Dear Student,

“Be a student as long as you still have something to learn, and this will mean all your life.” - Henry L. Doherty

The University initiated graduate degree programs in 1951 and today, UNI offers over 50 graduate programs leading to degrees. One of these graduate programs is the Masters in Social Work, which started in 2000. Welcome to the field component of the graduate social work curriculum. According to the Council on Social Work Education, field education is the “signature pedagogy” of social work education as it is the central learning tool in the preparation and training of students for the profession. At the University of Northern Iowa School of Social Work, field and class experiences are closely tied and operate in tandem. This manual has been developed to help you understand the policies and procedures of the field education program. Please use this manual to better understand the field program and answer your questions. We wish you a very successful educational experience.

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 School, our students, and the profession.

Sincerely,

Jenny Becker, LISW, Director of Field Instruction
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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 Foundation Field Instruction Manual is the guide that agency instructors, faculty liaisons, and foundation 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.

MSW MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the MSW program is to provide students with a trauma-informed foundation within a generalist perspective that will prepare them for advanced social work practice and leadership. Core values of the program include the inherent dignity, rights, and strengths of all individuals, families, and communities, regardless of social, historical, economic, and cultural contexts. Critical thinking, a fundamental program component, is supported by the promotion of multicultural sensitivity, human rights, and social and economic justice.

NASW CODE OF ETHICS - ETHICAL PRINCIPLES
The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire. Please go to www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction for a complete copy of the NASW Code of Ethics.

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 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 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.
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**PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**MSW Program Goals**

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;

Provide a concentration curriculum built on a professional foundation that prepares students to practice autonomously as advanced level professionals in trauma-informed practice within a wide range of client systems and practice settings;

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;

Promote student understanding of diversity through curriculum that identifies the experiences and needs of vulnerable and oppressed groups while emphasizing resilience and strengths;

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;

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 Foundation Objectives:
- Apply critical thinking skills
- Practice social work values and ethics
- Practice without discrimination, with respect to a variety of differences
- Understand mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
- Apply strategies of advocacy and social change to advance social justice
- Interpret history and current issues of the profession
- Apply knowledge and skills of generalist perspective to practice with systems of all sizes
- Apply evidenced-based theoretical frameworks to understanding individual development and behavior across the life span, between individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Analyze, formulate, influence social policies
- Evaluate and apply research studies to practice
- Evaluate own practice
- Communicate differentially
- Use supervision and consultation
- Function with organization and delivery systems
- Seek necessary organizational change

Course Sequencing
The MSW program at UNI offers a 60 credit hour, two-year curriculum for students without an undergraduate social work degree from a CSWE accredited bachelors' program, and a 34 credit hour minimum specialized practice curriculum for students with a bachelor’s degree from a CSWE accredited bachelors’ program. This manual will address the foundation level MSW student field requirements. An extended programming sequence for each may be developed. The first year of the two year program contains 26 credit hours of foundational social work masters courses, as outlined below. The courses offered in the second year of the two year program and the specialized practice program are identical. Once the foundation year is completed, students can choose an advanced Trauma Informed Practice concentration or a Social Administration concentration. Electives are offered in both concentrations. The MSW program at UNI is a non-thesis program.

The foundation curriculum content consists of 26 credit hours of foundation courses, to include 400 clock hours of field instruction in the spring semester. It includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, and research. The foundation content is required of all students. Those who hold a bachelor’s degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program will have met most of these content requirements. Students without an accredited bachelor’s degree in social work are required to complete the first year of
Foundation courses.

(Fall)
SW6212 Human Behavior and the Social Environment Trauma Informed (3)
SW6216 Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities (3)
SW6214 Social Work Practice I (3)
SW6261 Social Intervention: Policies & Services (3)

(Spring)
SW6218 Introduction to Social Work Research (3)
SW6215 Social Work Practice II (3)
SW6220 Foundation Practicum (4)
SW6221 Foundation Practicum Seminar (4)

*Please refer to MSW Specialized Practice Field Manual for 2nd Year Curriculum

FIELD PLACEMENT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Foundation Placement
The foundation field experience in social work introduces generalist practice experience with individuals, families, small groups, organizations and communities. Students are provided an experience of learning through concrete and practical community-based interactions with clients and practicing professionals. During the field practicum, students are supervised, monitored, and guided by agency instructors as well as Department of Social Work faculty liaisons. Students apply and integrate theoretical knowledge from foundation coursework to direct practice within the context of ethical practice informed by social work values. Emphasis is given to developing professional roles and relationships, applying multi-system assessment and intervention, and integrating systems theory, the problem-solving process, and a strengths-based perspective. Opportunities are afforded the student to practice the skills of social work where diversity, social justice, and attention to at-risk populations are emphasized.

Learning Objectives
The learning objectives for the field experience include:
1. Integrate knowledge, skills, values, practices, and ethics derived from the graduate curriculum in demonstrating professional competencies of generalist social workers.
2. Use supervision, collaboration and continuing education to develop professionally.
3. Identify and evaluate policies, practices, and services that either enhance or interfere with effective delivery of human services and to identify strategies for change.
4. Develop interpersonal and communication skills essential for effective professional social work practice in a practice setting.
5. Develop knowledge of and demonstrate sensitivity in practice to issues critical to culture, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, range of ability, oppression and social justice.
CLEARED FOR FIELD

Prior to starting the field experience, MSW Foundation students must be cleared by the Field Director. This includes the following requirements (Accreditation Standard 2.1.4 – The program discusses how its field education program admits only those students who have met the program’s specified criteria for field education.):

1. Attendance at Field Orientation (Summer Orientation)
2. Resume reviewed by Graduate College (Fall semester)
3. Meeting with Field Director (Fall semester)
4. Good academic standing after 1st semester/Fall courses (GPA 3.0 or better; No more than 6 credits with a C; No completes)
5. Completion of the following prerequisite courses: SW6212 Human Behavior and the Social Environment Trauma Informed; SW6216 Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities; SW6214 Social Work Practice I; SW6230 Injustice and Oppression
6. Secured approved site for Spring field experience (Dec 1st)

CREDIT AND TIME REQUIRED

MSW Foundation students are required to register for 8 credit hours of field instruction, 4 credits for the internship and 4 credits for field seminar. Field students will complete 400 hours at a field site during the Spring semester of their first year, which is approximately 25 hours per week. Students begin their field placement during the first week of classes of the Spring semester and can continue through finals week. Students who want exceptions, such as beginning placement prior to the start of the semester, ending a placement early, or extending placement beyond the end of those semesters, can do so only with the full knowledge and consent of the faculty liaison and agency instructor. Students may complete and count up to five (5) hours of agency orientation activities prior to the start of their field experience. Any more time required over five (5) hours need to be cleared with the field director and faculty liaison.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS, SEMINARS & EVALUATIONS

Foundation Field Assignments
1. Learning Plan due by week 3 of the field experience (credit/no credit)
2. Summaries of Learnings sent to faculty liaison and shared with agency instructor (graded component)
3. Attendance at seminars lead by your faculty liaison (graded component)
4. Seminar Presentation on Agency (graded component)
5. Log of hours (credit/no credit)
6. Evaluations: Self-efficacy, field program, midterm and final field evaluations (credit/no credit)

The Learning Plan
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. A template of the learning plan along with a guide with examples can be found at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction.

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 foundation 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.

**Summary of Learning**

The student completes weekly summaries of learning throughout the field experience, which is a reflection of how the experiences in the field placement connect to classroom learnings. The student shares the summary of learning with their faculty liaison and agency instructor. The content of the summary of learning includes field hours worked to date, knowledge, competencies, behaviors, and connections made during the reporting period. This is a graded component of the field experience. A template of the Foundation Summary of Learning can be found at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction.
**Field Seminars**

Students are required to participate in an on campus integrative seminar scheduled throughout the field experience. Designed to help students integrate their coursework learning with their experiential learning in the field practicum, the integrative seminar is taught by the faculty liaison who remains in communication with the students' agency instructors on issues pertaining to the students' field experience. Through class discussions, process recordings, case presentations, and reflective journals, students learn about professional social work practice with an emphasis on critical thinking, self-awareness, ethics and values, and culturally responsive practice with an emphasis on human rights and social justice.

Seminars allow students in diverse field placements an opportunity to share information and personal observations with one another, and to support each other’s effort to integrate course learning with practice experience. It is a time for additional educational learning and reflection. Seminars serve as an integral part of the field placement experience, providing students with further guidance and assistance in the integration of theory and practice. Seminars will be held by arrangement with the faculty liaison for no less than a total of 12 contact hours. Seminar topics are at the discretion of the faculty liaison based on the student needs within the seminar grouping, with the exception of the seminar presentation.

Time spent traveling to and from seminars and 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 as well as presentations.

**Seminar Presentation**

Students will present at least once during field seminars. Their presentation will highlight the agency with which the student is placed. This presentation includes information including, but not limited to:

- What are the mission, goals and objectives of your agency?
- How do they fit into the large community?
- How is the agency funded/how are they able to operate?
- Discuss the characteristics of the clients served by the agency: age range, gender, race/ethnicity, economic/educational status, issues and needs, strengths.
- What strategies/interventions are used by the agency to best serve their client's needs?
- Representation of the administrative structure of the agency and the position of your agency instructor in this framework.
- What roles you have been able to observe and/or practice?
**Documentation of Hours**

Students in a foundation field experience must complete no less than 400 hours of agency work. The documentation of hours is a tool used in monitoring advancement toward the completion of the prescribed hours in the field experience. After completion of the field experience, students are required to give the faculty liaison a copy of the documentation of hours form signed by student and agency instructor. An example of this form can be found online at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction.

**Evaluation of Field Learning**

Two evaluation conferences (midterm and end) are held with the student, agency instructor, and the faculty liaison. These evaluations can take place on site, at the University, via phone conference or other method arranged (skype, adobe connect, google chat, etc...). All parties involved must agree to maintain regular contact and address, in a timely and effective manner, any issues or concerns that may arise. The standard by which a student is to be compared, by the end of the placement, is that of a new beginning-level social worker. Foundation level students are expected, through the field experience, to demonstrate the ability to:

- Use knowledge of human behavior and development in the assessment of client functioning.
- Use social work values in their practice and adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Assess client needs and resources and choose the appropriate interventions in helping clients meet their needs.
- Develop constructive professional relationships with clients, agency staff, and community contacts.
- Participate in evaluating their practice experience.
- Work with diverse populations and address problems related to racism, sexism, ageism, and other forms of oppression and discrimination that affect the well-being of clients.

It is recommended that the agency instructor complete the midterm and end evaluations with the student's input, whether they complete the evaluation together or the evaluation is shared with the student after the agency instructor completes it on their own. The results of the evaluation is then shared with the faculty liaison at the time of the field visit. Once the student, agency instructor and faculty liaison agree upon the ratings and comments, the student indicates their agreement on the evaluation form and all parties sign off on the evaluation.

If the agency instructor does not have an MSW, but rather possesses a master's degree in a field that is related to social work, an additional agency contact will be made at the onset of the field placement and the faculty liaison will assist with developing the learning plan as needed along with the student and agency instructor to ensure that the social work perspective is evident in terms of social justice, policy and advocacy work as it relates to the student's field experience.
The Social Work Department utilizes an online system for completing field evaluations. Students are provided access to the IPT system after they attend a field orientation meeting. Faculty liaisons are provided access when they are assigned liaison duties during a certain semester. Agency instructors are provided access when they agree to supervise a social work intern student. The midterm and end evaluation assess the 9 core competencies and practice behaviors established by the CSWE (Council on Social Work Education). The IPT system is maintained by the field director, therefore all questions should be directed to that individual. A guide to assist agency instructors on completing the field evaluations on their student can be found at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction.

COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION COMPETENCIES

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is a nonprofit national association representing more than 2,500 individual members, as well as graduate and undergraduate programs of professional social work education. Founded in 1952, this partnership of educational and professional institutions, social welfare agencies, and private citizens is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in this country. Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) are used by CSWE to accredit baccalaureate- and masters-level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. As of 2015, there are nine (9) competencies identified through the EPAS for evaluation of social work students. These are used for evaluation purposes in classroom and field education learning. The EPAS competencies and practice behaviors for foundation students are listed below.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. 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;
b. Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
c. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
d. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
e. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
b. Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
c. Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and

b. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;

b. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and

c. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

**Competency 5 – Engage in Policy Practice**

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;

b. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;

c. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and

b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
b. 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;
c. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
d. Elect 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**

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
b. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
c. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
d. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
e. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

**Practice Behaviors**

a. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
b. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
c. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
d. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

**TRAVEL TIME AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING GUIDELINES**

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.” The student **MAY NOT** count time spent in seminars towards their field experience.

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 one hour or more, to and from the training.

**TRANSPORTATION 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.

**GRADING, GPA and TIME LIMITS**

The field experience 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. In addition to completing field satisfactorily (rating of 3 or above) and receiving a recommendation from the agency instructor that student has met the expectations of field placement thus ready for beginning level social work practice, students must also satisfactorily complete required assignments (i.e., Learning Plan, Log of Hours, Summaries of Learning, and Field Program Assessment and Self-Evaluation) and participate in the seminars, which are graded.

A cumulative grade index of 3.00 (B average) must be earned in all courses required for the degree. No more than six (6) semester hours of C credit (C+, C, C-) may be applied toward credit for graduation. When C-range grades on the advisement report exceed the six hour limit, one or more of such courses must be repeated. A course taken to satisfy degree requirements in which a student receives a D+, D, D- F or NC grade will not be considered satisfactory and must be repeated. The original grade for any repeated course will be included in the computation for the Plan GPA, as well as in the overall cumulative GPA.

Time limits on the completion of the MSW degree have been established by the UNI Graduate College. The allotted time to a Master’s degree is seven years from the earliest course applied to the degree. Courses taken more than seven years prior to the granting of the degree cannot be used to meet degree requirements. Any exception to this policy (waiver of recency) is at the discretion of the Associate Dean of the Graduate College (or designee), and a waiver of recency must be obtained prior to resuming work toward the degree.
THE FIELD PLACEMENT PROCESS

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING A FIELD SITE
Social Work knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are exclusive to Social Work. However, some elements of this constellation are shared by related professionals and may provide an appropriate setting for a foundation-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 a beginning generalist social work practitioner. Specific criteria to approve settings are listed below and the field director gives final approval for agency settings to be field placement sites.

1. Provides case and program responsibility for students in placement;
2. Directly serves clients (individuals, families, groups and/or communities) and allows the student to learn about the needs and problems of people through social interaction with clients, peers, and other professionals;
3. Have 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 from EPAS;
4. Provides the student with an opportunity to complement Social Work curriculum content and reinforce classroom learning;
5. Are interested in and accept the objectives of the Department of Social Work and will work cooperatively with it;
6. Demonstrate 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.

FIELD SITE SEARCH
Once the student completes field orientation, they will be provided access to the Intern Placement Tracking system (IPT) in which they can search through approved field placement sites for their field experience. Prior to exploring approved sites, students can review a listing of approved since in the Cedar Valley area at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction under "Field Placement Site in the Cedar Valley" and a list of other sites around the state of Iowa (approved and not approved) at the same link titled "Field Placement Sites for the State of Iowa". If a student wishes for an agency to go through the approval process, they will make a request to the field director in a timely manner.

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 generalist social work
education. Agency instructors for foundation students are to hold a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program or a master’s degree in a like field, plus have at least two years of post-degree experience in the field. For those agency instructors with master’s degrees in a like field, the faculty liaison will have an enhanced role with that agency instructor to ensure the planning, supervision and evaluation of the student has a social work focus.

The agency instructor meets with the student weekly and participates in the midterm and end 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 her/his demonstrated competence; and
4. Attitudes and values important in the delivery of services and the Social Work profession.

**DISTANCE FIELD PLACEMENTS**

Field placements outside the State of Iowa will be considered but need to meet certain conditions and requirements. **For the full-time foundation student, leaving the state or country is not a feasible option unless in the extended enrollment program as full-time students are taking classes on campus during each field experience.** If a distance field placement site does match the student’s program, the field director and student will work collaboratively to identify an appropriate agency. The final decision about the appropriateness of any distance field placements rests with the field director. Distance field placements will go through the same agency approval process as any local agency. This includes any sites that are outside the boundaries of the United States.

For students exploring international sites for their field placement, 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.

**Study Abroad Center Activities and Fees** (http://www.uni.edu/studyabroad/)

1. Study Abroad application fee
2. Study Abroad Fee for summer and for fall or spring semesters. This fee covers assistance in coordinating enrollment, coordinating financial aid opportunities, visa support and scholarship opportunities.
3. Health Insurance (daily rate) for duration of international placement.
4. Individual guidance on safety and security issues involved with immersion in a new and different culture, adjusting to culture shock, and other financial issues.
For any student that has secured a distance field placement site, they are required to complete a Distance Field Placement Request form and sign a Distance Placement Acknowledgment form that states their awareness that the student is responsible for all expenses that are associated with securing living arrangements, transportation to and from the location, ongoing living expenses, and any costs incurred on their behalf relating to the field placement, such as liability insurance, malpractice insurance, background checks and/or specialized training or other required training. In addition, should the distance field placement be disrupted, the student acknowledges the disruption may impact the timely manner in which the student can complete the required field placement experience hours, may result in additional cost/expense to the student, may delay the intended graduation date and/or may result in nonrefundable tuition paid.

*Distance Field Placement Request form and Distance Placement Acknowledgment form can be found online at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction.

**EMPLOYMENT BASED PLACEMENTS**

Students are able to complete field experiences at agencies in which they are currently employed. The agency has to be an approved site for a foundation field experience, the current job responsibilities have to be different than the field experience responsibilities, and the employment supervisor must be different than the field experience supervisor. Students who are interested in exploring whether their agency of employment can be used for their field experience need to complete the "Employment Based Field Practicum Request Application" found online at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction.

**PLACEMENTS AT HOSPITALS/MEDICAL CENTERS**

Increasingly, hospitals and medical centers are requiring that student interns provide proof of liability/malpractice insurance before a placement can begin. In addition, they usually need a completed background check, proof of certain immunizations and specialized training to be completed. During the field placement interview, students need to inquire about required liability coverage, background checks and specialized training (e.g., airborne pathogens, universal precautions). Students who accept internship positions at agencies that require liability/malpractice insurance coverage, immunizations, specialized training, background checks and/or proof of health insurance are financially responsible for obtaining those required documents, unless the agency is willing to do so. 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.

**Liability/Malpractice Insurance Coverage**

UNI does not provide students with liability coverage during the social work field placement. Social work students are strongly urged to have a liability/malpractice insurance policy purchased before they begin their field placement experience. Students can purchase liability coverage for field through NASW's Insurance Trust. The social work department has applications to NASW and the NASW Insurance Trust. Students need to be
NASW members before they can purchase its liability insurance for field placement. This process can take weeks and should therefore, be pursued immediately. Please contact the department’s graduate secretary for these applications.

**Immunizations**
The social work department does not give immunizations nor keep any records of student immunization history. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire about which immunizations are required for the field placement and to secure any ones needed.

**Specialized Training**
Hospitals often want students to have specialized training in medical related matters (for example, occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens and basic cardiac life support skills). The social work department does not provide training or orientation on medical specialized training nor does it keep records on any medical training students may have completed outside the department. Ask the field agency what is required of you.

**Background Checks**
If required, the agency needs to do this or may require the student to gather this information. Ask the agency what system they use to conduct background checks.

**Student Health Insurance**
Hospitals may want proof of student health insurance to cover emergency health care for illnesses or injuries resulting from the field experience.

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**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICA FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICY**
(Adopted February 28, 2001)

Field Instruction is an educational experience and not a work experience, however the Social Work Department at UNI realizes that students often face significant financial hardships while pursuing their university education. Therefore, the department does allow financial support for students in practicum placements. Wherever possible, agencies are encouraged to provide students with parking, mileage reimbursement, and other reimbursement for costs incurred while discharging agency responsibilities related to the field experience. It is important to underscore that in a financially supported field experience, as in all field experiences, final authority for tasks and assignments given to the student, rests with the faculty liaison.

In some circumstances, students would have the opportunity to have their tuition, books, and/or other educational costs paid for through a grant, scholarship, stipend, agency professional development plan or other educationally focused financial support program offered by the university or practicum agency. These funding opportunities are considered acceptable to the Social Work Department in supporting students, and may be a critical factor in enabling students to complete a social work degree. Any financial support proposed by agencies, related to the field experience, will be considered but must meet all
established guidelines set forth by field instruction at UNI. The main purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that educational requirements are met and that agency practices, related to financial support, do not have a negative impact on the educational process of the student. Financially supported field experiences are subject to the following stipulations:

1. Planning and prior approval are required. Requests for financially supported placements are made to the field director. All forms required from the student and agency must be delivered to, and reviewed by, the field director before a decision permitting the financial support can be made.

2. Student fieldwork must be educationally oriented, designed to meet the educational needs of the student and the educational objectives of the Social Work Department, as outlined for field instruction.

3. When an agency proposes a financially supported field experience for a student, the final placement decision rests with, and is controlled by the Social Work Department’s field instruction.

4. The decision to offer financial support, and the amount offered, is entirely up to individual agencies. Some agencies might receive grants that allow them to offer students financial support. Some may have other financial means to offer students financial support; these funds should be paid directly to students as a stipend.

5. Agencies’ ability to offer, or not offer, financial support, will not affect their standing with the Social Work Department as a field placement site. Agencies approved as placement sites need to continue to meet the criteria established for field instruction.

6. Students in financially supported field experience, and agencies providing the support, must conform to all policies, procedures, and expectations outlined for students in field instruction.

7. The student’s learning plan is used throughout the practicum as an educational tool as well as for any issues that may require clarification or problem solving related to student performance or the tasks and assignments given to the students during field work.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**STUDENT:** The responsibilities of the student include:

1. To attend a field orientation session as arranged by the field director and complete all preplacement activities by the deadline provided;
2. To conduct themselves as professionals during their agency internship;
3. To review the Council on Social Work Education core competencies and practices behaviors and to take any action needed to insure understanding;
4. To report for field instruction agency work as required and be prepared to complete responsibly a day’s work;
5. To report directly to the agency instructor in the agency if unable to report for work. To arrange with the agency instructor the rescheduling of hours missed
in order to fulfill the required hours of Field Instruction. Agency holidays, not University holidays, apply;

6. To adhere to all agency regulations and requirements including policies pertaining to sexual harassment;

7. To take initiative and responsibility for learning activities which includes discussing with agency instructor areas of learning in which student would like to engage;

8. To maintain agency records as required;

9. To engage fully and in all activities planned (i.e., visits, conferences, evaluations);

10. To review continually, internalize and adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics, with particular reference to such principles as confidentiality and the client’s right to self-determination;

11. To assess continually the appropriateness of the placement based upon the learning plan, interaction with staff, etc.;

12. To attend the field instruction seminars as arranged;

13. To complete the assignments given by the faculty liaison; and

14. To make her/his own living arrangements. Meals and transportation to and from the agency are also the responsibility of the student.

**AGENCY INSTRUCTOR:** The agency instructor is the individual at the agency who met criteria for supervising a foundation social work student and agrees to provide supervision through the field experience. The responsibilities of the agency instructor include:

1. View/attend agency instructor orientation sessions prior to taking a UNI social work student for their field experience (this orientation can be found at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction);

2. To provide structured and planned orientation activities to the student; to orient the student to the agency's functions, purpose, and structure; to give the student some idea of how the agency fits into delivery of service pattern for the community;

3. To be aware of the "emotional impact of field instruction" and to prepare the student to cope with it; to help the student identify and understand his/her role, to introduce him/her to staff members and make it easy for him/her to feel a part of the agency, to arrange for the student to attend staff meetings, to introduce students to other staff personnel, etc.;

4. To develop, in consultation with the student, a learning plan that includes the required field learning experiences for foundation students;

5. To provide appropriate assignments 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. In agencies where multi-problems are addressed, students should have a balanced load;
6. To provide time for attendance at seminar sessions with University faculty;
7. To provide ongoing evaluation of student. If at any time that student’s level of performance is questionable, to inform the student and the faculty liaison; to contact the faculty liaison in early if there are problems with the student in the agency; and
8. To hold regular instructional sessions with the student, preferably no less than once per week.

FACULTY LIAISON: When the student begins the placement, a 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. Faculty assigned as field liaisons consult on how best to divide students. The responsibilities of the faculty liaison include:

1. Contacts the student and agency instructor to inform them of their role as faculty liaison and to answer questions or concerns they might have;
2. Constructs a syllabus for the field course and identifies appropriate academic reading materials (content), as part of the student learning experience;
3. Inform the agency instructor and student of the field course syllabus;
4. Inform the agency instructor and student of the learning plan contract, its importance and the due date of completion of this document;
5. To monitor student progress in placement and oversee adjustments in learning plans, assignments, etc., where appropriate;
6. To interpret the department’s program and policies to the agency instructor and to relate these to the student’s objectives when the need arises;
7. To teach field instruction seminars for students placed with them. As a part of this responsibility, arrange for remote participation for students placed in distance field placements;
8. To hold evaluation conferences at least twice during the term, typically a mid term and an end conference, with the student and agency instructor;
9. If the agency instructor possesses a master’s degree in a field that is related to social work, the faculty liaison will make an additional agency contact to the agency instructor within the first 3 weeks of the field placement to promote a positive start to the field experience. The faculty liaison will also assist with developing the learning plan as needed along with the student and agency instructor to ensure that the social work perspective is evident in terms of social justice, policy and advocacy work as to relates to the student’s field experience; and
10. To determine credit/no credit for the field experience and the final grade for seminar requirements.

DIRECTOR OF FIELD INSTRUCTION: 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:

1. Securing agencies which meet the criteria for the placement of UNI social work students;
2. Evaluating the appropriateness and adequacy of supervision of students offered by the agency and provide field instructor orientation sessions;
3. Collaborate with UNI’s Graduate College for resume assistance and supports;
4. Presenting orientation sessions to ensure students are familiar with field requirements.
5. Meeting with students, who meet the department’s criteria for field, and work closely with them until a placement is secured;
6. To set up a profile for each student via the Intern Placement Tracking system (IPT), which allows them access to view approved agencies and view field evaluations.
7. To assist in securing an alternative placement, in the event that a placement disruption occurs; and
8. Administer field program evaluations and student self-efficacy evaluations at the end of the field experience.

FIELD PLACEMENT DIFFICULTIES
Sometimes during a field placement, issues arise that need to be addressed. Rather than "walk by a mistake", it is more appropriate to address issues early on and resolve issues in a professional manner.

Student Responsibilities: If difficulties arise in the placement, the student is advised to:
1. Consult with the agency instructor;
2. If the situation is not adequately resolved by consulting the agency instructor, or if the student in good faith, believes she or he cannot approach the agency instructor, student will contact the faculty liaison for guidance.

Agency Instructor Responsibilities: If at any time the student’s level of performance is questionable, the agency instructor is to inform the student and faculty liaison.

Faculty Liaison Responsibilities: If a significant placement disruption occurs, and in the judgment of the faculty liaison a second placement is advisable, the faculty liaison will inform the field director, who will work with the student to secure a second placement. The faculty liaison will inform the student and current agency instructor of a decision to end the placement. It will be up to the faculty liaison as to hours required and what assignments can be waived with the second placement, if applicable.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES (May 2018)
Academic Learning Center Services
You are encouraged to use the Academic Learning Center for free content tutoring as well as for assistance with writing, math, science, and college reading and learning strategies. For more tutoring information, check the Campus Tutoring Services link, unialc.uni.edu/tutor-services, for a searchable page of campus tutoring services; visit the Academic Learning Center’s office located in 008 Innovative Teaching and Technology Center (ITTC); or call 319-273-6023.

Services Available at No Charge for Currently-Enrolled UNI Students: One-on-one writing feedback for all UNI undergraduate and graduate students. Certified Writing Coaches work with students to help them successfully manage all phases of the writing process, from getting started, to citing and documenting, to editing and proofreading. Schedule appointments at 008 ITTC or call 319-273-6023.

**Rod Library Services for Distance Learners**
Access both print and online resources through the comprehensive services offered by UNI’s Rod Library. [http://guides.lib.uni.edu/distance](http://guides.lib.uni.edu/distance)

**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](http://www.uni.edu/resources/disability)

**Student Disability Services**
The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides protection from illegal discrimination for qualified individuals with disabilities. Student should address any special needs or special accommodations with their instructor at the beginning of the semester or as soon as they become aware of their needs. Students requesting instructional accommodations due to disabilities should obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) form from Student Disability Services (SDS). Distance learners who are unable to come to campus should either call the SDS office or send an email to disabilityservices@uni.edu to learn how SDS can adapt the accommodation process to assist distance learners. SDS is located on the top floor of the Student Health Center, Room 103; the phone number is: (319) 273-2677 (for deaf or hard of hearing, use Relay 711); and the website is [http://www.uni.edu/sds/](http://www.uni.edu/sds/).

**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 go to [http://access.blackboard.com/](http://access.blackboard.com/) and [https://uni.edu/elearning/new-elearning-system-ada-compatible](https://uni.edu/elearning/new-elearning-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](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](http://www.uni.edu/policies/302)

**UNI Non-Discrimination Policy**

UNI Policy makes clear: "The University of Northern Iowa adheres to all federal and state civil rights laws banning discrimination in public institutions of higher education. The University prohibits discrimination against any employee, applicant for employment, student or applicant for admission on the basis of any protected class. Protected classes include: age, color, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran or military status, or any other protected category under applicable federal, state, or local law, including protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any complaint process on campus or with other human rights agencies." For additional information, contact the Office of Compliance and Equity Management, 117 Gilchrist Hall, 273-2846.

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. The UNI Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy outlines prohibited conduct and reporting processes. All University employees who are aware of or witness discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or retaliation are required to promptly report to the Title IX Officer or a Title IX Deputy Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

Title IX Officer Leah Gutknecht, Assistant to the President for Compliance and Equity Management, 117 Gilchrist, [319.273.2846, leah.gutknecht@uni.edu](mailto:leah.gutknecht@uni.edu)

Title IX deputy coordinator for complaints against students: Allyson Rafanello, Dean of Students, allyson.rafanello@uni.edu. (319) 273-7153.

Title IX deputy coordinator for complaints involving the Department of Athletics: Christina Roybal, Sr. Associate Athletic Director, Athletics Administration, North DOME, [319.273.2556, christina.roybal@uni.edu](mailto:christina.roybal@uni.edu)

Resources that provide free, confidential counseling are detailed at safety.uni.edu

**Copyright Protection**

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection.

**Panopto Accessibility Statement**

[http://support.panopto.com/documentation/viewing/accessibility-features](http://support.panopto.com/documentation/viewing/accessibility-features)

**Microsoft Products Accessibility Statement**