Field Instructor Overview

For New and Returning Field Instructors

TEXAS STATE
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Office of Field Education

- Dr. Tozi Gutierrez, LMSW - Director of Field - t_g77@txstate.edu
- R. Stephen Medel, LMSW - Assistant Director - Stephen.medel@txstate.edu
- Michael Giannotti, LMSW-IPR, ACSW – Field Faculty Liaison/Field Advisor- mg1024@txstate.edu
- Valerie Gomez, LMSW – Field Faculty Liaison/Field Advisor – vg1059@txstate.edu
- Abel Rodriguez, LCSW, LCDC – Field Faculty Liaison/Field Advisor -ar1338@txstate.edu
- Cassie Smith, LCDC, MSW- Field Coordinator – cs1572@txstate.edu
- Lyndsey Anderson – BHWET Grant Coordinator, Field Advisor - Ina35@txsate.edu

Thanks to Ms. Bonnie Rinks, Director of Field Education, University of Southern Indiana School of Social Work for use of materials in this document.
The Mission of Field Education

• In field, the focus turns from the acquisition of knowledge to the application of knowledge

• Students are provided with opportunities to apply the social work knowledge and skills obtained in the classroom in actual practice situations – “practicum”

• When a student completes field he/she should have demonstrated readiness to enter the profession
Roles in Field Education

**IN THE FIELD**
Instructor/Supervisor
Task Supervisor
Preceptor

**STUDENT INTERN**
BSW - Generalist
MSW-Foundation
MSW-Advanced

**FIELD EDUCATION OFFICE**
Faculty Liaisons
Field Advisors
Field Education Roles

- **Field Instructor**: Provides supervision, direction and instruction for Texas State social work student intern in the agency. A supervisor has a BSW degree with 2 year post education experience to supervise BSW students or MSW degree with 2 years post education experience to supervise BSW or MSW students.

- **TASK SUPERVISORS**: Agencies may assign task supervisors to oversee students day to day assignments at their discretion, however, a one to one weekly supervision session is required by credentialed social work professional

- **Faculty Liaison**: Texas State School of Social Work Faculty providing both integrative seminar instruction and liaison to field agency where student intern is working. Faculty are responsible for collecting all evaluations of students performance demonstrated in the Educational Learning Plan, assessments from students, and verifying completion of required contact hours through timesheets
Field Education Roles Continued

- **Preceptor:** When a credentialed social work professional is not available on site to provide one on one social work supervision, a person with credentials is assigned to provide a one hour per week supervision specifically for social work consultation. Preceptors will coordinate with faculty liaisons on students progress (task supervisor may be assigned to assist with the students day to day tasks)

- **Field Advisor:** The faculty or staff member from the field education office who assists in the placement of students in agencies
Field Instructors

- Munson (2002) indicates that few supervisors are **SOLEY** supervisors. Rather they, balance the demands of agencies, clients, and requirements of the field with the needs of students or supervisees.

- Some field instructors defer the oversight of day-to-day responsibilities to a task supervisor.
**Task Supervisor**

- If a student intern is working with a Task Supervisor without a credentialed social worker on staff then a preceptor will be provided.

- A Task Supervisor is someone within the agency that the Agency Field Supervisor assigns the intern to learn a specific skill or experience with a particular population or when there is not a social worker on site.

- The student must receive formal supervision each week from a social worker.
Purpose & Roles of Supervision

➢ Teaching and role modeling practice skills
➢ Sharing professional and ethical
➢ Knowledge/experiences
➢ Monitoring practice and clinical competence
➢ Evaluating student self-awareness and functioning
➢ Socialization to the profession and professional etiquette
Learning to be Social Workers

- The primary role of a field instructor is to help student interns learn to be social workers, not do a particular job or work in a particular agency.

- This involves creating learning opportunities for student interns to integrate theory and practice.
Positive Factors in Supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mutual respect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of power differential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness and open discussion of diversity issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Providing Supervision Feedback

➢ Clarification of expectations and outcomes for supervision

➢ Timely feedback on an on-going basis

➢ Structured, consistent one hour weekly supervision meetings

➢ Address both strengths and areas in need of development or improvement

➢ Thoughtful and planned presentation of material by both the field instructor and the student

➢ Written documentation of supervision sessions
What to Avoid

➢ Authoritarian or demeaning treatment

➢ Unclear expectations and ambiguity in roles and responsibilities

➢ Comparison to other interns or other social work programs

➢ Unrealistic expectations and activities for the student’s current level of abilities

➢ Too much independence, too soon into the internship and lack of timely monitoring
What Student Interns Need from YOU

- Sharing your expertise & practice wisdom
- Assistance with developing communication skills
- Skills – the “how-to” of social work
- Guidance and trustworthiness so interns develop confidence and are willing to challenge themselves
- Processing of personal and professional responses to field experiences and supervision
Orientation and Supervision

Formal Supervision
➢ We require formal supervision by a credentialed social work professional
➢ Supervision will be arranged for 1 hour per week

Teachable Moments
➢ Students may need “checking in” time between Formal Supervision sessions for those teachable moments
Orientation and Supervision

- Students should first be oriented to the agency
- Please explain dress code, policies and procedures and other important items about your agency

Link to Orientation Checklist: http://www.socialwork.txstate.edu/fieldpracticum/forms.html
Supervision

- **Student’s role:**
  - Reflect on the tasks of the week
  - Explore any conflictual feelings
  - Exercise critical thinking skills
  - Focus attention to the Educational Learning Plans including core competencies
  - NASW Code of Ethics
  - Open to feedback

- **Supervisors role:**
  - Constructive, honest and direct feedback
  - Focus on personal growth of the student - *Strengths and challenges*
  - Student learning plans including core competencies
  - Professional standards of Social Work
  - NASW Code of Ethics
  - Utilize Task Supervisor (if applicable)
Red Flags in Supervision

- Emotionally or psychologically unstable; medical non-compliance
- Overwhelmed with personal/family issues
- Impulsive and/or lack problem-solving abilities
- Past unresolved history and current issues that could surface with clients
- Unrealistic expectations and highly critical personality Power/control issues
Reasons for Concern

- Failing/Inadequate performance in Field
- Personal Problems, which interfere with student performance
- Unprofessional Behavior: including unethical or illegal behavior
- Negative Attitude: which impairs the student’s ability to actively participate in the learning experience
- Inability to function in the role of a student
- Inability to work within the framework of supervision
- Failure to comply with policies of the school or placement agency
Reasons for Concern May Include

**Unethical Conduct:**
1. Sexual misconduct
2. Violation of the University alcohol and drug policy
3. Physical or verbal assaults
4. Any violation of the **NASW CODE of Ethics**
Reasons for Concern

**Unsatisfactory Performance**

1. Violating agency policies regarding recordkeeping, attendance, tardiness, confidentiality or practice

2. Inability to cooperate in the learning process with field instructors and or professional colleagues

3. Inability to meet learning expectations
Addressing Problems

- Prevention is best

- However, if problems do occur it is best to identify them early and address them directly and honestly during supervision

- Most students will correct any issues once it is addressed in supervision
Addressing Problems

- Document the areas where students need to make changes
  - Meet with student to address concerns
  - Notify Faculty Field Liaison – meeting between student liaison and supervisor may need to take place if the issue is not corrected
  - Liaison may need to involve the Field Director
Promoting Professional Qualities and Priorities

- We have a responsibility to educate, but we also have a responsibility to the Social Work Profession.
- As field supervisors you can help us ensure our profession is the strongest it can be.
- Ask yourself, would you hire this person?
The School of Social Work is a fully accredited Baccalaureate (BSW) and Master’s Social Work (MSW) program.

The accreditation standards are governed by The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) mandate student demonstrated competence in nine distinct areas in order to graduate from an accredited program.

The Field Practicum is the opportunity for students to demonstrate those competencies in a practice setting.
Nine Core Competencies - CSWE

- **Competency 1**: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- **Competency 2**: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
- **Competency 3**: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- **Competency 4**: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- **Competency 5**: Engage in Policy Practice
- **Competency 6**: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- **Competency 7**: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- **Competency 8**: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- **Competency 9**: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Applying the Core Competencies

The Field Instructor will assist students in applying the nine core competencies, social work knowledge, values, and skills they have learned in class, to an agency (or practice) setting.

Evaluate students performance in these areas through the development of an Educational Learning Plan (ELP).

The field liaison will provide field instructors with the template and guidance on developing the ELP.
Educational Learning Plan

• The Educational Learning Plan is collaboratively developed by the student, field instructor, and/or task supervisor (where applicable) and provides the basis for the development and demonstration of the professional practice competencies.

• Involvement in these activities will provide the evidence to support the competency ratings on the student’s Midterm Progress & Final Field Evaluations. The faculty liaison is available as needed to support the development of this plan. These social work practice activities are site-specific and individualized with the goal of facilitating the student’s successful professional development.

• The expectation is that the student will have various experiences that will allow them to be evaluated through observable behavior. Students’ progress towards achievement of social work practice behaviors will be assessed with a final evaluation demonstrating students’ proficiency in the application of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes in social work practice.

• Link For Educational Learning Plan: http://www.socialwork.txstate.edu/fieldpracticum/forms.html
Internship Levels

- The School of Social Work has three programs where students may enroll in the field practicum:

1. **BSW Generalist** Field Education is a generalist field placement for undergraduate students

2. **MSW Foundation** Field Education is a generalist field placement for first year graduate students

3. **MSW Advanced** Practice Field Education is a specialized field placement for students completing their final degree requirements
Generalist: BSW and MSW Foundation

• Generalist practice is broadly defined

• This foundation field placement is designed so that students can demonstrate the Core Competencies at the generalist level of social work practice

• Social work roles typical of generalist practice include: case manager, advocate, broker, educator, community organizer, group worker and individual counselor

• Assigned tasks often include preparing psychosocial histories, developing service plans and implementing broad based interventions congruent with the multi-variant client needs
The parameters for practice are usually determined by the identified client needs, the mission and function of the agency, and level of training and skill of the student. He/she works under supervision and relates to the client and delivers services in ways which convey respect while honoring and promoting the dignity of the clients served.

Skills expected include the ability to communicate empathy, genuineness, and a positive regard when listening and interviewing, and the ability to utilize the planned change process and problem solving strategies in all phases of work with the client: engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
Advanced: MSW

- All MSW students complete an advanced field practicum

- The educational focus in the advanced practicum is in providing students with opportunities to demonstrate the Core Competencies at the advanced level of social work practice

- Typically field agencies offer programs in specialized practice areas defined by a problem, such as substance abuse; or a population, such as children and adolescents at risk; or practice areas defined as health, mental health

- The agency program may be even more narrowly defined by a highly specialized context, such as the use of a particular intervention model, e.g., the 12 Step Model in chemical dependency programs or a research role
Advanced: MSW

- The advanced practicum is grounded in the liberal arts, the generalist foundation, and the values that distinguish social work as a profession.

- The clinical practicum is advanced, reflecting the specialized knowledge, skills, and values of an advanced practitioner whose training which is both specialized and rigorous in its demands for practice grounded in sound science, technical skill and the art of therapeutic practice.

- Advanced MSW field placements provide a mix of generalist and clinical activities, with the emphasis on the student developing therapeutic styles with clients while acquiring expertise within the specialization offered by the field agency.

- The ratio of generalist and clinical activities vary, depending upon the professional developmental needs of the individual student and the mission of the agency.
Field Agency Contact Hours

➢ BSW Students complete – 420 hours Contact Hours

➢ MSW Foundation Students complete – 360 hours Contact Hours

➢ MSW Advanced Students complete – 540 hours Contact Hours

*Students are concurrently enrolled in an integrative field seminar (on-line or on-campus) and field agency practicum
Thank You

- We sincerely appreciate your willingness to host social work interns and support the development of new professionals.

- We recognize Field Instructors, Task Supervisors and Preceptors have many obligations, responsibilities, and volunteering to host an intern is an added service.

- We provide continuing education credits (CEU) for field instructors each time they supervise a Texas State School of Social Work intern.


Http://www.salisbury.edu/socialwork/Field Training/StudentSupervision/StudentSupervision.swf. (n.d.).