates in accordance with the standards approved by the Council on Social Work Education. These two levels are (1) BSW students who we prepare for professional entry-level generalist social work practice and (2) MSW students who we prepare for advanced generalist practice in Advanced Leadership Practice (APL).

### MSW Program

The overall purpose of the Master of Social Work program is to prepare students for advanced generalist practice in social work. Our concentration is called the Advanced Practice Leadership. The public sector mission of the School of Social Work is operationalized through the MSW Program Goals that inform all aspects of the curriculum and shape policies and procedures relating to faculty, staff, students, and relationships with constituencies external to the university. The goals of the MSW program are as follows:

1. **Taking Professional Responsibility**: Students will demonstrate responsibility for their actions guided by professional values and ethics as articulated in the NASW Code of Ethics, and by law, using the Texas State Social Workers Examiners Code of Ethics;

2. **Thinking Professionally**: Students will be proficient in expressing and applying ethical sensibilities, in understanding the effects of history on modern events, and in employing critical and creative thinking skills to address issues affecting clients, client groups, and professional concerns;

3. **Analyzing Human Development**: Students will grasp the nature and course of human growth, will be accurate in analyzing human development using a variety of theoretical frameworks, and will apply this knowledge to systems of all sizes;

4. **Seeking Tolerance and Justice**: Students will explain, assess, and appreciate human diversity, and will articulate and apply principles of social justice as they apply to the human experience in all its complexity;

5. **Refining Practice**: Students competently employ research, evidence-based interventions, and communication techniques to enhance, evaluate, and refine their practice and to contribute to the knowledge base of social work;
6. **Humanizing Services**: Students will link people with resources, and will participate in devising, developing, and advocating for innovative, humane, consumer-driven services and policies;

7. **Pursuing Excellence**: Students will evaluate their professional growth, participate appropriately in supervision, engage in activities beneficial to the profession, and demonstrate commitment to life-long professional development;

**Values**

Knowledge and skills utilized by MSW practitioners must be used in accordance with the values of the social work profession as embodied in the *National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics*. English and Spanish versions of the NASW Code of Ethics can be downloaded from the NASW website at [www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp](http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp). Generalist practice requires the ability to work with all types of people experiencing any type of problem. All social workers must adhere to the principle that people are entitled to respect, self-determination, and social justice.

A well-educated MSW practitioner understands that these values apply across all systems levels. In fact, these criteria are expressed in the *National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics*, which specifies that a social worker has professional responsibility to clients, colleagues, employers and employing organizations, the social work profession, and society. The social work program infuses content on values and ethics into the curriculum across all content areas.

Termination/disengagement, and evaluation are skills common to all generalist social workers independent of field of practice, client system level, or target system. Knowledge, skills, and values combine to shape professional competencies, conceptions of professionally appropriate roles, and conceptions of the professional self. These are translated into educational objectives and behavioral competencies, the attainment of which operationally define our notion of the generalist social worker.

**The MSW Curriculum**

The purpose of the MSW program is to prepare graduates for advanced, specialized professional social work in direct practice leadership. The program is particularly responsive to experienced practitioners and/or administrators who are currently employed in the public sector and who desire an MSW degree for career advancement. The MSW curriculum complies with Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requirements, and is fully accredited. [http://www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/85377.aspx](http://www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/85377.aspx)

The MSW Program offers regular and advanced standing tracks, as well as full-time and fully online options.

**Structure of MSW Field Practicum Courses**
The MSW field practicum consists of two separate field practicum experiences. Foundation students take both field practicum sections and Advanced standing students only take the advanced field section.

The first experience is called **Foundation Field**, foundation field is for those students enrolled in the foundation program. Students enroll in SOWK 5410 Foundation Field I and SOWK 5411 Foundation Field II in the second semester. Structurally, the student is "in the field" approximately 24 clock hours per week during the semester while concurrently enrolled in two Foundation courses. The Foundation student is required to complete a total of 360 clock hours. Each of these courses provides 4 semester credit hours (SCH) for a total of 8 SCH.

The **Advanced Field** practicum is a block schedule of SOWK 5678 and SOWK 5679 and is taken the last semester of the final year and final semester of the MSW program. Students are required to complete 540 clock hours, approximately 36-40 hours per week. Each of these courses provides 6 SCH, for a total of 12 SCH.

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### The Office of Social Work Field Education-Organizational Structure

The Office of Social Work Field Education is composed of a Field Director, a BSW Field Coordinator, MSW Field Coordinator, Liaisons, an Administrative Assistant, and work-study students.

**MSW Field Director**

Primary responsibilities include the following:

- Process, review, and assess applications of new agencies for possible affiliation with the School of Social Work;
- Oversee the development of field practicum sites;
- Initiate the affiliation process with agencies;
- Review and assess currently affiliated agencies;
- Process, review and assess applications of new Field Instructors;
- Develop and maintain resources by which students may become familiar with available agencies and fields of practice;
- Plan and implement the process for student assignments to field practicum, and oversee the assignment of students to agencies;
- Consult with students and, when necessary, with faculty, and/or Field Instructors in selection of placements;
- Organize and conduct field practicum meetings and seminars for students, Field Instructors and faculty;
- Design, review, and revise supplemental materials such as the field practicum manual, field forms and field directories;
- Consult with faculty and make liaison assignments;
- Consult with Faculty Liaisons regarding individual student problems, and/or request for change of placement;
- Consult individually with Faculty Liaisons and students as they require direction or support in negotiating and completing field practicum course requirements;
- Convene and chair the Field Curriculum Committee;
- Plan for seminars, workshops, and recognition events for Field Instructors;
- Design and implement an ongoing evaluation program for field practicum to ensure that learning objectives are met;
- Consult with social work faculty regarding student’s academic, professional, and personal readiness for field practicum;
- Represent the School of Social Work in Texas-Field Educators Consortium (T-FEC);
- Supervise and conduct agency liaison activities.

**Student Intern Field Responsibilities**

**The Student**

With the student’s entrance into the profession of social work during internship, he/she will be held to professional standards and codes of ethics, including those at the agency. The student must also comply with the following standards:

- Must meet the academic prerequisites prior to entry into the field practicum placement;
- Arranges a pre-registration conference with the Office of Field Practicum for the purpose of agency assignment;
- Maintain records of the School of Social Work' designated professional insurance provider information;
- Attends the pre-registration conference with the assigned faculty field liaison and the Pre-Field Orientation;
- Completes an Educational Contract with the field instructor prior to first liaison visit;
- Adhere to the assigned hours per week in her/his assigned agency for a block field placement, or part-time field placement not to exceed 40 hours per week.
- Complete field practicum hours over the course of at least 14 weeks in the long semesters and 10 weeks in the summer semester.
- Attends all field practicum integrative seminars;
- Completes all specified University and agency assignments;
- Functions in the capacity of a professional person;
- Fulfills the condition of her/her Student Acknowledgement and Agreement;
- Agrees to abide by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers;
- Is prompt and on time for work at the agency and adheres to the schedule mutually agreed to by student and Field Instructor. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Field Instructor if s/he is unable to report for field practice. Unavoidable absences can be made up to a reasonable limit, as determined by the Field Instructor and Field Liaison;
- Is expected to use initiative and imagination in his/her activities in field practice;
• Shares experiences and relative information in field seminar discussions and participates in problem solving when appropriate;
• Does outside readings assigned by the Field Instructor pertinent to his/her placement and experiences;
• Arranges conferences with the Field Instructor and/or Liaison related to field practice;
• After the final three-way conference, submits to the Field Liaison a written objective/subjective evaluation of his/her field placement;
• Failure to fulfill any of the student field responsibilities will be grounds for dismissal or termination from field course with a failing grade.

The Field Instructor

The Field Instructor represents the heart of the field practicum as they, in their dual role as practitioners and teachers, enable students to integrate theoretical concepts and practice realities. In close relationship with the student, it is the Field Instructor who leads the student to a personal understanding of the responsibilities and rewards of professional social work practice. Toward this end, Field Instructors assume primary responsibility for:

• Agrees to supervise students in the agency placements. Each Field Instructor is selected by the Office of Field Practicum, and an agency representative based on detailed criteria;
• Orients the student to the agency structure, functions, policies, services, and personnel at the beginning of field practice and completes Field Prospectus and Educational Contract with the student prior to first liaison visit;
• Is responsible for and in charge of the student in the agency and selects and assigns appropriate activities and cases for each student;
• Maintains close contact with the student and retains overall responsibility for guidance and supervision. Meets with the student one hour per week for supervision;
• Plans in advance for the students' work;
• Arranges for another person to be in charge of the students' activities for any days that s/he will not be available;
• Discusses the objectives and expectations related to assignments with the student;
• Evaluates on a continuing basis the student's progress with both the student and the Faculty Liaison:
• Assigns appropriate case record readings;
• May assign appropriate outside readings;
• Submits mid-term and final written evaluations on forms provided by the Office of Field Education
• Cooperates with representatives of the Office of Field Education to provide an appropriate learning experience for the student;
• Reviews with the student and Faculty Liaison, in a three-way conference, the student's progress, accomplishments and areas in need of professional development, and recommends an agency performance grade;
• Evaluates with the Faculty Liaison the entire field instruction situation and makes recommendations for future improvements.

Off-Site Field Preceptor/On-Site Task Supervisor Model

In selected situations and with prior approval from the Field Director, an Off-Site Field Preceptor/On-Site Task Supervisor Model of field instruction may be utilized by a field agency that does not have an MSW employee available for field teaching. Off-Site Field Preceptors are selected jointly by the targeted agency and the Field Coordinator in consultation with the appropriate Faculty Liaison. Responsibilities for field instruction using this model are outlined below:

Off-Site Field Preceptor

• Must meet criteria for field preceptor;
• Assumes primary responsibility for creating the Educational Contract, including learning objectives and practice tasks, with the On-Site Task Supervisor and the Student;
• Meets weekly (for at least one hour) with student in supervisory session to review progress of student toward achievement of learning objectives, and to assist student with the integration of practice realities and theoretical concepts;
• Meets regularly with student and On-Site Task Supervisor to evaluate student performance and modify the Educational Contract if necessary;
• Assumes primary responsibility for submitting to the School of Social Work the written evaluation and grade recommendation for the student at the end of each semester;
• Assumes primary responsibility for meeting with the assigned Faculty Liaison and student during the semester to review student progress, and for alerting the liaison in a timely manner of any problems or potential problems that might interfere with a successful educational outcome.

On-Site Task Supervisor

• Assumes primary responsibility of orienting the student to the agency, to agency staff, and to work projects;
• Works with the Off-Site Field Preceptor and student to create the Educational Contract, which includes learning objectives and practice tasks;
• Assumes primary responsibility for supervising the daily work of the student as described in the Educational Contract;
• Meets regularly with the student and the Off-Site Field Preceptor to evaluate student performance and modify the Educational Contract if necessary;
• May meet with the Faculty Liaison to review student progress at the request of either the student, the Off-Site Field Preceptor, or the faculty liaison.

The Faculty Liaison
The goal of the faculty liaison system is to ensure a cohesive and progressive training experience in the Field Practicum. The Faculty Liaison’s responsibilities include:

- Counsels with the student to determine an appropriate, educational field placement for the student;
- Makes initial arrangements with agencies for field work placements for students;
- Holds a pre-registration conference with each student for the purpose of assigning the students to an agency and determining student’s academic and performance readiness for entry into the field;
- Works with the Field Instructor and other relevant agency personnel to structure a meaningful social work field placement for each student;
- Reviews with the students any questions and problems surrounding any change from the initial field placement and arranges re-assignment when necessary;
- Confers with the student following each conference with the Field Instructor regarding:
  1. General progress of the student
  2. Performance of the student
  3. Problem areas identified
  4. Progress towards the completion of the educational and field goals
  5. Possible modification of the student's program of activities;
- Remains available for unscheduled conferences on matters of concern to the student or the Field Instructor;
- Is responsible for obtaining evaluations from the Field Instructor and for determining the student's field grade;
- Recommends to the Field Director for termination of field before the end of the semester, if it is determined that the student is obviously unsuited for the experience;
- In unusual cases where a field setting is unable to meet the field practice agreement and educational objectives, recommends to the Field Director a reassignment of the student to an agency capable of meeting these expectations and willing to invest the resources;
- In exceptional situations, when a qualified MSW is not available as a Field Instructor and the field instructor is not directly supervised by an MSW in the agency, the Field Instructor: (1) closely monitors the placement and provides the student additional instruction and supervision and (2) provides additional consultation to the Field Instructor;
- Provides consultation to the agency regarding educational concepts, professional issues, and practicum requirements and expectations;
- Recommends and certifies the final grade for the course;
- Participates in the placement process of students;
- Facilitates the integrative seminar;
- In block placements (one semester only), the liaison makes two (2) field visits to the agency during the semester to confer with the Field Instructor and student regarding the student's professional development in relation to the educational and performance objectives. In concurrent placements (over two semesters) the Faculty Liaison will make two (2) field visits the first semester and then one (1) visit at the end of the second semester. A mid-term evaluation is done via telephone with the Field Instructor and student;
- Addresses the problems that are related to the educational and professional progress of students. Participates in the resolution of conflicts between Field Instructor and student(s);
• Participates in the professional development of Field Instructors in their educational role;
• Participates in the Pre-Field Orientation for students and Field Instructors Workshops.

### Selection of Instructors and Sites for Field Placement

#### Selection of Field Instructors

The School of Social Work has adopted policies and procedures that govern many aspects of the field practicum. For new practicum sites, the field instructor selection process is a part of the initial agency affiliation process. A resume of potential Field Instructors are reviewed together with agency applications. A similar process is utilized for affiliated sites wishing to utilize new staff as Field Instructors. The following criteria have been set regarding selection of Field Instructors.

#### Criteria for Participation as a Field Instructor

Field instruction is provided by a social work practitioner within an agency setting. While the selection of the Field Instructor involves collaboration between the agency and the department, the final appointment remains with the Office of Field Education.

- All Field Instructors shall possess a social work degree from an accredited social work program or school and a demonstrated competence in practice. For instruction of BSW students, the Field Instructor must have an MSW from an accredited program with two years of post-graduation professional practice experience. For instruction of MSW students, the Field Instructor must have a MSW from an accredited program with two years of post-graduation professional practice experience.
- The Field Instructor should have a commitment to the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The Field Instructors should have knowledge of and conviction about the School of Social Work’s philosophy, curriculum, and program including a commitment to the education of students and practice with historically vulnerable and oppressed populations.
- Field Instructors shall have a thorough knowledge of the agency in which they are employed.
- Field Instructors shall commit to provide a minimum of one hour, face-to-face individual supervision per week for each student assigned.
- The Field Instructor is required to work closely with the Office of Field Education in the coordination of assignments and is responsible for providing timely feedback on the progress of the individual student through the faculty liaison.

#### Support Systems for Field Instructors

The agency based field instructor serves as an extension of the School of Social Work faculty. Their contributions to the education of an MSW students are substantial. Since they work in partnership with faculty, it is important that they have the resources of Texas State University available to them.
• Field instructor training;
• Individual field consultation from faculty assigned as liaisons to the agency;
• Time spent during field instruction may used to meet the continuing education requirements for social work licensure by the State of Texas;
• A Field Practicum Manual that provides:
  1) Information about the organization and content of the educational curriculum emphasizing the interrelationships among human behavior, social policy, research, and practice content; 2) Information about the sequencing of course content; and
  3) Practice and evaluation goals for the field practicum and for students.

Criteria for Participation of an Agency as a Field Instruction Site

Field instruction is a collaborative endeavor between the School of Social Work and community agencies in the education of MSW students for social work practice. The learning experiences in the agency facilitate the student's opportunity to apply and extend knowledge as well as acquire skills useful in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. At the same time, students contribute to the delivery of services and share their academic learning relevant to programs in the agency. Given the importance placed upon practicum course work in the MSW program, the School of Social Work has established the following criteria for practicum site participation:

• Practicum site's philosophy of service shall be compatible with the philosophy, values and ethics of the social work profession in efforts to provide a positive learning experience for the student.
• Practicum site shall be related in purpose and function to the mission, methods and curriculum of the School of Social Work.
• Practicum site should maintain a social work service as a recognized function of the agency/organization or have a planning function relevant to providing or improving human services.
• The site should be able to provide a range of learning experiences consistent with the service functions of the agency, the student's learning needs and the objectives of the field practicum course.
• The administration and staff of the site shall have respect for professional social work education and acceptance of the objectives and educational focus of the program of field instruction.
• Practicum site shall support Texas State University's policies and practices must be nondiscriminatory in the provision and delivery of services and in the employment of personnel.
• The practicum site shall have access to qualified Field Instructors.
• Agencies shall provide release time for Field Instructors to carry out field instruction responsibilities and to attend field-related training and meetings.
• The staff shall be large enough to ensure that the basic agency program is developed and maintained sufficiently without reliance on students.
• Sites shall make available suitable desk space, telephones, dictating facilities, supplies, agency-related transportation/travel reimbursements, clerical support, and access to confidential interviewing areas.

• Agencies shall agree to the execution of an affiliation agreement or letter of understanding between the School of Social Work, the College of Applied Arts and the Practicum Site.

• The practicum site must provide necessary measures to protect students' safety. This may minimally include training in policies and procedures for conducting home visits; interacting with potentially difficult clients; and handling emergencies, as well as appropriate screening of student assignments by field instructor(s).

• The agency must communicate changes in supervision to the Office of Field Education as soon as possible in order to make the necessary arrangements for student supervision.

• The practicum site will support the intern's obligations to Texas State University and the School of Social Work for written assignments, projects, and integrative seminars.

Practicum Site Approval Process and Affiliation Process

Initiating a field practicum site may originate either with the School of Social Work or the site. The process involves the practicum site (field instructor or agency representative), the Field Director and field faculty. The selection process includes, but is not limited to:

• A review of the proposed program assignment by the field faculty and Field Director;

• A conference either by telephone, email, or in person with the administrator and/or field instructor of the agency/organization concerning agency expectations of the School of Social Work;

• Upon final approval of the practicum site, the Field Director will initiate the Affiliation Agreement or Letter of Understanding. This document will be signed by duly authorized representatives of the site and Texas State University.

Field Practicum Placement at Place of Employment

It is the policy of the School of Social Work that students complete the field practicum requirements in agencies where the student has never been employed or is not currently employed. The challenge for the student who, because of a lack of viable alternatives, wishes to complete his/her field practicum requirements at their place of employment is to propose a new learning experience for the internship.

It is essential that the social work field practicum be considered an integral part of the student's academic experience. The Council on Social Work Education and the School of Social Work require that this distinction be clear and unambiguous. The Field Coordinator may grant an exception to this policy if the following conditions are met:
• The field practicum must have social work as its primary function. The organization must be one in which social work practice is clearly distinguishable from the practice of other disciplines.
• The organization must provide social work students with a qualitatively different experience from that provided by regular employment.
• The student must answer to a different chain of command, where a social worker qualifies as a field instructor and assumes responsibility for the student's training.
• The field practicum must have a clearly identifiable educational focus unencumbered by workload and the administrative requirements of regular employment.
• Student's obligations to the university for written assignments, projects, and integrative seminars must be supported by the organization. No exception will be granted on assignment requirements or seminar attendance for work related reasons.
• The agency must be formally affiliated with the Texas State University College of Applied Arts and School of Social Work.
• The employment work hours and internship hours must be clearly articulated.

It is the responsibility of the student to submit a written proposal to the Field Director (faculty member) which addresses the above-mentioned conditions. This proposal must include written documentation from the agency that explicitly addresses all of the points above, and that clearly delineates release time (work hours and internship hours) provided by the student for completion of the field practicum requirement.

*Students will be allowed to do more than one field practicum at their place of employment, only if new, appropriate, and challenging learning experiences are available for the internships and with approval by the Field Director.*

### Field Practicum Policies and Procedures

#### Deadlines

Deadlines for student applications for all field placements are final. Failure to submit an Application for Field Placement by the posted deadline date may result in not being eligible for placement in that specific semester.

#### Change of Placement Policy:

A careful selection of social service agencies and instructors for the field practicum is made by School of Social Work. Assignments of students to field placement is made for the duration of the academic semester(s). Occasionally, a change for field placement is necessary and may be granted for any of the following reasons:

• Change in personal circumstances (academic, finances, transportation, health);
• Agency not able to provide accessibility to students with disabilities;
• Change in School of Social Work policy;
• Internal matters of the agency;
• Irreconcilable difference between student and field instructor.
Procedure for Change:

1. The student must first discuss the desire for changes of field placement and/or Field Instructor with the Field Instructor. A careful delineation of the factors involved is required.
2. If the issues are not resolved, the student must discuss the concerns with the Faculty Liaison. The Faculty Liaison must review the concerns with both student and Field Instructor before making a formal recommendation to the Field Director.
3. If the Field Instructor initiates the request for change, the matter must first be discussed with the student and then with the Faculty Liaison. It is preferable that the Field Instructor confer with the agency executive regarding the request for change prior to notification and/or communication with the Office of Field Education.
4. A conference with the student, Faculty Liaison and Field Coordinator will be scheduled to explore the options and requirements for the student to continue in field in another placement.
5. Change of placement final decisions will be made by the Field Director in collaboration with the Faculty Liaison and the Field Instructor. Students may appeal that decision through the appeals process presented in the Student Handbook.

Creation of One's Own Placement

All field practicum assignments must be arranged through the Office of Field Education. The Field Director is the final authority on approval of a field placement. Field placement assignments will be made only to agencies that are affiliated formally with the College of Applied Arts and the School of Social Work. Students may not visit or telephone agencies for the purpose of interviewing for possible field placements until they have received a referral from the Office of Field Education. Agencies and social work practitioners are extremely busy meeting the myriad needs of clients. Therefore, visits from student observers, unless coordinated by the Office of Field Education, may result in disrupted client service and termination of the agency's affiliation agreement with the School.

Credit for Work Experience

The policies and standards of the national accrediting body, the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), state: "Academic credit for life experience or previous work experience is not be given...". Therefore, students will not receive academic credit for life experience and previous work.

Employment & Internship Hours

Students who are employed more than 20 hours per week and who are carrying a full or part-time course load are required to complete their internships as a part-time placement over two contiguous semesters.
Exceptions to this policy must be requested by the student in written format to the Field Director, and will be approved only under exceptional circumstances.

**Holidays**

Students are to adhere to their field practicum agency schedule. Taking prolonged breaks (for example, between semesters, Spring Break), the student’s absence from the agency may create problems in terms of continuity of service to clients.

**Sick Leave**

In the case of illness necessitating absence from the field setting, students shall notify the Field Instructor and take responsibility for canceling or rescheduling appointments and/or meetings. Hours missed must be made up at a time agreed upon by student and Field Instructor. If the student's absence exceeds two days, the faculty liaison should be notified.

**Travel**

It is the student's responsibility to secure transportation to and from the field setting. Students should not transport agency clients, unless the agency is responsible for automobile liability insurance coverage, as with any other staff or employee. The student is also responsible for his/her own automobile liability insurance coverage for agency-related travel, if such coverage is not provided by the agency. The School of Social Work has no funds with which to reimburse students for civil lawsuits or damage of their automobiles or for other expenses incurred in the conduct of agency business. Reimbursement for agency-related expenses, including travel, should be the responsibility of the agency, and should be congruent with the agency reimbursement policies and rates for regular staff.

**Professional Liability Insurance**

All students are required to have professional liability insurance through the University prior to enrolling in field practicum courses. The annual policy covers the period September 1 through August 31. This policy is provided by the School of Social Work. Each student must retain a copy of the insurance policy which is provided by the Office of Field Education.

**Criminal History & Health Records Checks**

Students who accept an internship at an agency that requires a health records/immunizations, criminal history, background check, or drug test must comply with all agency policies and procedures. Failure to comply or pass the checks will result in a change of placement and/or a review of the student’s application to field practicum.

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**Selected Texas State University Policies**

This MSW Field Practicum Manual is for informational purposes only and is not an official publication of Texas State University. Official rules and regulations may be found in the Texas State University Undergraduate and/or Graduate Catalog, Texas State University Texan, and/or...
School of Social Work Student Handbook. Listed below are selected policies that are relevant to the field practicum experience:

**Multicultural Policy Statement**

Texas State University believes that freedom of thought, innovation and creativity are fundamental characteristics of a community of scholars. To promote such a learning environment, the university has a special responsibility to seek cultural diversity, to instill a global perspective in its students, and to nurture sensitivity, tolerance and mutual respect. Discrimination against or harassment of individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability are inconsistent with the purposes of the School of Social Work.

**Academic Misconduct Policy**

**Expectation:**

Social workers must demonstrate high standards of integrity. They should do their own work on all graded material submitted for all course requirements. Since dishonesty harms the individual, fellow students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

**Policy:**

Students guilty of knowingly using, or attempting to use, another person's work as though that work were their own, and students guilty of knowingly permitting, or attempting to permit, another student to use their work, may:

- be required to perform additional academic work not required of other students in the course
- have their grade on the examination or other academic work affected by the academic dishonesty reduced, thus lowering their grade in the course
- be required to withdraw from the course with a grade of "F"

Such conduct may also constitute grounds for dismissal from the Program and the University. Students who are unfamiliar with the University's policy on plagiarism and other types of academic dishonesty should consult the University's website. Students who are uncertain regarding what actions constitute plagiarism or other types of academic dishonesty should consult the instructor.

**Definitions of Academic Dishonesty**

Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Dishonest academic behavior is defined by Texas State University and includes, but is not limited to:
• Cheating on an examination or the preparation of academic work;
• Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computed files, data, listings and/or programs;
• Using during a test, materials not authorized by the professor;
• Collaborating with another person without authorization during an examination or in preparing academic work;
• Knowingly and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, copying or possessing in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered examination;
• Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
• Bribery another person to obtain an unadministered examination or information about an unadministered examination;
• Plagiarizing or appropriating another's work or idea without acknowledging incorporation of that work or idea into one's own work offered for credit;
• Knowingly and without authorization, using, buying, or selling a term paper, computer file or program, thesis, or other written report.

Special Accommodations/Disability Statement
Students having special needs/disabilities that require accommodations for the successful completion of the field practicum must notify the Texas State University’s Office of Disability Services via telephone at (512) 245-3451 and the Faculty Liaison, no later than the end of the first week of classes. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in accommodations being delayed, however, every effort will be made to ensure the student’s needs are met appropriately and in a timely manner.

MSW Field Practicum Competencies & Practice Behaviors
The Professional Foundation curriculum is devoted to the preparation of competent, ethical, entry-level social work practice that is defined as generalist practice. Generalist social work practitioners use an eclectic knowledge base in differentially applying appropriate techniques and skills to problem-solving with ethnically and culturally diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The generalist is required to develop the skills to simultaneously assess each problem from micro, mezzo, and macro perspectives. Generalist practice also requires the ability to plan intervention and to appropriately intervene utilizing micro, mezzo, and macro goals.

Field practicum internships provide comprehensive student learning in an applied setting. The primary purposes are: (1) to enable students to experience and understand the impact of agency structure and policy, client expectations and needs, and community resources on the delivery of social work services; (2) to appropriately apply social work theory and refine skills in the direct delivery of services to clients; and to integrate course and field learning experiences. The field practicum emphasizes generalist social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Both courses focus intensively on values and ethics, populations at risk, human diversity, and
social and economic justice as these issues impact on the delivery of social services in the agency context.

Field instruction provides in-depth study and application of social work concepts, methods and skills. The students' understanding, knowledge and skills are challenged and tested in field practice. The successful completion of both courses requires students to develop entry-level skills in providing refined and in-depth generalist social work services. The field practicum experience provide comprehensive student learning in an applied setting. Upon successfully completing this course, the student will be able to:

1. Take responsibility for his/her actions guided by professional values and ethics as articulated in the NASW Code of Ethics.
2. Show an understanding of how social welfare history affects modern events, and employ critical and creative thinking skills about policy issues affecting clients and professional concerns;
3. Apply knowledge of human development in assessment, and use a bio-psycho-social approach in the helping process;
4. Explain, assess, and appreciate human diversity, and articulates and applies principles of social justice as they apply to the human experience;
5. Competently employ generalist practice skills, and uses research literature and methods to inform and develop professional practice;
6. Be familiar with community services and programs, link people with resources, and advocate for innovative, humane, consumer-driven services and policies;
7. Evaluate his/her professional growth, participate appropriately in supervision, and demonstrate commitment to professional development.

In conjunction with the MSW Program Goals of preparing students for professional entry-level generalist social work practice who have mastered the following competencies and practice behaviors:

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

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

- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from
clients and constituencies;
• develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
• select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

• critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
• use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
• negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
• facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

• select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.
• critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes;
• apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro level.

How Students Demonstrate They Have Achieved Practice Behaviors

**Educational Contract:** The Educational Contract is the contract between the student, the agency, and the school for the educational experiences during the practicum. It should be completed accurately and completely, addressing the working conditions, hours, on-call expectations, workload, nature of assignments, holiday schedules, sick leave policies, absence policy, dress codes, criteria for determining satisfactory performance, and all other pertinent matters. Any disputes that might occur during the semester will be reviewed initially in the context of the Educational Contract, which should be completed within the first 2-3 weeks of the internship. At a minimum, the Educational Contract should be reviewed at mid-term and revised as necessary.

**Supervisory Conferences:** The Agency Based Field Instructor directly supervises the student throughout the practicum, and is expected to conduct a minimum of one hour of individual supervision with the student per week. The student has a reciprocal obligation to prepare for supervisory conferences and to maximize this learning opportunity.

**Seminars:** The seminar provides students with a forum in which they can compare their practice experiences and expand their knowledge beyond the scope of the practicum setting. Students will have opportunities to present challenging case material and to examine current policy and practice issues that affect the profession and service delivery organizations. The seminars:

1. Deal with specific field problems
2. Integrate course work with field experiences
3. Provide an orientation to various agency services and functions
4. Provide students with a structure in which they can support and learn from one another
5. Relate conceptual learning to practice

Seminars focus on specific themes of professional social work values and ethics, human diversity, vulnerable populations, and social justice as they emerge in practicum, so students integrate conceptual knowledge and practical experience. Students will be required to present their work, and to lead discussions with their peers on the topic of their presentation. A portion of each seminar will be devoted to "small group processing" of the students’ experiences in their field placements. Individual students are expected to share their experiences, seek feedback from peers, and offer constructive feedback and support to their classmates.

“Hands-On” Practice Experience: The most powerful learning opportunities in the field practicum emanate from the students’ performance of practice activities, in which they:
• Gain first-hand knowledge of the network of social welfare services and how they affect clients' social functioning
• Gain first-hand knowledge of community services and forces that affect agency organization and operation
• Apply knowledge, theory and understanding derived from undergraduate courses and the content areas included in the social work curriculum to real world practice situations
• Interact as part of the agency staff, develop professional relationships with other staff members, and adhere to the agency hours, style of dress, and pace of work
• Relate generalist social work course content to the agency and its clientele by applying the basic techniques and skills of social work practice
• Assume responsibility for beginning professional practice within the agency, maintaining appropriate relationships with the clientele and personnel in and outside the agency
• Utilize supervision to facilitate professional development and effectiveness
• Become aware of and analyze their value orientations, and feelings about people and the problems that they bring to social agencies
• Continue to assess their interest in and suitability for a career in social work

*Field Evaluation*

Evaluation in field practice, an on-going process, is a major and continual aspect of the Field Instructor's obligation, carried out in regular supervisory conferences throughout the semester. Part of each agency visit by the Faculty Liaison is spent in evaluating, with the Field Instructor and the student, the student's progress, educational needs, strengths and areas needing improvement. The student, Faculty Liaison, and the Field Instructor conduct a formal evaluation at mid-term and at the end of the semester, carefully discussing together the results. The student and the field instructor are required to complete separate Field Evaluation Forms.

**MSW Advanced Standing: Advanced Practice Leadership**

**General Information**

Each student, after completing the required MSW Concentration courses, is assigned to a field placement selected by the Faculty Field Liaison in coordination with the Field Instructor and the student. The assignment of students to practicum sites is based on several factors of equal importance: 1) The student's learning objectives for Concentration Field; 2) The agency's capacity to offer practicum experiences consistent with both the student's and College's objectives for Concentration Field; 3) The availability, within the agency, of a Field Instructor who is qualified to provide the necessary supervision of the student's work.

Field placement agencies differ considerably with regard to the nature of the activities and supervision available. The Faculty Liaison consults with the Field Instructor to ensure that each adheres to the general educational and field objectives. Although a wide variety of placement opportunities exist and may be utilized, placements in public sector agencies are especially
encouraged. This final practicum experience provides the student with an opportunity to focus on direct practice leadership areas of professional interest. The exact dimensions of the preferred specialization will vary from student to student.

The field placement process begins with the selection of a placement agency that offers the student an appropriate mix of specialized administrative and management experiences. It is shaped through the development of an Educational Contract with individualized goals and objectives to be carried out with the support of the agency-based Field Instructor. Each student must identify specific competencies, practice behaviors, and learning outcomes that can be achieved within the concentration practicum agency, and are related to the MSW Program Goals and the EPAS Competencies and Practice Behaviors.

### MSW Course Assignments for Field Practicum

The assignments for the field practicum are designed to enhance and integrate social work theory and practice. Assignments are geared toward helping the student meet the educational objectives of the field experience and to support practice within the social work domain. The students are given a course calendar in the class syllabus that outlines each integrative seminar and due dates for assignments.

**Integrative Seminars:**
Seminars are a required part of the course and must be attended for the student to receive a passing grade. The seminars are designed to: deal with specific field problems; integrate coursework with field experiences; provide an orientation to various agency services and functions; provide students with a structure in which they can support and learn from one another; relate conceptual learning to practice; and increase the knowledge of other agency's functions, services, policies, and problems.

The three (3) hour seminars meet every other week, and are designed to help students integrate conceptual knowledge and practical experience. Students will also be required to present their work, and to lead discussions with their peers on the topic of their presentation. A portion of each seminar will be devoted to small group processing of the students’ experiences in their field placements. Students are expected to share their experiences, seek feedback from peers, and to offer constructive feedback and support to other students. Students must be aware and careful not to divulge confidential agency or client information during seminars. Students are encouraged to speak with the Faculty Liaison in private if there are concerns about confidential information or feedback being disclosed during seminar.

**Student Responsibilities:**
- This is not a lecture course. Students are expected to prepare, and to contribute to the discussion, and to each other’s learning.
- One of the positive benefits of the integrative seminar is the opportunity for mutual problem solving. Students are expected to share both positive and negative experiences and to seek peer and instructor feedback.
- Students are expected to be on time and to remain for the entire seminar.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** *One unexcused absence results in lowering the grade by one letter. Two unexcused absences will result in failure of your field practicum.*

**Field Instructor’s Evaluation of Student**
Evaluation in field practice is an on-going process. This is a major and continual aspect of the Field Instructor's obligation. Part of each agency visit by the Faculty Liaison is spent in evaluating with the Field Instructor and the student the student's progress, educational needs, accomplishments, and areas needing improvement. Where there are discrepancies, the Faculty Liaison confers with the Field Instructor and student before making a final decision.

In addition to this informal, on-going evaluation, a formal evaluation is constructed for the student with the Faculty Liaison and Field Instructor at mid-term and at the end of the semester (Mid-Term Progress Report and Final Field Evaluation). Both the student and the Field Instructor complete the field evaluation forms, and copies should be available for review by the Faculty Liaison. The Field Evaluations are located on the student’s course TRACS site and the intern is responsible for providing a copy the Field Instructor.

**Grading:**
The final decision for assigning a grade is the responsibility of the Field Coordinator in partnership with the Faculty Liaison and the Field Instructor. The agency Field Instructor will **recommend** a grade for agency performance.

**APPENDIX I**
CONDITIONS FOR STUDENTS ENROLLING IN FIELD PRACTICUM

CONDITIONS FOR STUDENTS ENROLLING IN FIELD PRACTICUM

1. Representatives of the school and the agency to which the student is assigned have agreed that the purpose of field instruction in the agency is to provide the student with the opportunity to meet the learning objectives as outlined in the respective Field Practicum Manual.

2. The school has agreed to assign students that meet the criteria of the participating agency.

3. The agency field instructor will assign those cases and client contacts that it deems reasonable for a student to handle during field practice.

4. The agency field instructor will from time to time submit informal and/or formal reports to assist the faculty liaison in evaluating the student's activities in field practice.

5. The Field Director and faculty liaisons at Texas State University-San Marcos School of Social Work assume the responsibility for the selection of students to be placed with the agency and share with the agency, prior to placement, information about the student's academic achievement, personal characteristics, and educational needs.

6. The student is expected to follow the agency's normal office hours, stipulations against disclosing confidential information, and other rules and regulations mutually agreed upon by the School of Social Work and the agency.

7. The student is expected to withdraw from the agency and/or respective course(s) if he/she is found to be unsuitable for his/her assignment or if unusual circumstances within the agency dictate temporary termination of the field placement.

8. The agency may initiate the withdrawal by notifying the faculty liaison by phone or in writing. The faculty liaison will then inform the Field Director and the student that s/he is to withdraw. The Field Director may also initiate the withdrawal and will notify the student in writing.

9. The student is expected not to publish or divulge any information or material obtained during field placement, unless approved for release and publication by the agency to which the student is assigned.

10. The student is expected to perform those tasks that the agency and School of Social Work have designated as a part of field practice.

11. The student understands that in the administration of the field instruction program the School of Social Work seeks to meet the educational needs of the student, but at the same time must cooperate with the agency in maintaining standards that assure the quality of services offered to clients by the agency.
12. The student understands there is a mandatory Pre-Field Orientation and failure to attend will result in a delayed entry into field practicum and points deducted from their course grade.

13. The student must purchase malpractice insurance through the College of Applied Arts for the duration of the internship.

14. Students must comply with any agency policy on criminal history or background checks prior to placement. Students must also comply with University policies on criminal history/background checks and Health Reports prior to placement. Failure to do so may delay internship or be cause for termination from the MSW Program.

15. Full-time students employed for more than 20 hours per week are required to complete a part-time internship over two contiguous semesters.

APPENDIX II

GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCING SAFETY AND MINIMIZING RISK IN FIELD

From Jane Parker, Associate Professor & Associate Dean, School of Social Work, Tulane University:

GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCING SAFETY AND MINIMIZING RISK IN FIELD

1. Have written agency policies to address any work situation that entails risk such as the following: home visits; services in isolated or high crime areas; services at night or on weekends, services to clients with infectious disease as well as any required immunizations; working around special equipment or chemicals, what to do in case of fire or other disaster; politically-sensitive services that may result in violent threats to agency staff (abortion counseling, for example). This list is not to be considered exhaustive, and each agency is responsible for determining its own sources and levels of risks and taking reasonable precautions with these risks.

2. TRAIN YOUR INTERNS IN THE ABOVE POLICIES AND DOCUMENT THAT YOU HAVE DONE SO.

3. Remember that according to the School-Agency agreement, students have both the right and responsibility to refuse any assignment that they deem too dangerous to pursue at the time. The Director of Field is available for consultation and problem-solving on such issues.

4. Do not have students seeing clients alone in the building. Be sure other personnel are nearby. Examine your office arrangements: Is your desk positioned so that you are "boxed in" and
cannot get to the exit easily? Do you have sharp or other potentially dangerous objects lying around? If so, remove them and rearrange your furniture for the "worst scenario."

5. Familiarize students with your agency environment, especially all entrances and exits, evacuation routes, potentially dangerous areas. Health care settings should provide proof of orientation to the environment, particularly infection control policies.

6. PROVIDE SUPERVISION THAT IS CONSISTENT AND ADEQUATE IN TIME SO THAT YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS ACTUALLY DOING! Do not expect students to be able to fully represent your agency in making critical decisions about patient disposition with physical and legal implications, such as involuntary hospitalization, threats of suicide or homicide. If the instructor is not available in such situations, THERE MUST BE A WRITTEN AND FULLY UNDERSTOOD PROTOCOL FOR NOTIFYING ANOTHER WORKER OR A PSYCHIATRIST ON CALL, OR FOR GETTING THE PATIENT TO AN EMERGENCY FACILITY THAT CAN MEET THEIR NEEDS.

7. Train students on confidentiality policies. Students SHOULD NOT be taking any identifying information on clients out of the agency, unless required for outreach centers and only with clear guidance on protection of records, NOT TO COMPLETE AGENCY PAPERWORK.

8. If students are required to make home visits, train them on your written policies and personally provide orientation to neighborhoods.

PRECAUTIONS TO FOLLOW IN MAKING HOME VISITS

6. Review the agency's written policies regarding home visits (as well as all other safety issues). A staff member familiar with the area should personally orient students.

2. Be familiar with the environment: entrances, exits, places to avoid. Beware of "looking lost", and project an image of knowing where you are going and what you are doing, even if you don't.

3. OBSERVE how clients are dressed. Are they wearing coats, jackets, or other clothing that can conceal a weapon?

4. Park your car a few spaces down from the house as opposed to directly in front. If you have to exit quickly, do not give a pursuer the opportunity to catch up too soon. If it is unsafe to jump into your car, run to the nearest spot where there are people, activity and hopefully security.

5. ALWAYS BE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH GAS IN YOUR CAR.

6. Visit at high activity times, like 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. or 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. Also choose to visit at times when people known to be violent are out of the home.

7. Be aware of your own clothing that may misrepresent you. (Flashy jewelry, provocative clothing, "salesperson" look, etc.)
8. Ask clients to walk around their neighborhood or sit on their porch with you from time to time, so that others can see that you are there with the client’s permission.

9. Answer questions about who you are and what you are doing, without violation confidentiality. The purpose is to demonstrate to neighbors that you are not a salesperson, an evangelist, a policeman, or a new drug dealer.

10. ALWAYS LET STAFF KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING AND WHEN YOU WILL BE BACK.

11. CALL CLIENTS TO LET THEM KNOW TO EXPECT YOU AT A CERTAIN TIME. Ask them to contact the agency if you are late.

12. At the door of a home, LISTEN BEFORE YOU KNOCK. If sounds of any threatening situation are going on, LEAVE IMMEDIATELY. Stand to one side of the door when you knock, not directly in front. DO NOT accept invitations such as "Is that you? Just come on in." Identify yourself and ask the occupant to come to the door to let you in.

13. Once inside, BE ALERT AND OBSERVANT of your environment. Are there dangerous weapons lying about? Are there drugs being used in the house? Is someone drunk and physically acting out? In such cases, tell your primary client that you cannot remain and to reschedule or have them see you at the agency. Regardless, GET OUT!

14. If a client escalates, DO NOT GET PHYSICAL when the interaction is verbal. SEE TIPS WHICH FOLLOW:

**IF YOU ARE IN AN ESCALATION:**

**DIVERT** -- Switch attention to another subject, ask for a glass of water, change seats. Separate agitators.

**DIFFUSE** -- Use soft voice, agree, focus on how the person feels she/he has been treated. Assure the person they are safe.

**DELAY** -- Ask to postpone, get back-up, practice "strength in numbers”.

**LEAVE** -- Get out of Dodge any way you can. While none of us like to think of the possibility that any of the aforementioned will happen to us, it is much better to be safe than sorry. If students and/or the Field Instructors have questions or need further guidance on specific issues, they should contact the Field Coordinator immediately.
APPENDIX III

EDUCATIONAL CONTRACT

The educational contract is a working document designed to give direction and structure to the field experience, and to ensure that each student's individual learning needs are met in the course of the semester. It is the joint responsibility of the student and the field instructor to negotiate this contract within the first few weeks of the placement, and to review and modify it on an ongoing basis throughout the semester as learning needs change. Copies of the educational contract are signed by the field instructor, student, and faculty liaison at the first field visit.

The course and field practicum experience objectives frame the parameters of the educational contract. The field instructor is responsible for incorporating into the contract the particular demands of the culture and mission of the agency and its specific area of practice. The student is responsible for reconciling the requirements of the College and the Agency with her/his personal learning needs and professional goals. Please use the following format:

I. **Student Profile (Self-Assessment)**
   A. Assessment of current strengths (including values, knowledge, skills, and abilities)
   B. Assessment of areas of development (including values, knowledge, skills, and abilities)
   C. Career Goals
   D. Experiences desired during the semester in the field setting

II. **Agency and Field Instructor Profile**
   A. Description of field setting, including specific unit/service of which field instructor is a part
   B. Agency and field instructor views on field instruction
   C. Preferred teaching methodologies

III. **Educational Plan**

Learning objectives are statements of learning expectations for the student. They are outcomes to be achieved, and should be written in specific and observable terms. Learning objectives are derived from an integration of three sources: 1) assessment of student strengths, needs, and goals; 2) agency requirements for practice; and 3) the course and field practicum competencies and associated practice behaviors. Learning objectives should ideally include both knowledge to be acquired and skills to be mastered.

Please refer to the course learning aims and the associated Competencies identified in your syllabus to develop your Learning Objectives. Examples of practice behaviors and tasks can be found on the Field Evaluation, and you should also consult with your Field Instructor for specific activities and tasks that are available at the agency. The suggested format for this section follows:
Competencies & Learning Objectives: Write your learning objective in active voice and make sure you identify which of the ten competencies relates to each of your learning objectives. A learning objective can contain more than one competency. Under each learning objective, use these subheadings:

Practice Behaviors & Tasks: Practice behaviors and tasks are those activities in which the student will engage in order to meet or achieve each competency and learning objective. Practice tasks should be clearly stated, feasible, and where possible, placed within a specific time frame.

Outcome Measures: Outcome measures indicate the ways in which the student's performance will be evaluated in relation to the achievement of objectives. The outcome measures should be specific evidence or examples that the student has mastered during the internship.

IV. Student-Agency Contractual Obligations
   A. Hours and days of fieldwork (including schedule and time-keeping procedures; flexible and compensatory time; holiday arrangements; sick leave procedure and arrangements; etc.)
   B. Special arrangements (i.e. travel procedures and policies; staff development and professional educational needs; safety issues; special medical requirements. etc.)
   C. Plan for weekly one-hour supervision (day, hour, etc.)
   D. Plan for documentation of student's completion of clock hours.

V. Review of the Educational Contract
   At the end of the Educational Contract, include lines for signatures from student, field instructor/preceptor and faculty field liaison. Be sure to indicate date document was signed.

NOTE
   (1) A copy of the completed educational contract is to be submitted to the Faculty Field Liaison for use in working with student and Field Instructor. Please also submit any substantive changes to your liaison as soon as possible.
   (2) At mid-term, this contract will be reviewed by the Faculty Field Liaison, Field Instructor, and student. An addendum may be submitted to address changes in the area of the Educational Plan and Student-Agency Contractual Obligations.