

## Frequently Asked Questions for New MSW Field Education Placement Sites

### **Why Field Education?**

*“As professionals in the making, social work students attend class to learn practice principles, values and ethical behaviors, a body of specialized knowledge, and the scientific basis for practice.*

*In field placement, students apply, under supervision, what they have been learning in the classroom to real situations. Thus, the preparation to become a social work professional is composed of formal learning as well as practical experiences”.*

Royse, D., Dhooper, S., Rompf E. (2012). Field Instruction. A Guide for Social Work Students, Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

### **What are the needed Field Supervisor’s Qualifications?**

The Field Supervisor must be a MSW with at least two years post-graduate experience. NAU and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), our national accrediting body, does not require Field Supervisors to be in a leadership role within the agency to qualify.

### **What is expected of a Field Supervisor?**

The Field Supervisor will serve as a mentor and instructor for a student. They will provide one hour of supervision per week. The Field Supervisor is responsible for assisting the student in developing their learning contract, monitoring the student’s progress, completing both a mid-term and final evaluation, and providing professional mentoring.

### **How many hours are required for the field placement?**

The Two-Year Program requires a minimum of 900 clock hours at two different placement sites.

The Advanced Standing (Specialized Year) requires a minimum of 450 clock hours in one placement.

Specialized Year field placements must be in a different organization than the BSW year and Foundation Year.

- Foundation Year: 450 hours; 225 a semester (15 a week)
- Specialized Year: 450 hours; 225 a semester (15 a week)

*\*If your internship class is over a summer semester,  
you will be required to attend internship for at least 19 hours a week during the 12-week summer semester\**

### **What are the requirements regarding student’s Field Placement Availability?**

Social Work Field Education experience and training involves participating in the life of the agency, attending regularly scheduled meetings, and other activities involving or sponsored by the field placement site. **Students are required to be present at their field placement site for their 15 hours a week during the normal business hours of Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm when the professional staff are working and available to the student.** All field placement hours must be completed on site.

### **What are the course numbers for the field placement?**

<b>MSW Degree Program</b>	<b>First Semester</b>	<b>Second Semester</b>
MSW-Foundation Year	SW 595 (3 credits)	SW 596 (3 credits)
MSW-Specialized Year	SW 695 (3 credits)	SW 696 (3 credits)

Students enrolled in all MSW Field Placement classes are required to attend a monthly field seminar (class) via Zoom. The monthly seminar schedule will be set prior to the semester starting. Monthly seminar will meet for two hours. Attendance and full participation is required.

## **What is the process to location and confirm my Field Placement?**

All students will be required to find and confirm their own internships. Field Education faculty will work with students who request help in identifying possible placements. Student will use Sonia for their application needs.

- Foundation year students are required to submit a detailed field placement application and resume. Upon review of the material, an interview with a member of the Field Education Faculty may be requested.
- Specialized year (including Advanced Standing students) are required to submit an abbreviated field placement application and resume. Upon review of the material, an interview with a member of the Field Education Faculty may be requested.

Once students received confirmation of an internship offer, they will submit the Field Placement Confirmation Form. Field Education Director will finalize placement with an NAU Affiliation Agreement.

## **What is the NAU Affiliation Agreement?**

The agreement establishes a relationship between the University and the Organization, to allow students from Northern Arizona University to participate in an unpaid or paid educational experience at a field placement site that may qualify for university academic credit, as determined by the University.

## **Are Field Placements at place of employment allowed?**

Employment Based Field Placement is not a guarantee and will be considered on an individual basis. There are special requirements for an internship at place of employment. There is an additional Employment Based Field Placement application for students who wish to request this type of placement. If approved, Employment Based Field Placement is only allowed for one of the two internships. Students who apply for Place of Employment field placement must be able to verify employment for at least 12 months prior to beginning internship.

## **Is there any training and or support for Field Supervisor?**

Yes, we offer training and support in all aspects of Field Education and provide specific guidance for the completion for the Student Learning Contract.

## **Is there a guide to help a student organize their field placement?**

Students will work with their assigned Field Supervisor in preparing a learning contract that specifies learning objectives, learning activities, and evaluation criteria. Students are provided with a training on how to prepare a learning contract during the mandatory Field Placement Orientation. The Field Supervisor is a key person in guiding the student on their learning contract. The assigned Field Liaison is available to provide technical assistance to the field instructor.

## **What are the student's field placement assignments?**

Students will complete the aforementioned Learning Contract within the first few weeks of placement. Students will also have a weekly journal and supervision log. Both of these weekly assignments will be submitted to both the field instructor and field liaison. A record of the intern's time will also be recorded and approved. Additionally, there are assignments in the Social Work classes that relate to the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that the students will demonstrate in practice. Students will be required to integrate their field-based learning into their course assignments and class discussions.

**The following are the Social Work Competencies that students will be expected to demonstrate while in field placement.** They are also represented in the objectives of the Learning Contract. Field Placement sites need to offer students exposure to, and work within, the micro, mezzo, and macro practice fields.

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

### **Are there field visits conducted by the field liaison?**

There will be at least three visits conducted throughout the placement. An initial check in, a midpoint and final visit. These visits will be conducted via phone or video conferencing. No face-to-face visit is required.

### **Grades for field?**

Field Education consists of course work that is graded on a “Pass/Fail” basis. The grade is assigned by the Field Education Director or Online Field Coordinator and is based on the recommendation of the Field Instructor and/or Field Liaison. The grade is based on the “student performance evaluation” conducted by the field instructor and student at the end of each the semester. The student performance evaluation is reviewed by the Field Liaison to ensure that the evaluation was conducted in a fair and balanced manner, and that it was comprehensive and relevant to the student’s learning contract. If the student is unable to complete their field placement in the pre-established time frame, the student may request an “in progress,” which needs to be approved by the Field Instructor and Field Liaison and submitted to the Field Education Director for review and posting.

### **Are students covered by liability insurance?**

Northern Arizona University, by action of the Arizona Board of Regents, covers all students who are properly placed and supervised under its self-insurance program for purposes of liability. The coverage protects against claims arising from a student’s acts, errors or omissions in rendering services of a professional nature.

### **What about holidays?**

Students receive credit for holidays that are observed by NAU, only if it is regularly scheduled internship day. Students are, however, required to make up the time from any **other** holidays that are observed by the field placement site that fall on field days. Students are not required to be at their placement during winter break and spring break, however best practices need to be considered when having a caseload.

### **What are the procedures to make up missed field workdays?**

All absences from fieldwork must be made up. Students are advised to speak with their field instructor on how to plan the makeup time.

## **What do I do if I begin to identify problematic professional behaviors and/or concerns with my field student?**

Students are expected to follow the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics and a link to this document will be provided at the Field Instructor training. If you begin to observe problematic professional behavior or other concerns, first you should speak with your assigned NAU field liaison. Field liaisons are either faculty or community social workers who are assigned to guide and assist field students and field instructors. The field liaison will advise on the best possible resolution as well as inform you of relevant field policies. Field Liaisons consult with the Field Education Director as needed.

### **Field Placement Terminology**

**Field Placement:** Internship

**Field Placement Site:** The community organization (agency, school, hospital, etc.) that offers and accepts a student for internship. All the Field Placement Sites have an agreement with NAU to provide this learning experience.

**Field Liaison:** Social Work Faculty or Faculty Community Representative that will follow you through your placement.

**Field Supervisor:** Staff member from your field placement site that you will report to, will supervise your internship, and evaluate your skills, knowledge and social work competency.

**Task Instructor:** The person designated by your Field Instructor to assist with your internship. This person is also employed by the field placement site.

**Social Work Education Assessment Project (SWEAP):** The online tool used to evaluate the student at mid-point and final.

**Sonia:** NAU's Department of Social Work web-based portal to support all aspects of Field Education.