



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
AT MONTICELLO

University of Arkansas at Monticello

Department of Social Work

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BSW Field Education Handbook
2019-2020 Academic Year

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The University of Arkansas at Monticello Department of Social Work

The Purpose of the Social Work Profession

Per the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE),

the purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person and environment construct, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, social work's purpose is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons. (CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards [EPAS], 2015, pg. 1)

The Practice of Social Work in Arkansas

Per the Arkansas Social Work Licensing Act,

the "practice of social work" means a professional service which effects change in social conditions, human behavior, and emotional responses of individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations. "Social work practice" can only be performed with specialized knowledge and skills related to human development, the potential for human growth, the availability of social resources, and the knowledge of social systems. The disciplined application of social work knowledge and skills includes, but is not restricted to, the following:

1. counseling with individuals, couples, families, and groups for purposes of assessment and enhancement of the problem-solving and coping capacities of people
2. the application of social work knowledge and skills in social planning, administration, and research

(Arkansas Code, Chapter 3, 2009, pg. 2)

The UAM Department of Social Work seeks to provide educational opportunities that exemplify the purpose of the social work education and the practice of social work in the State of Arkansas.

The Nature of Social Work Education

Social work education is based in the liberal arts and consists of a structured and integrated curriculum and applied experiences that are designed to train practitioners to competently apply social work values, theories, and methods to the various social problems encountered by individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social work education is academically and personally challenging. The BSW degree program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello is designed to support the mission of the University of Arkansas at Monticello and reflects the mission and charter of the social work

profession by conforming to the standards set forth by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

The Nature of Generalist Social Work Practice

The UAM social work department chose to define generalist practices as follows:

Generalist social work practice is built upon a foundation in the liberal arts and is a process of using critical thinking skills to competently engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate outcomes with diverse multi-level systems using research-informed knowledge and professional values to enhance individual and community well-being. Generalist social workers are lifelong learners who engage in promoting human rights and advancing social and economic justice in an ever-changing global context.

The BSW degree program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello is designed to prepare generalist social work practitioners and uses the ecological perspective as the theoretical foundation of generalist practice. Generalist social work practice includes the provision of social work services to individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities. Regardless of the population (e.g., children and families, criminal justice, health, mental health, aging, substance abuse, or any other identified population) or level of practice (i.e., micro, mezzo, or macro), social workers seek to promote social and economic justice and to improve the social, psychosocial, or biopsychosocial functioning of individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social work practitioners support individual self-determination and respect the dignity and worth of all people regardless of their age, disability, race, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, national origin, religious or spiritual beliefs/practices, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Social work practitioners advocate for those who have experienced various social problems that cut across cultural groups such as, but not limited to: poverty; crime and victimization; oppression; discrimination; mental illness; substance abuse; chronic physical illness; physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; and neglect. However, given the breadth of the social work profession, social work practitioners also work with those who may not have experienced such social problems. Regardless of the population served, social workers recognize their legal and ethical responsibilities to clients and only provide those services in which they are competent to provide.

Generalist social work practice may include interviewing, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, case management, mediation, counseling, direct practice, information and referral, problem solving, supervision, consultation, education, advocacy, community organization, policy and program development, implementation, and administration.

The BSW Degree Description at UAM

The BSW degree curriculum at the University of Arkansas at Monticello is designed to prepare generalist social work practitioners to work in a variety of areas including, but not limited to: child, adolescent, and family services; health care; mental health care; criminal justice settings; geriatrics;

substance abuse services; and a variety of social service organizations in the community. An emphasis is placed on the ecological perspective, providing students with an understanding of the reciprocal relationship between the person and environment.

The University of Arkansas at Monticello's mission is to create a society of learners committed to individual achievement by:

- Fostering a quality, comprehensive, and seamless education for diverse student learners to succeed in a global environment;
- Serving the communities of Arkansas and beyond to improve the quality of life as well as generate, enrich, and sustain economic development;
- Promoting innovative leadership, scholarship and research which will provide for entrepreneurial endeavors and service learning opportunities;
- Creating a synergistic culture of safety, collegiality and productivity which engages a diverse community of learners.

In addition the University of Arkansas at Monticello has identified the following core values:

- *Ethic of Care:* We care for those in our UAM community from a holistic perspective by supporting them in times of need and engaging them in ways that inspire and mentor.
- *Professionalism:* We promote personal integrity, a culture of servant leadership responsive to individual's needs as well as responsible stewardship of resources.
- *Collaboration:* We foster a collegial culture that encourages open communication, cooperation, leadership and teamwork, as well as shared responsibility.
- *Evidence-based Decision Making:* We improve practices and foster innovation through assessment, research, and evaluation for continuous improvement.
- *Diversity:* We embrace difference by cultivating inclusiveness and respect of both people and points of view, and by promoting not only tolerance and acceptance, but support and advocacy.

The University of Arkansas at Monticello seeks to fulfill its mission and values by identifying the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

- *Communication:* Students will communicate effectively in social, academic, and professional contexts using a variety of means, including written, oral, quantitative, and/or visual modes as appropriate to topic, audience, and discipline.
- *Critical Thinking:* Students will demonstrate critical thinking in evaluating all forms of persuasion and/or ideas, in formulating innovative strategies, and in solving problems.
- *Global Learning:* Students will demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of diversity issues pertaining to race, ethnicity, and gender and will be capable of anticipating how their actions affect campus, local, and global communities.
- *Teamwork:* Students will work collaboratively to reach a common goal and will demonstrate the characteristics of productive citizens.

The BSW Degree Program's Mission Statement

While drawing upon the university's mission, the Department of Social Work more narrowly focuses its mission to reflect the purpose of our profession and its core values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Enhancing individual and community well-being underlies our purpose and our mission of educating BSW students.

Our mission statement is, "To prepare students to be critical thinkers and competent, ethical, generalist social work practitioners who serve and work with and empower vulnerable populations within a diverse, global environment; embrace professional values; advocate for social/economic justice and human rights; and are dedicated to lifelong learning."

Values Underlying the BSW Degree Program

The UAM Department of Social Work BSW degree program supports and accepts the core values of the social work profession, reflecting the six values of the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics that include: service; social justice; the dignity and worth of the person; the importance of human relationships; integrity; and competence. These values provide the foundation for the mission and goals of the BSW degree program and its curriculum (CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards [EPAS], 2015, pg. 10)

The BSW Degree Program's Goals

The UAM Department of Social Work BSW degree program provides a rigorous curriculum grounded in the liberal arts, using sound teaching practices, to promote: 1) the knowledge, values, and skills used in social work that can be applied across settings and diverse populations; 2) critical thinking skills; and 3) ethical and competent social work practice consistent with the mission and objectives of the social work profession. To this end, the goals of the B.S.W. degree program include:

1. To prepare students for ethical generalist social work practice to include an awareness of the profession's global reach.
2. To build upon a student's liberal arts foundation that emphasizes critical thinking.
3. To graduate students who are grounded in the profession's values and ethics.
4. To instill in students a commitment to serve vulnerable populations and to promote social and economic justice.
5. To prepare students for graduate education and to encourage lifelong learning.

The Core Competencies of the BSW Degree Program at UAM

The core competencies (as taken directly from the CSWE's 2015 EPAS) of the BSW degree program at UAM:

EP 2.1.1**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

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

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

EP 2.1.2**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including, but not limited to, age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

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

EP 2.1.3

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

EP 2.1.4

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

EP 2.1.5**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

EP 2.1.6**Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

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

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

EP 2.1.7**Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

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

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

EP 2.1.8**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

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

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

EP 2.1.9

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

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

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

The Philosophy of the UAM Field Education Program: Our Signature Pedagogy

According to CSWE, field education is the signature pedagogy of the social work profession. The CSWE EPAS states,

the purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally. (CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards [EPAS], 2015, pg. 5).

Social Work Field Education Program Goals

The primary goal of field education is to provide students with opportunities to apply generalist social work knowledge and develop skills which reflect the profession's values and ethics with clients at all system levels (micro, mezzo, and macro). The following are the goals of the UAM field education program:

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

The Field Practicum Organizational Structure

The Purpose of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum

The purpose of the field practicum in social work education is to provide opportunities for students to apply social work knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom to real-life situations with clients “in the field”. Students are able to observe the benefits and challenges of working within various organizational settings with diverse client populations. Students are supervised by a professional social worker or related degreed/licensed individual (the Field Instructor or Task Supervisor) in a field agency and by field faculty (Field Education Director) at the university. This dual perspective is intended to facilitate the integration of classroom learning with agency-based practice, and to provide support to students as they engage in this dynamic process. Additionally, field agencies often benefit from the presence of a social work field practicum student (the student in the field practicum); however, the primary focus of the internship is on the learning process for the student.

The Philosophy of the UAM Social Work Practicum

The UAM Department of Social Work BSW degree program utilizes the ecological perspective as the theoretical foundation of generalist practice. The UAM social work department chooses to define generalist practices as follows:

Generalist social work practice is built upon a foundation in the liberal arts and is a process of using critical thinking skills to competently engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate outcomes with diverse multi-level systems using research-informed knowledge and professional values to enhance individual and community well-being. Generalist social workers are lifelong learners who engage in promoting human rights and advancing social and economic justice in an ever-changing global context.

Generalist social work practice includes the provision of social work services with individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This perspective is reinforced through the knowledge, skills, and values content taught in UAM's social work courses.

The Generalist Intervention Model (Kirst-Ashman & Hull), which may be employed with all clients across system levels (individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities) is defined as seen below:

1. Engagement
2. Assessment
3. Planning
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation
6. Termination
7. Follow-up

Students are encourage to further develop their critical thinking skills which enable them to apply this model regardless of the setting or context of practice.

The Structure and Design of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum

The field practicum component of the UAM Department of Social Work BSW degree program requires two semesters of practicum experience (SWK 4674 Social Work Field Practicum I and SWK 4704 Social Work Field Practicum II), consisting of a total of 480 hours. Students must complete 240 clock hours of supervised social work practice experience during SWK 4674 Social Work Field Practicum I and 240 clock hours of supervised social work practice experience during SWK 4704 Social Work Field Practicum II at the same agency, or at a different agency if necessary in the judgment of the Social Work Field Education Director.

Additionally, students are required to complete 2 semester credit hours per week of class instruction (SWK 4252 Field Practicum Seminar I and SWK 4302 Field Practicum Seminar II) in conjunction with the aforementioned Field Practicum Courses. Each Field Practicum Course is worth 4 academic credits. Therefore, students will earn a total of 6 academic credits per semester regarding their Field Education experience.

The class instruction portion of the field practicum is designed to assist the student in transitioning into their placement, integrating classroom learning with the practice setting, developing/revising their learning contract, and providing an opportunity to process weekly placement experiences. In addition to other classroom assignments, students will submit weekly journal entries summarizing their practicum experience from the prior week to share during the classroom time. This will allow students an opportunity to share and process any successes or difficulties they have experienced at their practicum placement and serves to further integrate classroom-based knowledge with their field practicum experience. In summary, the two components of the total field practicum experience consist of a total of 480 clock hours in the field and the 12 semester credit hours in the classroom across two semesters (fall and spring).

Administration of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum Program

The UAM Social Work Field Education Director has the overall responsibility for directing the Field Education Program. The UAM Social Work Field Education Director is responsible for: the development, utilization, and evaluation of field placement agencies; screening and placement of potential practicum students; development, implementation, and evaluation of field practicum policies; development of databases and reporting systems related to field education at UAM; evaluation of practicum program activities; development and evaluation of Field Instructor training; monitoring students' progress in the field; the coordination of faculty which interface with various aspects of the field education program in collaboration with the UAM Department of Social Work's Program Director.

Specific Responsibilities of the UAM Social Work Field Education Director

The UAM Social Work Field Education Director functions as a link between the university, the student, and the field agency. The UAM Social Work Field Education Director monitors and evaluates students' progress and performance in the field and assumes primary responsibility for assigning students' grades for the semester in SWK 4674 Social Work Field Practicum I, SWK 4704 Social Work Field Practicum II, SWK 4252 Field Practicum Seminar I, and SWK 4302 Field Practicum Seminar II. The specific responsibilities of the UAM Social Work Field Education Director include:

1. Serve as the instructor of record of a two semester credit hour Social Work Field Practicum Seminar I class, a two semester credit hour Social Work Field Practicum Seminar II class, a four semester credit hour Social Work Field Practicum I class, and a four semester credit hour Social Work Field Practicum II class integrating social work knowledge, values, and classroom-learned practice skills while supervising social work practice experience across system levels, fostering the implementation of evidence-based practice.
2. Visit field placement sites a minimum of three times during each academic semester including, but not limited to: initial visit to confirm the learning contract; a mid-term evaluation visit; and a final evaluation visit prior to the end of the academic semester. At least two of these site visits must be face to face and take place at the field practicum site.
3. Serve as the student's primary advocate during their field practicum experience.
4. Monitor and evaluate practicum students through weekly assessments reflected in written student journals and time sheets, the appropriateness of student job descriptions and learning plans, and overall review of student performance in the field as reflected in the verbal and written evaluation processes.
5. Provide support and training to agency Field Instructors, task supervisors, and agency leaders in the effective use of supervision with field practicum students, through a four-hour annual orientation held each July, prior to the fall semester.
6. Participate in faculty meetings related to curriculum development and assessment, screening and reviewing field students, and other program planning issues.

7. Communicate with the UAM Department of Social Work's Program Director on student progress in the field, including any problems, issues, or concerns which need to be addressed by the field education program.
8. Investigate, in consultation with the UAM Department of Social Work's Program Director, any student or agency complaints and/or grievances.

The Social Work Community Advisory Committee

The Social Work Community Advisory Committee works in conjunction with the Department of Social Work in evaluating the policies and procedures for the field practicum experience as well as the overall BSW degree program. The committee also provides an additional link and a valuable resource between the Department of Social Work Field Education Program and the community. Based on the members' expertise, it may also provide input into the development of new practicum sites and the review of existing sites. The committee may also provide input on training needs or other appropriate issues related to the UAM social work field education program.

Agency Based Field Education: Field Agencies and Field Instructors

Selection of Participating Agencies

Agency-based field education provides students the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real problems of client systems on all levels. Students, in turn, provide agencies the opportunity to bring new ideas and challenges to service delivery. To become affiliated with the University of Arkansas at Monticello Department of Social Work BSW degree program, agencies must meet the following criteria:

1. The agency's philosophy of service should be compatible with the philosophy, values, and ethics of the social work profession; the primary purpose of the organization (or program) must be to address human needs.
2. Services provided by the agency must be appropriate for undergraduate, generalist social work practice and there must be a sufficient caseload of clients (and work) for students to gain "hands on" experience.
3. There must be availability of appropriate supervision, namely at least one staff member with a BSW or MSW, to serve as the *Field Instructor* for the student. If a BSW or MSW is not available, a staff member with a related degree or related role can serve as the *Task Supervisor* with the Social Work Field Education Director or other University of Arkansas at Monticello social work faculty member providing field instruction supervision. Students working under a *Task Supervisor* will be provided with social work supervision through an assigned BSW Field Instructor from another program within the assigned agency, or from the UAM Department of Social Work Faculty. The *Task Supervisor* and Social Work Field Education Director will work collaboratively in designing student assignments, guiding student activities, and evaluating

student performance. Note: the use of the term *Field Instructor* throughout this manual also applies to *Task Supervisors*.

4. Agencies must support the field education process by providing release time for Field Instructors to carry out field instruction responsibilities and to attend field-related meetings such as field site visits made by the Social Work Field Education Director.
5. Agencies must provide students with adequate work space, office supplies, access to a telephone, transportation or travel reimbursement for travel required by the agency and information regarding transportation policies and liabilities if this is provided to agency employees, and access to client and agency records appropriate for the learning experience.
6. Agencies should not engage in discriminatory practices in the hiring of personnel, the acceptance of students, or the provision of services to clientele regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, disability, age, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.
7. Agencies must agree to participate in various processes of the field education program, including Field Instructor training, periodic agency updates, interviews with prospective field students, communication with the social work field faculty, and site visits.
8. Provide students with an initial orientation to the agency prior to the beginning of the field placement.

Contact regarding a field practicum site may be initiated by the UAM Department of Social Work or the agency. The affiliation process begins with one or more conversations between the agency and the Social Work Field Education Director to determine that the agency meets the above stated criteria. If the agency is deemed appropriate as a practicum site, an agency application form, a data sheet for the Field Instructor(s) and/or task supervisors, and Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) specifying the relationship between the agency and the university are sent to the agency. The Social Work Field Education Director reviews the completed forms, and upon approval of the agency as a field practicum placement site, a Memorandum of Agreement is signed by authorized representatives of both the agency and the university.

Because the University of Arkansas at Monticello students come from such a dispersed geographic base, the university continuously works to have MOA's with a large number of field agencies in order to best meet the needs of the social work field practicum students. Depending upon the number of students in field practicum and their geographic preferences, some agencies may not have students placed with them every semester. However, all active field agencies will receive an Agency Field Practicum Application to be updated every two years in order to provide the Social Work Field Education Director with current information. *Field Instructor* and *Task Supervisor* data sheets should also be updated by each agency whenever staff is hired to or leaves a position.

Responsibilities of Field Agencies

As an approved field agency, affiliates are committed to the educational process of social work students. Through agency experiences and supervision, students have the opportunity to learn and become socialized into the profession of social work. Agencies are expected to provide designated Field Instructors

and other resources stated in the criteria for agency selection above. Field agencies are asked to work cooperatively with the Department of Social Work (and the Social Work Field Education Director) in creative problem-solving and efforts to enhance the learning experience for field practicum students. As an approved affiliate with the UAM Department of Social Work BSW degree program, agencies agree to:

1. Participate in the pre-placement process, which includes completing an interview with prospective field practicum students and providing an assessment of the appropriateness of a respective student for that agency.
2. Provide opportunities for students to participate in agency programs and activities which will enhance the students' learning experience.
3. Appoint appropriate personnel to serve as Field Instructors/Task Supervisors and provide the necessary agency support for Field Instructors/Task Supervisors to provide necessary supervision and attend field orientation and training provided by the UAM Department of Social Work as well as participate in all other field-related functions (supervision, evaluation, conferences, and so forth).
4. Provide students the use of facilities necessary to successfully complete required field assignments, including office space, office supplies, access to a telephone, and access to client and agency records appropriate to the learning experience.
5. Inform the Social Work Field Education Director as soon as possible regarding staff or organizational changes which affect the field practicum placement.
6. Work in partnership with the Social Work Field Education program to maximize the field education of social work students.

Selection of Field Instructors

The *Field Instructor* plays one of the most critical roles in the educational process of the field practicum. In order to be approved by the UAM Department of Social Work as a *Field Instructor*, an agency employee should meet the criteria listed below. Exceptions to any of the following criteria must be granted by the Social Work Field Education Director.

1. BSW or MSW degree from a CSWE accredited social work program, and/or a license in social work from any state or a degree in a related field such as psychology, nursing, or marriage and family counseling.
2. At least one year's experience related to their professional degree, including at least six months of employment at the field agency.
3. The ability to supervise and instruct undergraduate social work students.
4. Acceptance of the generalist social work model and the educational philosophy of the UAM Department of Social Work BSW degree program.
5. Commitment to work cooperatively with the Social Work Field Education Program.

6. Demonstrated professional values, knowledge, skills, and behaviors in relation to clients, agency co-workers, and with social work practicum students that are compatible with the social work profession.

Due to the limited number of BSWs and MSWs in our region, not all field practicum agencies have a professional social worker to directly provide field supervision. However, they do have qualified professionals with either a related degree or the interest, expertise, and ability to provide supervision of social work tasks. In cases where no professional social worker is available to fill the Field Instructor role, such individuals will be identified as *Task Supervisors*, and will be eligible to provide direct oversight of the daily educational activities of the social work field practicum student.

Task Supervisors must be approved by the Department of Social Work Field Education Director based upon their educational background, values and ethics compatible with the social work profession, supervisory ability, understanding of social work education and practice principles, and work experience. *Task Supervisors* without any degree should have a minimum of four years of experience in a related area of practice. Students working under a *Task Supervisor* will be provided with social work supervision through an assigned BSW Field Instructor from another program within the assigned agency, or from the UAM Department of Social Work Faculty. The *Task Supervisor* and Social Work Field Education Director will work collaboratively in designing student assignments, guiding student activities, and evaluating student performance.

Responsibilities of Field Instructors

Field Instructors engage in the dual roles of agency practitioners and social work educators. Since the primary goal of social work field instruction is social work education rather than agency service, the teaching role of the Field Instructor is critical. Conversely, the primary task of the field student is that of learning rather than serving.

The specific responsibilities and duties of the Field Instructor include:

1. *Pre-placement interviews and assessment of prospective students.* Field Instructors are asked to meet with a prospective student to discuss what a practicum at their agency would entail and to assess the student's appropriateness for that setting. Field Instructors are expected to complete a post-interview evaluation form, which provides feedback for placement decisions.
2. *Orientation of practicum students.* Field Instructors are responsible for orienting the assigned field student to their agency. For example, students need to learn about the agency's mission, policies and procedures, expectations regarding work rules, dress codes, and supervision. The most effective form of orientation is participatory; therefore, rather than relying on manuals to orient the student, Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss relevant policies and allow the student to observe first-hand the way in which business is conducted by the agency.
3. *Establishing a learning contract and job description.* Field Instructors are expected to work with the assigned field student in the development of a learning plan and job description for their practicum. Input from the Field Instructor is critical to the identification of realistic and

appropriate expectations for the placement. Ongoing communication with the student about roles, responsibilities, duties, and accountability during the practicum can be facilitated by these instruments.

4. *Supervision of practicum student.* Field Instructors shall provide at least one hour per week of direct face-to-face supervision. While most Field Instructors spend much more time than this each week working directly with students, there is a need for a designated time strictly set-aside for discussing and processing the student's learning needs, identifying strengths and areas for work, updating learning goals, and giving feedback on the student's performance.
5. *Serve as a professional role model.* Field Instructors should reflect and model professional social work values, skills, and behavior. Students are keenly aware of how their Field Instructor interacts with clients, co-workers, and other community contacts. Field Instructors should be open to discussing questions the students may have regarding different communication styles and contexts, agency politics, and balancing "real life" dynamics compared to textbook ideals.
6. *Provide appropriate learning experiences.* Field Instructors should structure the student's learning experience in such a way that the student is exposed to a wide range and variety of opportunities including, but not limited to, direct client contact, agency staffing and staff meetings, board meetings, community meetings, and court hearings. Students should be increasingly challenged in their role and involvement as the semester progresses, beginning with observational roles and working towards direct responsibility for specific experiences intake, intervention, and group facilitation. In addition, the Field Instructor is responsible for coordinating the student's involvement with other agency staff that function in various roles.
7. *Evaluation of the student.* Field Instructors should provide the students with ongoing feedback regarding their work and progress. The evaluation process includes completion of the evaluation form at mid-semester and at the end of the semester. The Field Instructor is responsible for completing the form and discussing it with the student in conjunction with the Social Work Field Education Director's field visits during the semester. The student will complete a self-evaluation as well in order to compare perceptions. The Field Instructor should regard the evaluation as an integral part of the field instruction process and critical component to the student's learning experience.
8. *Participation in the internship experience.* Field Instructors are expected to attend Field Instructor training provided prior to each fall semester. In addition, input and participation from Field Instructors is appreciated in order to continue to upgrade and enhance the practicum experience, the curriculum, and the UAM Department of Social Work's social work BSW degree program.
9. *Communication with Social Work Field Education Director.* Field Instructors should contact the Social Work Field Education Director as soon as possible should problems arise in the field setting. In addition, Field Instructors are asked to communicate with the Social Work Field Education Director regarding any agency changes that may impact the placement.

Expectations for the Social Work Field Practicum as a Learning Experience

The social work field practicum experience is the highlight of the student's social work education and is considered the "signature pedagogy" in social work education by the CSWE (CSWE, 2015). The UAM Department of Social Work is dependent upon community agencies to carry out this component of the learning process. Because social work is a practice-based profession, the student learns by doing, not from being told how to do it. By working under the supervision and instruction of a competent professional social worker or allied professional, students can initially observe the skills and processes and then begin to demonstrate their own ability to provide professional social work services.

The social work field practicum provides opportunities for students to integrate classroom learning and skill development through closely supervised social work practice in a variety of situations. Rather than teaching a specialized approach to working with a given population, emphasis is on generalist social work practice implemented in a specific setting. Therefore, students are able to transfer their knowledge and abilities gained in one agency to any other setting.

The practicum allows the student to engage in both short-term and long-term client contact (broadly defined), a range of client situations, varied practice approaches, and diverse agency activities. While there are many contemporary social contexts that influence the service delivery system (such as managed care systems, increased specialization, professional liability, and accreditation standards), the social work field practicum continues to offer a somewhat insulated experience where the emphasis and priority is on maximizing the student's learning opportunities. Field Instructors need to become increasingly creative and flexible in structuring the placement for their assigned student in order to ensure the student is able to receive the fullest range of experiences; perhaps even allowing the student to become involved with other agencies or programs in order to fulfill this need.

As stated previously, the social work field practicum is a mechanism for students to become socialized to the social work profession. Social work field practicum students can indeed be a wonderful resource to community agencies and bring a wealth of energy, enthusiasm, and commitment with them to the internship experience. However, the primary focus should always be on the student's learning.

Teaching Methods Used in the Social Work Field Practicum

Since Field Instructors are typically agency practitioners, each may have an approach to field instruction based on their individual educational background and experience. Field Instructors should be sensitive to the diversity of learning styles and characteristics of field students and should utilize the most appropriate approach for the particular student. The following methods are listed as suggested tools for Field Instructors to utilize to meet the educational needs of their field students:

1. Assign, evaluate, and discuss process recordings.
2. Review and discuss case documentation.
3. Allow the student to observe and discuss the Field Instructor's client interactions.
4. Directly observe the student's client interactions and discuss such interactions.

5. Videotape client interactions (individual, couple, family, group, and so forth).
6. Conduct role plays with the student.
7. Allow the student to observe and participate in agency staff meetings.
8. Ask the student to visit other agencies to gather information.
9. Arrange for the student to participate in various staff roles (receptionist, intake worker, therapist, direct-care staff, and administration).
10. Assign films and readings and discuss their relevance with the student.

The above are just a few suggested teaching methods. Field Instructors should feel free to utilize other approaches that they have found to be effective.

The Social Work Field Practicum: Integrating Theory with Practice

Requirements for Student Admission to the Social Work Field Practicum

Students entering the social work field practicum must be fully admitted to the social work program and have completed all prerequisites with a grade of “C” or higher in all social work classes; they must have a GPA of 2.5 in the social work major and a 2.0 overall GPA and must have completed the application process for the social work field practicum experience. Students are required to become BSW student members of NASW or other approved national social work organizations (upon their formal admission to the program), obtain a criminal background check, and provide those results to the UAM Department of Social Work, obtain malpractice insurance (1 million/5 million level of policy coverage) and have reliable transportation. For transportation purposes, a copy of the field practicum student's driver license and proof of insurance is required. Please note that all social work field practicum students are responsible for the cost of the background check, and membership fee for their chosen social work organization, as well as the purchase of their own malpractice insurance and provide evidence of the aforementioned requirements to the Social Work Field Education Director prior to beginning their social work field practicum experience.

Core education requirements are usually met by the end of their sophomore year. Students who have successfully completed their university required core education requirements and prerequisite social work courses must attend a social work field practicum general interest/orientation meeting (during the fall semester of their Junior year) and apply for the social work field practicum by the designated deadline (during the spring semester of their Junior year). Students will receive official notification from the Field Education Director regarding their admission into the Field Education program once final grades for the spring semester are released.

Summary of Procedures for Student Placement into a Social Work Field Practicum

The following steps describe the sequence of events for placement in the social work field practicum:

1. Eligible students attend a general interest/orientation meeting for the social work field practicum.

2. Students complete and submit a social work field practicum application by the specified deadline, which will include a ranking of desired placement opportunities with requests for specific agencies. This typically occurs during the spring of students' junior year.
3. The Social Work Field Education Director reviews the applications for eligibility and completeness.
4. The Social Work Field Education Director conducts a formal interview with each applicant to discuss the application and any concerns which need to be addressed.
5. Field Education Director will review the applicants with the Director of Social Work and make a formal admissions recommendation regarding each application.
6. Students will be notified of the admission decision within two weeks of receipt of final grades for that spring semester.
 - a. Students who are denied admission into the program may appeal the decision by written letter to the UAM Department of Social Work's Director.
 - b. Students may be denied admission into the Field Practicum program for academic or nonacademic issues. Academic reasons include, but are not limited to, failure to complete required courses, failure to meet and/or maintain grade point average, and/or failure to demonstrate necessary skills within the curriculum. Non-academic reasons include, but are not limited to, failure to comply with the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, and/or failure to comply with the UAM Student Conduct Statement.
7. The Social Work Field Education Director determines prospective social work field practicum assignments for all prospective students who are approved for placement and notifies students and agency Field Instructors in writing.
8. Students schedule and complete interviews with prospective Field Instructors.
9. Students and Field Instructors submit interview response forms to the Social Work Field Education Director.
10. The Social Work Field Education Director confirms and finalizes assigned placements and notifies students and the field practicum agencies in writing.
11. If, after completion of the initial interviews, a student has not been matched with an agency, additional interviews with prospective agencies will be arranged as needed.
12. Prior to the beginning of social work field practicum experience, a mandatory training seminar is provided to all Field Instructors and a mandatory orientation is held for all field practicum students.

Sequence of the Field Practicum Experience

The following describes a general overview of experiences, which are appropriate for most social work field practicum students.

Orientation of agency. As specified under responsibilities of the field agency and Field Instructor, students should receive adequate orientation to the agency and its services. This phase should include tours

of the facility, introductions to staff, overview of the agency (particularly for large agencies with multiple programs), an overview of the relevant agency procedures and services to clients, and specific expectations of the agency (such as parking, dress code, and work schedules). This information is best transmitted in a personal or interactional process rather than simply reading agency policy and procedure manuals. *Please note that this orientation may take place prior to the actual practicum if necessary. This is especially true for agencies that require extensive training and/or orientation before students can begin their practicum.*

Orientation/Observation of client services. By the third week of the social work field practicum, students should be involved in opportunities with clients. This may include sitting in on intakes, conducting intakes directly, observing agency staff as they conduct social assessments or social histories, observing group sessions, and/or sitting in on staffing or treatment team meetings. As the student completes the orientation phase, they should have developed an understanding of the agency's procedures for working with clients, documentation, and the organizational structure.

Provision of services to clients. Because undergraduate students are being prepared for professional generalist social work practice, there should be opportunities for extensive client contact, a range of client situations, varied practice approaches, and diverse agency activities/assignments. It is expected that the placement should include the following: working one-on-one with clients to assess their needs and determine resources to meet these needs; working with people in families and groups; participation in staffing; documentation for and maintenance of case records; research, assessment, or intervention within an agency setting and community or committee work. Students should be given as much direct responsibility as they are capable of.

Conclusion of placement. Students should address the conclusion of their placement with clients, co-workers, and the Field Instructor. The termination process should include evaluation of clients' progress and accomplishments, providing for follow-up or aftercare, summarizing and evaluating their own learning and performance, and addressing feelings regarding termination. Because the end of the semester typically comes "so quickly," this phase is often overlooked as a part of the social work field practicum process. Attention to this time should be given by both the student and the Field Instructor.

General Expectations, Responsibilities, and Requirements for Social Work Field Practicum Students

Social work field practicum students are expected to assume responsibility for their own learning, for self-evaluation, communication with co-workers and supervisors, providing critical feedback regarding the field placement, completing the required hours, adhering to their job description, and fulfilling their learning contract. Part of the learning experience during the social work field practicum is experiencing the frustration which may occur when working within an organization's structure, working with different personalities, or working under a supervisor (the Field Instructor) who may not be what the student expects. Students, therefore, are expected to demonstrate maturity and use good communication and problem-solving skills when encountering challenges in the placement. Please note that the most difficult situations in the social work field practicum do not usually involve clients; they involve agency staff. Consequently,

learning to effectively operate within an agency is an important part of the social work field practicum experience.

Hours. Social Work Field Practicum I and Social Work Field Practicum II each consist of 240 clock hours at the agency. This averages to be approximately 16 clock hours per week at the agency. Both placements typically are completed at the same agency; a change in agency placement may be necessary under special circumstances. Students are required to record completed hours on official time sheets, which must be validated with the original signature of the Field Instructor (or their designee) every week. Students work out a schedule of days and times they will be in field at the agency with their Field Instructor.

Students are to work during regular agency office hours and only when the Field Instructor is available. To be clear, the social work field practicum student should generally work during the same schedule or shift as the Field Instructor. If a Field Instructor typically works weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., then the social work student should not regularly work evenings or weekends. If, on occasion, when working a weekend is important to the student's learning plan and the Field Instructor is not working at that time, an alternative supervisor or other designee (task supervisor) on duty who can supervise the student must be assigned during these times. If there are opportunities outside regular working hours such as health fairs, agency events, continuing education conferences, which the Field Instructor feels may also benefit the student's field practicum experience, these opportunities may be accepted as social work field practicum hours with approval from the Social Work Field Education Director.

If the Field Instructor will be absent from the agency for an extended period of time due to a family emergency, vacation, or illness, they are required to designate a qualified individual within the agency to serve as the Field Instructor or task supervisor until their return, and to notify the student and Field Education Director of this as soon as possible.

Students should not complete their social work field practicum hours any earlier than two weeks prior to the end of the semester. If a student does complete their practicum hours two weeks before the end of the semester, they are expected to continue to attend the weekly required minimum hours at the agency for the remaining time period in the academic semester.

Learning plan. All field practicum students are expected to develop a learning plan as a part of their social work field practicum experience. This assignment is to be done by the student *with input and guidance from the Field Instructor*. The learning plan should reflect mutually-agreed upon learning goals for the semester. This document will be utilized as a part of the evaluation process with the Social Work Field Education Director.

Weekly summaries or journals. Students are expected to maintain documentation regarding their weekly field practicum experiences. The student is responsible for completing a written description and assessment of their work at the agency every week as outlined in the course syllabus.

The Social Work Field Practicum Evaluation Process

By the student. The student is expected to assume responsibility for this evaluation process as a part of their professional reflection, development and growth. The three tools, which are utilized to guide the student in developing reflection and evaluation skills include the learning plan, the field practicum mid-term and final self-evaluations, and the student evaluation of the practicum placement. The learning plan allows the student to establish measurable goals and use this format to facilitate supervisory conferences and self-evaluation. The student completes a self-evaluation by completing the same mid-term and final evaluation form as the Field Instructor. This evaluation is used as a self-reflection and correction tool. The student should critically assess their performance and discuss self-perceptions along with those expressed by the Field Instructor. Students are full participants in their evaluation and growth during the practicum, this evaluation is not a process that is “done to” the student but is done with the student. The student is also asked to complete an evaluation of the practicum placement at the end of the semester. This provides feedback to the Social Work Field Education Director and the field agency regarding the field practicum site and allows the student to have input into improving the quality of future placements at this agency.

By the Field Instructor. Field Instructors are encouraged to regard the evaluation forms and process as a tool for supervision as well as a measurement of progress. The Field Instructor and student should complete the field practicum student evaluation form at mid-semester and at the end of each semester. Students should complete their evaluations separately. Field instructors should meet with students after their self-evaluation and the field instructor evaluations are both complete to compare and discuss the outcomes. Attention should also be given to evaluating how well the student has performed according to their job description and the learning contract in particular. The evaluation form consists of measurements that address the nine core competencies and thirty-one practice behaviors as outlined by CSWE.

Field Instructors are asked to use the evaluation form to rate students on their performance as objectively as possible. Often, Field Instructors who have a good relationship with the students are reluctant to give critical feedback or to give anything but the highest of ratings. However, it is essential that even students who perform exceptionally well in the field are challenged to grow in new areas. Field Instructors are also asked to provide a recommended grade at the end of the semester. While the recommended grade may affect the grade assigned by the Social Work Field Education Director, other factors such as their progress towards mastery of CSWE competencies and overall professional performance is also taken into consideration before the final grade is determined.

By the Social Work Field Education Director. The Social Work Field Education Director will meet conjointly with each student and their Field Instructor at least three times during the semester, usually at the initial placement, mid-term in the semester and at the end of the semester. This will provide an opportunity for the Social Work Field Education Director to visit with the Field Instructor and student to address particular concerns which need to be addressed.

The Social Work Field Education Director is continually assessing and evaluating students based on information from the students’ journals, assignments, participation in the field practicum seminar course, and feedback from Field Instructors. The Social Work Field Education Director is responsible for

determining the final grade for the semester in the social work field practicum course based on performance both in the field and in the classroom. However, the assigned grade is not as significant as the learning and growth, which takes place for the student during the social work field practicum experience.

General Social Work Field Practicum Policies

Completion of Hours and Attendance

Students are expected to complete a total of 480 hours to satisfy the requirements for both Social Work Field Practicum I and Social Work Field Practicum II courses. This is about 16 clock hours per week on average during both field practicum courses. Specific work schedules are to be developed and agreed upon by the student and the Field Instructor. If the agency requires training or in-service hours, ***up to 40 clock hours may be counted towards the required social work field practicum hours.*** If training occurs before the semester begins, permission from the Social Work Field Education Director should be granted in advance. Travel time to and from the field agency ***may not*** be counted towards the students' field practicum hours, but travel which is incurred during the placement is appropriate to be included such as home visits and/or travel to other offices or agencies.

Students are responsible for accurately documenting their field practicum hours with signed verification from their Field Instructor (or their designee) on the proper form. Students are expected to demonstrate professional work habits, such as being punctual and consistent in work attendance. In the event a student must be late or absent from their regularly scheduled field practicum hours, they should call their Field Instructor. Excessive tardiness or absences are considered a serious problem and may necessitate a conference with the Social Work Field Education Director, or even dismissal from the field practicum.

If students must miss their regular social work field practicum hours, they may schedule "make-up" hours with the approval of their Field Instructor. If a student gets seriously behind on their field practicum hours due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g., illness, personal emergency, death in the family), they should discuss this with the Social Work Field Education Director in order to develop an outcome that is in the best interest of the client, the student, the agency, and the UAM Department of Social Work. Students may not, typically, receive an incomplete for a social work field practicum course. If the required hours or assignments are not completed by the end of the semester, students will receive an "F" for the social work field practicum course and will be expected to repeat the social work field practicum experience (usually at another agency). ***Exceptions to this policy are made for only the most extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Social Work Field Education Director and the Director of Social Work.*** If a student is not satisfied with the action taken by the Social Work Field Education Director, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the UAM Department of Social Work's Program Director.

SWK Field Practicum Seminar Attendance Policy 2.1:

Attendance will be taken and recorded daily in all social work courses. This attendance record will be used in part to calculate the professional performance grade for each social work course. Attendance will count towards 50 of the total 100 points of the professional performance grade.

- Each student is allowed 1 unexcused absence per course with no penalty. Any additional unexcused absences will incur a 5-point penalty.
- Arriving more than 10 minutes late for any course is considered tardy.
- For every 2 tardy occurrences an additional 5-point penalty will be incurred.
- The maximum penalty for all absences and tardy occurrences for each course will be 50 points.

SWK Field Practicum Attendance Policy 2.2:

Attendance will be used in part to calculate the professional performance grade for the field practicum course. Attendance will be counted towards 50 of the total 100 points of the professional performance grade.

- Students should not miss scheduled field days without a valid excuse discussed with the field instructor and field director ahead of time. If there is an illness, you must contact the field instructor per their agency policy and also inform the field director within 24 hours of the absence. Any absences deemed unexcused will result in 5 points being deducted from your professional performance.
- Additionally, the field instructor may provide any score they deem appropriate on the relevant sections of the performance evaluation assessment on your mid-term and final evaluations.
- Arriving after the scheduled start time of your field placement arrangement is considered late.
- An additional 5-point penalty will be incurred for every 2 tardy occurrences, as well as any penalty deemed appropriate on relevant portions of the student's mid-term and final evaluations conducted by the field instructor.
- The maximum penalty for all absences and tardy occurrences for each course will be 50 points of the professional performance grade.
- The field instructor may rate performance of any practice behavior as they deem appropriate based on student performance. Scores on specific applicable practice behaviors can be as low as a 1, which signifies "unacceptable" performance in that area. Most of the practice behavior scores that would apply to attendance would include those under 2.1.1; however, the field instructor may identify these behaviors as an interference with service delivery and rate other areas of performance low as applicable. For example, student absence impacting or delaying services to clients.

Changing Social Work Field Practicum Placement

The Social Work Field Education Director should be contacted if problems arise in the placement. Most concerns can be resolved through a conference with the Social Work Field Education Director, the field practicum student, and Field Instructor. Changes in the social work field placement are only made when agency changes dictate the termination of the field placement (e.g., programs closing, Field Instructors leaving the agency), or when problems between the field practicum student and an aspect of the placement are determined to be irreconcilable by the Social Work Field Education Director.

If a student has concerns about their practicum that may necessitate a change in location, the student must first inform the Field Instructor of the situation and attempt to resolve the issue. If the student and Field Instructor cannot resolve the issue, the student must then notify the Director of Field Education who will work with the student and Field Instructor to attempt to resolve the issue. The Director of Field Education will hold a meeting with the Field Instructor and student to facilitate a solution, which could include a development of a performance improvement plan or written action plan.

If an agreement cannot be reached and the student continues to feel that the placement setting is inappropriate, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The student will submit a written request to the Director of Field Education for another placement within five (5) business days of the meeting with the Director of Field Education and Field Instructor. The request should include an outline of the reason(s) for the request, a description of any attempts made to rectify the situation, and the results of those actions.
2. Within five (5) business days of receipt of the written request, the Director of Field Education and Director of Social Work will meet regarding the student request and determine one of the following outcomes:
 - a. Student will remain in their current placement with a Performance Improvement Plan or written action to rectify any concerns
 - b. Student is to be placed in a new agency and carry hours over from previous placement.
 - c. Student will be placed in a new agency and not be able to carry hours over from previous placement.

The Director of Field Education will address each student's concerns on a case-by-case basis, including but not limited to awareness of time constraints, learning needs/expectations, and learning opportunities. If a student is reassigned, the placement choice will be entirely made by the Director of Field Education. Once a determination is made, the Director of Field Education will provide the student with a written notice of the decision. If the student continues to be dissatisfied with the field practicum situation, the student may appeal to the Social Work Program Director in writing within five (5) business days of receipt of the written notification of the Director of Field Education's decision.

Students are required to remain in their placement until a final solution can be reached. Every effort will be made to expedite the process. The required number of hours must be completed regardless of the hours lost during transitioning to another agency. If the student decides to terminate the placement at any point during the process, the student must notify the Field Instructor and terminate with clients under the direction of the Field Instructor. The student must also notify the Director of Field Education in writing. In order for the student to re-enter field, the student must re-apply to the field practicum by the field application deadline and complete the entire placement along with any other required co-requisite courses. If re-accepted into the field practicum, the Director of Field Education and the Program Director will determine if any previous hours will be counted as credit toward completion of the program.

Removal of a Student from a Social Work Field Practicum Placement

A student may be removed from the field practicum agency at any time by request from the field instructor and/or agency for unprofessional conduct or for significant lack of progress in achieving practicum learning objectives. If a student's performance is deemed unsatisfactory, the field instructor should contact the Social Work Field Education Director immediately. This contact is needed in order that a conference can be arranged between the student, the Social Work Field Education Director, and the field instructor. The Social Work Field Education Director also may remove a student from a social work field practicum placement for unprofessional conduct or lack of progress or participation.

The grounds for removal of a student from field may include but are not limited to: failure to abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics*; attempts to harm oneself or someone else; repeated tardiness or absences at the agency; repeated changes in scheduled field hours without approval; violations of Federal or Arkansas state laws or regulations; and/or other behavior that is incompatible with accepted professional conduct. The final decision to remove a student from their social work field practicum will be made, after consultation with the Director of Social Work, by the Social Work Field Education Director, and/or with documentation from the field instructor or agency and may be based on objective and/or subjective professional judgments. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Social Work Field Education Director, the student may appeal the decision to the Department of Social Work's Program Director.

Supervision of Student Activities and Work

Students shall not be left alone in the agency without professional staff supervision. Leaving students without supervision or in charge is not an appropriate situation for social work field practicum students. Social work field practicum students, no matter how competent or skilled, do not yet have the required credentials for assuming staff responsibilities. It is also inappropriate for students to make home visits without some measure of supervision.

Safety Issues

Social work field practicum agencies should be aware of safety issues related to the activities of the social work field practicum student. Students should not be expected to engage in any activity where there are safety concerns. Students should be thoroughly oriented to the agency's policies and procedures to ensure their health and safety during their social work field practicum experience. Students have the responsibility to request information and seek instruction to ensure their own safety. Students are not allowed to restrain clients, perform the actual drug screening on clients, or perform bodily searches on clients. Students should always communicate any safety issues or concerns with the field instructor and the Director of Field Education.

Malpractice/Liability Insurance

Students are required to have coverage for malpractice liability purchased through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) or other reputable agency with comparable coverage. The student must provide proof of such malpractice insurance, at the 1 million/5 million coverage level prior to beginning their social work field practicum experience.

The Provision of Credit for Life Experience, Work Experience, and Prior Practicums

The UAM Department of Social Work does not award any academic credit, including credit towards the Social Work Field Practicum experience, for prior work or life experiences, as stipulated by the CSWE. All social work field practicum experiences must be taken in residence at UAM.

Transfer of Previous Social Work Field Hours

Acceptance or transfer of field hours obtained during a previous enrollment at UAM or from another university are not accepted. However, special circumstances may be considered. Acceptance of hours will be determined by length of time since the placement, number of hours completed and whether they were completed successfully according to the Field Education Director overseeing the placement, which may be determined by mid-term and/or final evaluations from that placement. Other criteria to be considered are students' progress towards achieving the nine competencies and understanding and adherence to the *NASW Social Work Code of Ethics*, which students may be asked to demonstrate in either oral or written form. For consideration to be made, all requested information must be supplied by the student by the date requested by the Social Work Field Education Director.

Social Work Field Practicums at Student's Place of Employment

As a general rule, social work field practicum students *shall not be placed in agencies where they are currently employed*. It is the student's responsibility to disclose such information to the Social Work Field Education Director during the application process. Experience has shown that when a student is doing a social work field practicum and employed at the same agency, the educational focus for the student is severely limited. Any exceptions to the policy must be approved by the Social Work Field Education Director in consultation with the UAM Department of Social Work's Program Director. The stated criteria, which must be met for a possible exception to this policy are: 1) the student must have a different supervisor for the social work field practicum than employment supervisor; 2) the student must engage in social work field practicum hours at different times and/or days than employment hours; and 3) the student must be assigned to a different department/position for the social work field practicum than for their employment.

Paid Internships/Stipends

Historically, agencies that have provided practicum placements for UAM have not offered paid internships and/or stipends for practicum students. The one exception to this has been the Arkansas Department of Human Services, which partners with the Title IV-E program to offer one \$5000 stipend each year. This stipend includes an application process and is contingent on the student signing a contract which commits the student to one year of employment immediately following their graduation. This stipend is open to any student within the Social Work, Criminal Justice or Psychology Departments.

While there have been no such placements in the past, (with the exception of the Title IV-E Stipend Program) the BSW Program is open to and encourages such opportunities. If such an opportunity occurs the agency must stipulate that the student is **NOT** a full-time employee, is not expected or required to fulfill the same responsibilities and/or duties of a full-time employee, and is not subject to the same sanctions and/or liabilities associated with a full time employee.

Night and Weekend Social Work Field Practicum Placements

Most traditional social service agencies do not have qualified supervisory staff available during non-traditional hours. While the UAM Department of Social Work is sensitive to students' scheduling needs, students should be aware that no evening or weekend hours will be approved that compromise the programs' educational objectives or the quality of the student's field practicum experience. If, however, an agency provides adequate and appropriate supervision during non-traditional hours, a student may schedule practicum hours with approval from his/her designated field instructor and the Social Work Field Education Director.

Travel and Mileage Reimbursement

It is the student's responsibility to secure reliable transportation to and from the social work field practicum placement. It is also their responsibility to provide their own automobile liability insurance coverage for agency-related travel. Reimbursement for agency-related expenses, such as travel compensation, should be the responsibility of the agency and should be congruent with the agency reimbursement policies and rates for regular staff at that agency. The UAM Department of Social Work does not reimburse students for field travel expenses. ***Students are not permitted to transport clients in their personal vehicles.*** The agency may permit the student to transport clients in agency vehicles if the agency policy permits and the agency accepts responsibility for the related liability coverage. The agency policies and procedures for the travel compensation should be discussed with social work field practicum students as a part of their orientation. *It is the responsibility of the field instructor and agency to verify that the student's vehicle insurance coverage is adequate for the job required before allowing the student to engage in agency activities involving transportation.*

Holidays

Students are entitled to observe holidays as designated by the University of Arkansas at Monticello and their placement agency. However, if a student's regularly scheduled practicum hours occur on a holiday, they are still responsible for completing those hours on another day. In addition, students may choose to work on said holidays in order to earn additional practicum hours, or to make up for other absences. If a student wishes to do this, they must gain prior approval from both the field instructor and the Field Education Director. Students should communicate the University's holiday schedule to their Field Instructor and make plans accordingly. This does not include the break between fall and spring semesters. Students may only complete their hours during regular UAM semesters.

Sick Days

If students are unable to attend their social work field practicum due to personal illness or the illness of a dependent family member, they should contact their Field Instructor and assume responsibility for rescheduling any appointments or work requirements. The student shall make up any missed hours at a time agreed upon by the student and the Field Instructor. ***If the student's absences exceed 24 hours or three full field practicum days, the student should notify the Social Work Field Education Director and propose a plan to remediate the time missed.***

Conflicts of Interest

Students, field instructors, field agencies, and social work faculty should all be aware of potential conflicts of interests. Social work field practicum students and field instructors, particularly, should make known to the Social Work Field Education Director **any potential** conflicts of interest. For example, social work field practicum students shall not be placed at agencies where relatives or family members are employed or serve on the board of directors without the approval of the Social Work Field Education Director. Failure to report any known potential conflicts of interest before placement may result in removal from the field placement.

Requests for Documentation

The UAM Department of Social Work or field agencies may request that potential social work field practicum students applying for a social work field practicum or participating in the social work field practicum experience provide documentation regarding their physical or mental health, drug or alcohol use, or provide information for a criminal background check. Such information may be requested if required by the agency, or when it is deemed necessary to ensure the well-being of the social work student and/or clients at the field practicum site. Decisions related to the information obtained will be made on an individual basis.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

The University of Arkansas at Monticello is committed to the principle that no qualified person shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from the participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, as required by the *Americans with Disability Act of 1990*. However, the University of Arkansas at Monticello does not waive the published degree requirements for students. To the extent practical, the faculty and administration will make reasonable accommodations to assist qualified individuals with disabilities to meet their degree requirements, consistent with the applicable provisions of Arkansas statutes. The UAM Department of Social Work will work with students and other support services to enable a student to work towards a successful social work field practicum experience. It is recognized that students may choose not to disclose a disability. In such cases, the student shall not receive special accommodations in class or for field work if the disability is not known to the University or its faculty.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The University of Arkansas at Monticello is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by the University of Arkansas at Monticello, on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability.

Students have a right to study and work in a non-discriminatory environment. The UAM Department of Social Work affirms and respects diversity and difference among students, faculty, field instructors, and staff. The social work department does not discriminate on the basis of nationality,

immigration status, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, age, gender or any other characteristic.

Grievance Procedures

The UAM Department of Social Work's *Student Handbook* details student's rights and explains complaint and grievance procedures. Social work students have the right to appeal course grades and adverse decisions relating to the Social Work Field Education Program according to the appeal process outlined in the Department of Social Work BSW *Student Handbook*.

Forms

Agency Forms and Descriptions

Agency Field Practicum Application. This form provides a brief description of the agency setting, services, and learning opportunities. This form is completed by an agency representative and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director as part of the application for becoming a social work field practicum site.

Field Instructor/Task Supervisor Data Sheet. This form provides a brief summary of background information on the designated Field Instructor(s) and/or Task Supervisor(s) including education, employment, licensing history, and so forth. It is completed by individuals within the agency who are interested in becoming Field Instructors or Task Supervisors.

Agency Interview Response Form. This form provides feedback from the agency regarding the prospective social work field practicum students' initial interviews. It is completed by the Field Instructor and/or agency administrator who conducted the initial interview and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director following the interview.

Field Practicum Student Evaluation. This form provides the Field Instructor's mid-term and final evaluation of the social work field practicum student. This form is completed by the Field Instructor, discussed with the student, and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director. In addition, each student will use this form to rate their own performance and progress in order to facilitate their self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-correction during the field practicum.

Field Instructor's Program Evaluation. This form provides the UAM Department of Social Work with feedback and input regarding the Social Work Field Education Program. This form is completed by the Field Instructor and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director at the end of each student's field practicum experience.

Field Education Director's Evaluation of Field Agency. This form provides feedback and input to the agency regarding placement. This form is completed by the Social Work Field Education Director and submitted to the agency at the end of each student's field practicum experience.

Student Forms and Descriptions

Student Field Practicum Application. This form provides background information on prospective social work field practicum students including biographical information, education and work history, areas of interest regarding preferred practice setting, and so forth. This form is completed by the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director.

Student Interview Response Form. This form provides feedback from the student regarding their initial interview with their prospective social work field practicum placement site. This form is completed by the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director following the interview.

Field Practicum Learning Plan. This form provides the required learning competencies, goals, and objectives students will be expected to meet during the social work field practicum. It form is completed by the student with assistance from the Field Instructor and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director during the second week of each field practicum course.

Field Practicum Timesheet and Analysis. This form provides an account of social work field practicum hours worked as well as how those hours were spent. This form is completed by the student, reviewed and signed by the Field Instructor, and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director on a weekly basis.

Field Practicum Student Self-Evaluation. This form provides the student with a tool to evaluate their own performance during the field education experience. This form is completed by the field practicum student, discussed with the field instructor, and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director. Each student will use this form to rate their own performance and progress in order to facilitate self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-correction during the field practicum.

Student Evaluation of Practicum Placement. This form provides the UAM Department of Social Work with feedback and input regarding the student's experience in the social work field practicum site. This form is completed by the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director at the end of each student's field practicum experience. In addition, the Field Education Director uses aggregate data from the evaluations to identify issues/topics that need to be addressed during the following year's Field Instructor Training.

References

Arkansas Code, Social Work Licensing Act of 1999, No. 1122, § 1; 2015, No. 1170, § 1.

Council on Social Work Education. (2015). *Educational policy and accreditation standards*. Retrieved from <https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf.aspx>

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