



# MSW SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM DISTANCE EDUCATION SPECIALIZED PRACTICE FIELD MANUAL

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*This Field Manual is provided with appreciation for Agency Field Instructors who have mentored our social work students. The University of Northern Iowa faculty and staff recognizes their invaluable contribution to the department, our students, and the profession.*

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FIELD TEMPLATES/FORMS - located on social work website at  
[www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction](http://www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction)

## **INTRODUCTION**

Considered an invaluable component of the student's professional education and development, the field experience program is governed by the mission, overall aims, foundation curriculum, and advanced curriculum concentrations of the MSW program. A primary aim of the program is to educate and prepare professional social workers to assume advanced competent practice and leadership roles in a dynamic, complex, and multicultural society. Skill development progresses from generalist to more advanced techniques. Opportunities are afforded students to apply theoretical knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to actual practice situations. Selecting from an array of field placement sites, students construct individualized learning plans to meet their educational goals. Students benefit from faculty guidance and support during the process, as well as that given by experienced practitioners within the community.

The MSW Specialized Practice Field Instruction Manual is the guide that agency instructors, faculty liaisons, and graduate students use throughout the placement experience. It contains the official policies, procedures, and guidelines currently in place for the field placement experience. The aim of the manual is to guide and assist all those involved in the field placement experience to understand the structure of this educational component of professional training. Therefore, be sure to read it carefully and seek clarification, when needed, from the director of field instruction.

Under the supervision of experienced practitioners, students demonstrate their ability to meet the specific competencies of the field placement experience as well as the expectations of agency, school and profession. Graduate social work education is considered a professional educational program and as such, field education is the capstone experience for students in the social work program at UNI.

## **GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the University of Northern Iowa Masters of Social Work Program is to provide students with a trauma-informed foundation that prepares them to identify, evaluate, and address the personal, social, and systemic conditions that perpetuate individual, family, organizational and community-based trauma using evidence-informed interventions. Our curriculum is based on the perspective that effective change within this paradigm requires upholding the dignity and worth of the individual, advocating for human rights and social and economic justice, challenging oppression, promoting human relationships, practicing multi-cultural responsiveness, and identifying factors that mitigate the effects of trauma and enhance strengths, competencies, and resilience. Students obtain an in-depth understanding of these values and practices through in-person and online coursework and instruction that promotes critical thinking, self-reflection, and ethical decision making, along with intensive experiential learning through local, state, national, and international field placements. (Spring 2020)

## **NASW CODE OF ETHICS/ETHICAL VALUES & PRINCIPLES**

(As taken from the NASW Code of Ethics Approved by the NASW Delegate Assembly on February 19, 2021, and November 6, 2020. Implemented 2021)

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate

its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

**VALUE:** Service

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.

Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

**VALUE:** Social Justice

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers challenge social injustice. Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

**VALUE:** Dignity and Worth of the Person

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person. Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

**VALUE:** Importance of Human Relationships

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships. Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

**VALUE:** Integrity

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers should take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally. Social workers act honestly and

responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

**VALUE:** Competence

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

## **GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **Program Goals (Spring 2020)**

1. Provide a foundation curriculum rooted within a generalist perspective that addresses knowledge and skills necessary for effective and ethical practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
2. Provide a concentration curriculum built on the professional foundation that prepares students to practice autonomously as advanced level professionals in either trauma-informed or administrative practice within a wide range of client systems and practice settings;
3. Infuse social work values and ethics throughout students' educational experience to serve as guides for practice in field placements and future professional social work practice;
4. Promote student understanding of diversity through curriculum that identifies the experiences and needs of vulnerable and oppressed groups while emphasizing resilience and strengths;
5. Increase students' understanding of the types and processes of discrimination and oppression and enhance their ability to promote social and economic justice through advocacy and social reform;
6. Prepare students to critically assess and apply empirically-based knowledge, evaluate their own practice effectiveness, and participate in the evaluation of programs and policies.

### **MSW Program Objectives (CSWE Core Competencies)**

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

## **FIELD PLACEMENT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

Field instruction is an integral and essential component of Social Work education. It provides a learning experience in a setting where the student has the opportunity to integrate curriculum content, to question the relationship of theory and practice, to develop skills in interpersonal

relationships and intervention techniques, to participate in the role of social worker, and to evaluate oneself in that role. There have been many changes in the profession as the trend in social work is toward greater diversity in roles, settings, methods, and clientele. These changes together with the requirements for being a generalist social worker in both urban and rural areas require that field instruction provide learning experiences which will prepare students for a profession that is developing and emerging toward the future. The student is provided with a variety of experiences which foster the development of skills through which s/he can begin to be a self-directed learner who can work with confidence, exercise independent judgment, and respond to a diversity of roles and responsibilities.

### **GOALS OF FIELD INSTRUCTION**

1. To offer learning experiences which provide the opportunity for students to use and test the knowledge and skills derived from the curriculum in learning the professional competencies of generalist social workers, through active participation in the delivery of human services.
2. To provide settings where students can develop the interpersonal and communication skills essential for professional Social Work.
3. To help students test themselves and their commitment to social work values and attitudes, and to evaluate their own preparation for the profession.
4. To prepare students to identify the policies, practices, services, and procedures that interfere with effective delivery of human services and to develop strategies for change.
5. To prepare students to develop the skills and attitudes of a self-directed learner.

### **FIELD RELATED COURSES & CREDIT**

The University of Northern Iowa Distance Education Trauma Informed Master of Social Work program offers online courses using the Blackboard elearning management system. Courses are held Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 9 p.m. (CST) via interactive video conferencing. The field program does not grant social work course credit or field hours for life experience or previous social work related experience. The field hours can only be completed through the field instruction course. (*Accreditation Standard 3.1.5*). The field practicum and seminars are taken in the final two semesters of the program and the courses include:

- SW 6268 60 Trauma Informed Practice Practicum I (3 credits)
- SW 6269 60 Trauma Informed Practice Practicum I Seminar (2 credits)
- SW 6270 60 Trauma Informed Practice Practicum II (3 credits)
- SW 6271 60 Trauma Informed Practice Practicum II Seminar (2 credits)

### **SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK ENDORSEMENT PATHWAY**

The MSW program provides an endorsement pathway for MSW graduates to apply to the Iowa Department of Education to obtain Endorsement 240 School Social Worker Birth to Age 21. Students will take two SPED courses at UNI for their elective requirements (SPED 6240 Collaborative Consultation I: The Relationship, SPED 6260 Special Education Law and Policy and/or SPED 6285 Readings in Special Education) and complete their MSW Specialization field experience with one of the Iowa Area Education Agencies. See Director of Field Instruction for more information about this pathway as it only applies to school social workers that practice in Iowa.

## **POLICIES/CRITERIA/PROCEDURES FOR PLACEMENT**

Prior to starting the field experience, MSW Specialization students must be cleared by the Field Director (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.6*). This includes the following requirements:

1. Admitted into the graduate program.
2. Attend a field orientation session.
3. Resume reviewed by the graduate college.
5. Be in good academic standing (3.0 grade point average or better, no more than 6 credits with a C, no course incompletes).
6. Completed SW 6234 Primary and Secondary Trauma & SW 6235 Systems Redesign & Community Collaboration
7. Secured an approved site with a signed contract.
8. The field program does not grant social work course credit or field hours for life experience or previous social work related experience. The field hours can only be completed through the field instruction course. (*Accreditation Standard 3.1.5*)

Once students attend a field orientation session, they are provided access to the department's Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) system. This online system allows the student to access field profiles of approved sites. The profiles contain information on the site's mission, population served, programs where the student may be placed, point of contact for interested students, point of contact for field supervision, supervision requirements, what type of intern the agency can support, typical field placement working days and hours, transportation requirements, and brief examples of internship experiences for the type of social work student(s) the site is approved to support. The student reaches out to the agency contact for field placement as outlined in the profile. The student schedules and attends the agency interview. Once an internship offer is accepted by the student, a contract is signed.

### **FIELD SEMINAR AND ASSIGNMENTS**

During the field experience, the student is required to participate in field seminars led by their faculty liaison. The primary objective of the seminar is to reinforce the learning which occurs in the field agency, process how it is linked to classroom instruction, and to provide further socialization to professional competency and confidence. Seminars will be held by arrangement with the faculty liaison usually monthly for no less than a total of 14 contact hours over two semesters. Seminar topics are at the discretion of the faculty liaison based on the student needs within the seminar grouping, with the exception of safety issues, use of supervision and an agency presentation.

Time spent participating in seminars ***DO NOT*** count towards field experience hours. Seminar is a graded component of the field experience. Components graded are at the discretion of the faculty liaison and include attendance at and active participation in scheduled seminars.

Students will have various **assignments** to complete during their field experience. The assignments established by the Department's Field Education Committee include, but are not limited to:

1. ***Learning Plan***: Students with direction and guidance from agency field instructors are to complete a learning plan or a list of expected learning experiences, which include duties, responsibilities, and specific competencies within the first three weeks of their

field experience. The student, agency instructor and faculty liaison will sign off on the learning plan, which is located on the IPT system.

2. **Summary of Learning:** Students will submit to their agency instructor and faculty liaison summaries of learning to assist the student in linking theory and field. The student will connect their field experiences to the 24 specialized practice behaviors.

3. **Agency Presentation:** Students will present on their agency, comparing and/or contrasting the interventions with the characteristics of a trauma informed care organization.

4. **Log of Field Hours:** Due at the end of the field experience and requires signatures of student, agency instructor and faculty liaison, which is found on the IPT system (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.1*)

### **REQUIRED LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

A major aspect of evaluation is accomplished through a critique of practice performance in relation to the student's learning plan. Students construct a learning plan in conjunction with the agency instructor. After the initial construction of the learning plan, the faculty liaison reviews it. It is used as a focus throughout the field experience for agency visits as well as for any issues that may require clarification or problem solving related to student performance or the tasks and assignments given to students. Learning plans spell out what students hope to learn from the field experience, the competencies to be developed, the responsibilities students assume, the tasks students intend to complete, and the time frame in which this all takes place. The learning plan is individualized to address the goals and objectives of the student within a specific practice setting, reflecting the goals and objectives identified by the University's program for field placement.

#### **Guidelines for Development of the Learning Plan**

1. Responsibility for constructing the learning plan is shared equally by the student and the agency instructor. Faculty liaisons provide consultation in the development of the learning plan. The learning plan directly links the nine (9) core competencies and practice behaviors with their field experience activities.
2. Students should develop a learning plan within the first three (3) weeks at the agency and turn in a copy to the faculty liaison for approval.
3. The learning plan may be modified during field experience but only with the approval of the agency instructor and the faculty liaison.
4. Field activities are developed that reflect the required learning for specialized practice as well as the time frame for placement.
5. Measurement criteria can include written material appropriate to the agency setting that is reviewed by the student, agency instructor, and faculty liaison. Direct observation of the student's work is expected. Feedback and evaluative information from other agency staff, or community professionals, involved with the student's efforts should be incorporated into the evaluation criteria.
6. The learning plan provides important content for supervision meetings that the student has with the agency instructor. Activities the student engages in relate to desired goal attainment. It further creates a basis for the student evaluation process.

(*Accreditation Standard 2.2.1*)



**PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES THAT COUNT TOWARDS FIELD HOURS**

**Travel Time:** Students often travel to meetings, clients’ homes, and other agencies in the course of their field experience. Students may count the time used for this travel during their “agency day.” However, students may not count the time they travel to and from the agency from their place of residence that starts and concludes their “agency day.”

**Professional Development Opportunities:** Students often have the opportunity to attend professional development training during their time in field placements. Students may count the time spent at these trainings, provided that the agency instructor has approved the training if the training is of a professional nature related to social work and likely to enhance student development as a professional. Students may not count any time involved in overnight stays or other time associated with training other than the actual training hours and travel time of two hours or more, to and from the training.

**Other:**

<b>What can be counted as hours</b>	<b>What cannot be counted as hours</b>
Travel to meetings, other agencies, client homes	Travel to and from the agency from place of residence
Lunch breaks that involve direct client contact or when traveling for internship related activities over the lunch break	Travel to and/or from seminar if it is at the beginning or end of work day
Professional development sessions, if approved by your agency instructor	Travel to professional development sessions if over 2 hours away, including overnights prior to or after the professional development session
Travel to professional development sessions if under 2 hours away	Lunch breaks
Webinars and/or book reads, if approved by your agency instructor/supervisor. Limits to how many hours can apply are recommended.	Federal, state and/or agency holidays in which students did not complete field experience activities towards their field hours.
	On call hours when not engaged in on call activities or other relevant learning activities assigned by site supervisor.

**TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY ISSUES**

Use of your personal vehicle may be expected during your field experience. Please refer to the agency profile for agency specific requirements around use of your personal vehicle for completing the field experience requirements of the agency, which may include but is not limited to traveling to meetings, traveling to professional development sessions, traveling to client homes, and transporting clients. It is recommended that the student inquire about personal vehicle use at the time of the interview to determine if the site is a good match for their educational needs and personal resources. The university is self-insured for liability purposes; however, that coverage does not provide liability or vehicle coverage for student internships.

In some client situations, there may be a risk of violent or unpredictable behavior. Students will be provided a thorough orientation to the policies and practices relevant to personnel issues, personal safety issues, guidelines for home visits, transportation requests, and specialized training needed to carry out the tasks of the field experience. (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.7*)

### **EVALUATION OF FIELD LEARNING**

Two evaluation conferences are held with the student, agency instructor, and the faculty liaison. The standard by which the student is to be compared, by the end of the placement, is that of a social work professional with advanced practice skills to work with socioculturally diverse populations of individuals, families, small groups, agencies and communities. During the midterm and final field evaluations, the agency instructor is asked to rate the student on their social work skills (see below). Evaluations are completed through an online Intern Placement Tracking system (IPT) in which training of and access to is provided to all parties by the field director. The results of the evaluations are shared with the student and faculty liaison. If the student disagrees with the assessment, they will state that disagreement in writing. A meeting between the student, agency instructor, and faculty liaison will be held to discuss any disagreements. At the end of the field experience, students complete a field program evaluation. The field program evaluation is the student's feedback regarding preplacement activities as well as field experiences, and may lead to field experience changes and improvements. (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.7*)

#### **Competency 1–Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

- a. Identify and demonstrate ethical practices, including maintaining physical, interpersonal, spiritual, emotional, and psychological boundaries for clients and client systems, face-to-face and virtual, and demonstrate the ability to assess and address barriers to safety for clients across the lifespan.
- b. Practice in self-reflection, self-regulation strategies, and self-care practice including reflective trauma-responsive supervision to prevent and address secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout in self and organization to enhance effective practice, policies, and research that considers ethical decision making related to trauma.
- c. Demonstrate understanding of personal trauma-related history and their positionality as well as clients' experience of trauma as it relates to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.

#### **Competency 2 –Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

- a. Develop and demonstrate cognitive self-awareness and affective self-regulation in response to the influence of personal biases and values in working inclusively with clients and constituencies.
- b. Demonstrate the meaning of trauma and responses for individuals, families, and cultural and societal groups into all levels of social work practice grounded in cultural humility.
- c. Implement trauma-informed principles of care, advocating for policies and trauma-sensitive services at the individual, organizational, and societal levels that are responsive to those underrepresented and oppressed in society.

**Competency 3 –Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

- a. Understand and apply the intersectional knowledge between human rights frameworks and the principles of trauma-informed care with individuals, families, communities, and the workforce across micro, mezzo, and macro practice.
- b. Implement and encourage practices and policies that facilitate empowerment, resilience, and posttraumatic growth.

**Competency 4 –Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

- a. Understand the impact of trauma on brain structures and biological processes, including impairments in memory, cognition, attachment, affect regulation, and long-term somatic responses and apply to practice.
- b. Understand that ongoing neurobiological maturation and neural plasticity create continuing opportunities for recovery and adaptive developmental progress and apply in practice.
- c. Use trauma-relevant theory and the research literature to inform and conduct scientific inquiry and trauma research.

**Competency 5 –Engage in Policy Practice**

- a. Engage in the policy proposal process to amend policies across levels and fields of practice that are counter to the principles of trauma-informed practice or that retraumatize, victimize, or oppress.
- b. Advocate for trauma-informed policies to increase access and enhance service delivery, including self-care and other provisions for social workers affected by trauma.

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

- a. Synthesize and apply relevant theories of trauma and recovery in therapeutic relationships, organizational culture, and systems of care.
- b. Use a range of interventions to address underlying motivations that influence help-seeking and help-rejecting behaviors, in a variety of contexts (e.g., from micro to macro) that affect engagement.
- c. Demonstrate attention to nonverbal behaviors and cues, emotional dysregulation, and wariness of institutions that impede the establishment of a therapeutic alliance.

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

- a. Assess organizational policies for their potential to strengthen trauma-informed evidence-based programs and practices and evaluate organizational readiness to engage in such change.
- b. Practice micro- and macro-level trauma-informed assessment skills that explore and examine the effects of all types of trauma, trauma context, and history of trauma exposure and assess for risks, strengths, protective factors, and development of trajectory.

**Competency 8 –Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

- a. Use strategies to establish a sense of safety, identification of strengths and resiliency for a collaborative therapeutic relationship.

- b. Critically select and implement developmentally and culturally appropriate trauma-informed evidence-informed interventions in conjunction with practitioner expertise and client preferences to address the adverse consequences of trauma.
- c. Advocate for the advancement of trauma-informed organizational systems of care.

**Competency 9 –Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

- a. Recognize and practice the key characteristics of a trauma-informed organization.
- b. Systematically evaluate processes and outcomes related to trauma-informed practice.
- c. Apply assessment and evaluation measures when working with diverse client systems.

Field assessments are based upon how well the social work student demonstrates ability in each of the following 9 competency areas using the rating scale shown below. The standard by which the student is to be compared, by the end of the placement, is that of a social work professional with advanced practice skills to work with socioculturally diverse populations of individuals, families, small groups, agencies and communities. The 9 competencies specified in this assessment form are those established by our national accrediting organization, the Council on Social Work Education.

While the agency instructor/supervisor is asked to rate student’s social work skills according to criteria as it is appropriate to their agency setting, the faculty liaison has responsibility of assigning credit or no credit for field instruction. The credit or no credit assigned is based on the faculty liaison’s overall assessment of the student’s performance in the field placement in conjunction with the agency instructor’s assessment and other submitted materials such as student logs, seminar participation, and written work that integrates the agency field experience with classroom instruction.

5	Very Good - student far exceeded the necessary requirements in an exceptional manner
4	Good - student exceeded the necessary requirements in a favorable and reliable manner
3	Satisfactory/Meets Expectations - student met the necessary requirements in a fully sufficient, suitable, and/or fit manner
2	Unsatisfactory - student does not meet the necessary requirements in a sufficient, suitable, and/or fit manner
1	Very Unsatisfactory - student displays unacceptable skills
n/a	Not applicable - student has not had the opportunity to demonstrate competence in this area. If an n/a is used during the midterm, please comment on when the student will have the opportunity to demonstrate the practice behavior. There should be no n/a on the final assessment.

**GRADING**

Credit/No Credit: Field instruction is taken on a credit or no credit basis. The faculty liaison is

responsible for awarding the credit or no credit. No letter grade is given. Assessment of student's agency performance will be based on online evaluations completed by the agency instructor twice during the field experience.

Graded: In addition to completing field satisfactorily, students will be graded on their completion required assignments (i.e. Summaries of Learning, Agency Presentation, Seminars).

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTING A FIELD SITE**

Social Work knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are exclusive to Social Work. Some elements of this constellation are shared by related professionals and may provide an appropriate setting for a master-level social work field placement experience. The general criteria for the selection of a field experience placement setting is that it provides an opportunity for the student to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values important for advanced work with socioculturally diverse populations of individuals, families, small groups, agencies and communities. The field director approves agency settings as field placement sites using, but limited to, the specific criteria below:

1. Provides case and program responsibility for students in placement;
2. Directly serves clients (individuals, families, groups and communities) and allows the student to learn about the needs and problems of people through social interaction with clients, peers, and other professionals;
3. Has the potential for developing a field experience with diversity of methodology and interventive strategies that reflect the generalist approach in Social Work education and core competencies;
4. Provides the student with an opportunity to complement Social Work curriculum content and reinforce classroom learning;
5. Is interested in and accepts the objectives of the Department of Social Work and will work cooperatively with it;
6. Demonstrates interest in students and their professional development; and
7. Expose students to social services and health systems, their relationship to other systems, and to the needs for change in systems or development of new systems.
8. Has been in operation for at least one (1) calendar year.

*(Accreditation Standard 2.2.7)*

### **PROCESS FOR APPROVING A FIELD SITE**

Potential field sites are brought to the attention of the field director. The field director and agency personnel authorized to approve field experiences for social work interns complete an agency profile, which highlights the site's mission, population served, programs where the student may be placed, point of contact for interested students, point of contact for field supervision, supervision requirements, what type of intern the agency can support, typical field placement working days and hours, transportation requirements, and brief examples of internship experiences for the type of social work student(s) the site is approved to support. Once the site is approved and the site has been in operation for at least one (1) calendar year, it is placed on the listing of approved sites shared with social work intern students.

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTING AN AGENCY INSTRUCTOR**

Agency instructors, employed by community agencies, are selected by the agency on the basis of their practice competence and their positive approach to a social work education. Agency instructors for MSW Foundation field students are to hold a graduate degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program, plus have at least two years of post-degree experience in the field. For those agency instructors with graduate degrees in a like field, the faculty liaison will have an enhanced role with the field student to ensure the planning, experiences, supervision and evaluation of the student has a social work focus.

The agency instructor meets with the student every other week and participates in midterm and final evaluations. The agency instructors are the linchpins around which the whole program revolves. Although they do not have University appointments, the contributions they (and their agencies) make to Social Work education is incalculable. Further criteria for selection of appropriate agency instructors include:

1. Interest in the professional Social Work education of students;
2. Ability to instruct and supervise students;
3. Perception of learning as a process of developing confidence and independent judgment in the student, and allowing increasing responsibility and authority to the student in accordance with their demonstrated competence; and
4. Exhibit attitudes and values important in the delivery of services and the Social Work profession.

### **INTERNATIONAL FIELD PLACEMENTS**

Per 3.14 International Study Programs policy, any UNI student involved in a university-related activity abroad, must register with the UNI Study Abroad office. Please refer to the UNI Study Abroad Center's website at [www.uni.edu/studyabroad](http://www.uni.edu/studyabroad) for information regarding application fees, program fees, health insurance requirements and individual safety issues.

### **EMPLOYMENT BASED PLACEMENTS**

Students are able to complete the field experience requirement at the agency in which they are currently employed. Student field assignments and employment tasks may be the same and counted toward required field hours if the tasks have clear links to the social work competencies, including any competencies added by the program, and their related behaviors.

There are two pathways for this option:

1. With the student's place of employment where field experiences are different from employment duties. If the employment supervisor is used for field supervision, supervision time for field education learning must be separate from supervision time for employment. The agency, field experiences and the supervisor have to be approved by the UNI Social Work Field Office.
2. With the student's place of employment, using the employment duties as the field experience. If the employment supervisor is used for field supervision, supervision time for field education learning must be separate from supervision time for employment. The agency, field experiences and the supervisor have to be approved by the UNI Social Work Field Office.

While these options are permissible, each program has the autonomy, authority, and discretion to develop its own policies regarding field placements in an organization in which the student is

also employed. Students who are interested in exploring whether their agency of employment can be used for their field experience need to reach out to the field director as documentation is required to ensure all accreditation requirements are satisfied. If the employment status of the student would be disrupted, student will work with the field director to secure another approved field placement experience to satisfy the field experience requirement. This disruption may impact the timely manner in which the student can complete the field placement requirements and/or may delay the intended graduation date. (*Accreditation Standard 3.3.7*)

### **DOCUMENTATION/PROOF OF COVERAGE**

Field sites may conduct a background check on students prior to offering an internship position or request that one is conducted and submitted to their agency. Certain field sites, like hospitals and health care centers, may require proof of professional liability insurance, health insurance, health checks and/or certain immunizations, and/or specialized trainings (e.g., occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens, basic cardiac life support skills). If a student is required to transport clients, whether in their own vehicle or agency vehicle, proof of care insurance may be requested. Unless the field site is going to provide for these requirements, it is the responsibility of the student, including covering the cost, to satisfy them.

It is recommended that students inquire about background checks, health care checks, professional liability coverage and/or specialized training that is required of the student for placement. Resources regarding how to obtain those required documents on campus at a reduced rate or in the community can be found online at [www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction](http://www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction) or through consultation with the field director.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF DIRECTOR OF FIELD INSTRUCTION**

**ROLE DEFINED:** The field director has oversight of the field program. The person in this role is responsible for the administration of the field program which includes planning the program, development of placement processes, advising students, maintaining the field manual and field forms, and placing students in appropriate agencies. The responsibilities of the field director include, but are not limited to:

- Approve field sites which meet the criteria for the placement of a UNI social work student.
- Approve field site supervisors who meet the criteria for the placement of a UNI social work student.
- Provide orientation activities for students, faculty liaisons and agency instructors to ensure all requirements of the field experience are understood, followed and supported. (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.10*)
- Collaborate with UNI's Graduate College to offer resume building consultation for students.
- Meet with field students during the pre-placement process to consult on pre-placement requirements and field sites.
- Manage the prefield paperwork and maintain the student's field folder until the student is assigned to a faculty liaison.
- Maintain the Intern Placement Tracking system (IPT) so students have access to

approved field site profiles, and all parties have access to field evaluations.

- Consult with field students, agency instructors and faculty liaison before, during and after the field experience to assist with creating learning plans, field questions, troubleshoot issues, provide resources, and if needed, secure an alternative placement. (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.10*)
- Administer field program evaluations at the end of the field experience for continuous improvement activities. (*Accreditation Standard 2.2.7*)
- Ensure field paperwork is filed in the student's cumulative folder.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF AGENCY INSTRUCTOR**

**ROLE DEFINED:** The agency instructor is the individual at the agency who met criteria for supervising an undergraduate social work student and agrees to provide primary supervision throughout the field experience. The responsibilities of the agency instructor include, but are not limited to:

- View the Agency Instructor Orientation video found at [www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork](http://www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork).
- Provide a thorough orientation to the policies and practices relevant to the student, to include but not limited to personnel issues, personal safety issues, guidelines for home visits, transportation requests, and specialized training needed to carry out the tasks of the field experience.
- Develop, in consultation with the student, a learning plan that includes the required field learning experiences for graduate level social work field students. Provide experiences which will give students exposure to all facets of the agency. As the student shows growth in learning and development of self-awareness, assignments should increase and reflect recognition of this growth.
- Provide supervision meetings every other week with the social work field student.
- Complete field assessments and meet with faculty liaison for scheduled meetings (two per placement).
- Allow student to attend field seminars.
- Review the following expectations with the social work field student:
  - How differences or conflicts are to be handled.
  - How variations in field placement time will be handled (for example, university breaks).
  - Method and person to contact if student is requesting time off for health or personal issues.
  - Guidelines the student should follow in relating to other staff, administration, board members, other agencies, and the community in general.
- Assist the student with coping appropriate with the emotional impact of the social work role.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF FACULTY LIAISON**

**ROLE DEFINED:** The faculty liaison is assigned to oversee the field experience, is responsible for the student, and maintains close contact with the student and agency instructor throughout the placement. The responsibilities of the faculty liaison include, but are not limited to:

- Contacts the student and agency instructor to inform them of their role as faculty liaison and shares field course syllabus.
- Oversees completion of and assigns credit to all field assignments and requirements.
- Consults on and approves the student's learning plan.
- Monitor's student progress in placement and oversee adjustments in learning plans,



assignments, expectations, etc....

- Facilitates field seminars throughout the field experience.
- Notifies field director regarding changes in supervision or field issues that require attention.
- Engages in at least 2 agency meetings (on site if local, remote if out of area) during the field experience.
- For cases in which an agency instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree or does not have the required experience, the liaison engages in an additional agency meeting at the onset of the field placement to assist with the learning plan and provides additional supervisor sessions to the student (usually after field seminars) to reinforce a social work perspective. (*Accreditation Standard M2.2.9*)

### **\*RESPONSIBILITY OF FIELD STUDENT**

**ROLE DEFINED:** The field student has met criteria to participate in the field experience. The responsibilities of the student include, but are not limited to:

- Attend a field orientation session as arranged by the field director and complete all preplacement activities by the deadline.
- Use the IPT system to search for field experiences that match their educational and professional goals, and contact the agency to set up the interview. Conduct themselves as professionals during agency interviews and, once accepted at a field site, during the field placement.
- Report directly to the agency instructor assigned regarding field experiences, responsibilities, and agency policies.
- Continually review, internalize and adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics, school policies and agency expectations.
- Complete all field requirements, including hours, supervisory sessions, learning plan, summaries of learning, seminar attendance, evaluations, and all duties assigned by agency instructor.

\*Failure to adhere to these responsibilities may result in the student not receiving credit for the field course.

### **PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING FIELD PLACEMENT CHALLENGES**

Sometimes during a field placement, issues arise that need to be addressed. It is important to address issues early on and resolve issues in a professional manner. The steps below highlight the process in place for addressing issues.

#### ***Process for the student if they have an issues with the field expectations or supervision:***

Step 1: Student consults with Agency Instructor

Step 2: Student consults with Faculty Liaison

Step 3: Faculty Liaison consults with Field Director

#### ***Process for the student if they have an issue with their faculty liaison:***

Step 1: Student consults with Faculty Liaison

Step 2: Student consults with Social Work Department Head

#### ***Process for the Agency Instructor if they have an issues with the field student:***

Step 1: Agency Instructor consults with Student

Step 2: Agency Instructor consults with Faculty Liaison

Step 3: Faculty Liaison consults with Field Director

Agency supervisors will address any conduct issues with students placed at their agency. If the conduct issues continue, the agency supervisors will notify the faculty liaison assigned to the student. If the conduct issues continue, the faculty liaison can determine if the field director needs to be brought in to assist with the issues through a support plan, or if the student needs to be placed at another site. If a support plan is put into place and the student's conduct continues to be problematic and not aligned with the Social Work program's mission, values and ethics, UNI Academic Ethics/Discipline Policy (<http://www.uni.edu/policies/301>), and/or UNI Student Code of Conduct Policy (<http://www.uni.edu/policies/302>), the student may be counseled out of the program. Students may reach out to UNI's Office of Compliance and Equity Management for guidance and support at any point during this process (117 Gilchrist Hall, (319) 273-2846).

## **SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY RESOURCES & POLICIES**

### **Department Procedures for Resolving Student Academic Issues**

**Field:** If a student is displaying academic issues in field, the instructor of the course will work directly with the student to address those issues. If the academic issues continue, the instructor of the course will consult with department faculty during faculty case consultation sessions that are held after curriculum committee team meetings. This session is an opportunity for the instructor to consult with faculty about student successes, concerns, and how to best support them. The instructor can also refer the student to various University support programs, which can include but are not limited to: UNI Rob Library, The Learning Center Services, Student Accessibility Services, Office of Compliance and Equity Management, Student Health Clinic, Counseling Center and Student Wellness Service.

### **Department Procedures for Resolving Student Conduct Issues**

**Field:** Agency supervisors will address any conduct issues with students placed at their agency. If the conduct issues continue, the agency supervisors will notify the faculty liaison assigned to the student. If the conduct issues continue, the faculty liaison can determine if the field director needs to be brought in to assist with the issues through a support plan, or if the student needs to be placed at another site. If a support plan is put into place and the student's conduct continues to be problematic and not aligned with the Social Work program's mission, values and ethics, UNI Academic Ethics/Discipline Policy (<http://www.uni.edu/policies/301>), and/or UNI Student Code of Conduct Policy (<http://www.uni.edu/policies/302>), the student may be counseled out of the program. Students may reach out to UNI's Office of Compliance and Equity Management for guidance and support at any point during this process (117 Gilchrist Hall, (319) 273-2846).

### **Department Policy on Incompletes**

A grade of “incomplete” is generally to be discouraged and only employed when faculty conclude that a student is unable to complete assigned course work due to extenuating circumstances. Course requirements that are appropriate for incompletes include, but are not limited to, the requirements in the final 1/6 of the course, final assignments/assessments, and

signature assignments. This is not intended for work assigned in the first 12 weeks of the semester. Students must request the course extension in writing to the course instructor. A time frame for completing the course work that is acceptable to both the student and faculty must be agreed upon. It is recommended that this time frame not extend beyond two weeks after the formal course end date. An “I” may convert to an “F” if the incomplete is not resolved by the due date agreed upon. An instructor is under no obligation to accept work from a student after the mutually agreed upon time frame. It is the instructor’s decision whether to re-negotiate the agreement. As in all matters related to grading, an instructor’s decision about a grade-related matter is final.

See also the information relating to incompletes in the current UNI Academic Catalog found at <https://catalog.uni.edu/generalinformation/academicregulations/> under *Policies Regarding Course Grades of Incomplete*.

### **UNI Rod Library**

Rod Library faculty and staff can help you be successful with research assignments, so take advantage of their free services. Each department has a designated librarian to support your needs. **Anne Marie Gruber** is our liaison librarian for this course. You are encouraged to make appointments with her at <https://uni.libcal.com/appointments/AMG> and she can be reached at [anne.gruber@uni.edu](mailto:anne.gruber@uni.edu) or (319) 273-3711. She also holds weekly office hours in McCollum and Sabin Halls. Here is a link to the library's guide for [insert subject or course guide name]: [insert link]

Librarians can help you with:

- Getting started by finding and narrowing a topic/research question
- Searching for a book, article, or data to support your paper, poster, or other project
- Tips and tricks for finding resources as well as using library databases and Google efficiently
- Evaluating search results and sources for the most relevant and reliable sources
- Citing sources and creating your bibliography

You can also stop by, chat, email, text, or call the library all hours the library is open. ([www.library.uni.edu/research/ask-us](http://www.library.uni.edu/research/ask-us)).

### **The Learning Center @ Rod Library**

The Learning Center @ Rod Library provides free tutoring for a variety of different areas (i.e. writing, math, science, business, Spanish, college reading and learning strategies). The Learning Center @ Rod Library is open for walk-in assistance Monday-Thursday 10am-10pm and is free of charge for all UNI students. If you are unavailable during normal tutoring hours, online tutoring is also available through Smarthinking. You will need your CATID and passphrase to gain access. To access the Smarthinking platform go to <https://tlc.uni.edu/online>. For more information, go to <https://tlc.uni.edu>, email [TheLearningCenter@uni.edu](mailto:TheLearningCenter@uni.edu), call 319-273-6023, or visit the TLC desk located on the main floor of Rod Library.

### **UNI Web Site Accessibility Guideline**

The University of Northern Iowa endorses the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) as the standard for World Wide Web accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. <http://www.uni.edu/resources/disability>

### **Student Accessibility Services**

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) supports the campus community with ensuring an accessible educational environment for students with disabilities. The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Students with disabilities experiencing a barrier to access should connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to request accommodations. SAS views disabilities as an integral part of the rich diversity at UNI and works collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff to create an accessible educational environment for students. UNI faculty are not obligated to provide accommodations for students with disabilities without proper notification from SAS and the student. Students may initiate the accommodation process at any time. However, accommodations are not retroactive, and the process for getting connected takes time. Therefore, SAS staff always recommends that students initiate the process as soon as possible rather than wait for academic and social-emotional responsibilities to become overly stressful and/or overwhelming. Information is also available at [sas.uni.edu](http://sas.uni.edu). For the safety of our students and staff members, SAS encourages students, faculty, and staff to connect with our office virtually for appointments through Zoom or over the phone. If a student has any questions or concerns at any point in the semester, please contact SAS at (319) 273-2677 Relay 711 or [accessibilityservices@uni.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uni.edu). A member of the SAS team will be available throughout the week to answer phone calls and respond to emails. For questions related to COVID-19, please visit the SAS COVID-19 Questions page.

### **Blackboard Accessibility Statement**

Blackboard® is fully committed to ensuring that our platform is usable and accessible. Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). For more information, please see <http://access.blackboard.com/> and <https://uni.edu/elearning/newelearning-system-ada-compatible>

### **UNI Academic Ethics/Discipline Policy**

Students at the University of Northern Iowa are required to observe the commonly accepted standards of academic honesty and integrity. <http://www.uni.edu/policies/301>

### **UNI Student Code of Conduct Policy**

The university's student conduct code maintains the principles of respect, honesty, and responsibility to create a safe, healthy environment for members of the campus community while preserving an educational process that is consistent with the mission of the University. <http://www.uni.edu/policies/302>

## **Office of Compliance and Equity Management**

The University of Northern Iowa does not discriminate in employment or education. Visit 13.03 Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination Statement (<https://policies.uni.edu/1303>) for additional information.

### **Procedures for Termination**

**Termination Based on Academic Performance:** Undergraduate students at the University of Northern Iowa are expected to meet academic standards set by the university and to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress towards earning a degree. Academic Alert and Academic Probation serve to warn students that unless their academic performance improves, they may be placed on Academic Suspension. This policy can be found at <https://registrar.uni.edu/students/academic-standing/undergraduate>

The University's Undergraduate Academic Standing Policy highlight the procedures for Academic Alert, Academic Probation, Academic Suspension, Readmission After Suspension. Following a second suspension, the student will be permanently academically suspended if their UNI term GPA is less than a 2.00. The procedures can be found at <https://registrar.uni.edu/students/academic-standing/undergraduate>.

**Termination Based on Professional Performance:** The University has established disciplinary procedures for any student who intentionally commits, attempts to commit, or incites or aids others in committing acts of misconduct. The policy can be found at <https://policies.uni.edu/303>.

The Undergraduate program provides a case consultation process to address student professional performance in the classroom and in field. If student professional performance issues interfere with the student's, other student's abilities to successfully complete the program, and/or the instructor's ability to teach the course, a remediation process is initiated.

At the University level, any student who is found, after appropriate hearing, to have violated any of the rules of personal conduct may be sanctioned up to and including suspension, expulsion or dismissal. The procedures can be found at <https://policies.uni.edu/303>.

The Undergraduate's remediation procedures include a meeting between the student and course instructor (if a classroom issue) or agency instructor (if a field issue) with an action plan to support the student and resolve the issue(s). Step 2 involves a meeting between the student, course instructor and department head (if a classroom issue) or agency instructor (if a field issue) with an action plan developed to support the student and resolve the issue(s). Step 3 involves a meeting between the student and department head (if a classroom issue) or field director (in a field issue) to review lack of progress and alternatives to a social work degree. For field specific issues, an alternative field site may be an option in certain situations prior to be counseling out of the program.

Student supports may include, but are not limited to, classroom or field accommodations, remediation sessions focused on academic and/or performance issues, referrals to the UNI Counseling Center, referrals to Student Accessibility Services, and referrals to the UNI Learning Center.

### **Student Academic Grievance Policies and Procedures**

UNI provides a process for the redress of academic grievances for graduate and undergraduate students within the framework of academic freedom, the integrity of the course, and the prerogative of the faculty to assign grades. The policies and procedures can be found at <https://policies.uni.edu/1201>.

### **Student Personal Conduct Appeals**

Students may reach out to UNI's Office of Compliance and Equity Management (117 Gilchrist Hall, (319) 273-2846) for guidance and support at any point during the process of evaluation personal conduct issues that are in direct conflict with professional standards outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics for practicing social workers. The University has a process for appealing a decision reached by a Student Conduct Administrator. The process can be found at <https://policies.uni.edu/302> under G. Appeals.

### **UNI Student Health Clinic**

016 Student Health Center  
(319) 273-2009

General Medical Care, Routine Health Exams, Injury Evaluations, Immunizations, Coordination of Care for Chronic Medical Issues, Resource Nurse, [Psychiatric Services](#), [Travel Consultations](#), [Allergy Injections](#), [Lab Testing](#), [Sexual Transmitted Disease \(STD\) Testing](#), [Eating Disorders Management](#), [Women's Health Services](#), [Pharmacy](#)

### **Absences Related to Illness**

Instructors are to clearly state their policy regarding accommodations for illness-related student absence in their syllabi, and to work with students to determine appropriate accommodations in such cases. Students are encouraged to follow CDC guidance when they suffer illness or exposure. Additionally, the CDC website provides guidance regarding when and how to [wear a protective mask](#), as well as when and how to [quarantine and isolate](#) when ill or exposed

### **Counseling Center**

103 Student Health Center  
(319) 273-2676

Mental health counseling, assessment, referral, groups, workshops, consultations.

### **Student Wellness Service**

(319)273-2311

Student Wellness Services provides outcome-based health education programming, services and resources to meet the health and wellness needs of our unique student population based on the UNI National College Health Assessment. The office offers wellness coaching, wellness workshops, as well as health education and screenings.

### **Sexual Assault & Relationship Violence Support**

There is free, confidential help on campus available to students who have been sexually assaulted or have been or are victims of physical/emotional abuse, stalking or harassment. For

help and assistance due to sexual assault, contact the Riverview Center at (563) 231-1285. Additionally, 24-hour Sexual Assault Support is available at (888) 557-0310. 24-hr Relationship Violence Support is available at (800) 208-0388. Additional resources may be found at [safety.uni.edu](http://safety.uni.edu).

### **Panther Pantry**

The Panther Pantry strives to ensure that every UNI student is able to get their basic food and necessity needs met. They offer both perishable and nonperishable items for any currently enrolled UNI student facing food insecurity. More information can be found on their website: [www.pantherpantry.uni.edu](http://www.pantherpantry.uni.edu). Lower Level Maucker Union, Open Monday-Wednesday 12:30-4:00 and Thursday 2:30-6:00

### **Panther Plot**

The Panther Plot is a UNI-student run garden. Produce from the garden is available to volunteers. More information is available on their website: [www.sustainability.uni.edu/panther-plot](http://www.sustainability.uni.edu/panther-plot). Contact: Kara Poppe at [poppekc@uni.edu](mailto:poppekc@uni.edu) or Kelsey Ewald at [kewald@uni.edu](mailto:kewald@uni.edu)

*Direct field manual questions to:  
Jenny Becker, Director of Field Instruction  
1227 West 27th Street  
Field Office - Sabin Hall 241  
Cedar Falls, IA 50614  
Ph: 319.273.7881  
[jennifer.becker@uni.edu](mailto:jennifer.becker@uni.edu)*