



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
MSW FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL

2023-2024

FOREWORD

This manual is dedicated to the numerous field setting personnel, field instructors, and agencies who collaborate with us each year to develop quality field education placements for our social work students. These individuals graciously and generously give of their time, expertise, and wisdom.

Candy Dolcy, MSW
Director of Field Education
candydolcy@southern.edu
423-236-2630

Tricia Foster
Field Program Administrator
tfoster@southern.edu
423-236-2629

Faculty and Staff



Candy Dolcy, MSW
Director of Field Education



Tricia Foster
Field Program Administrator



Evie Baker, DSW, LCSW
Professor



Lunelle Bertresse, MSW
Professor



Michelle Clinton
Office Manager



Stephanie Guster, MSW, LCSW
Professor



Nina Nelson, Ph.D., MSW
Professor



Laura Racovita, Ph.D., MSW
Dean



Cornel Rusu, PhD, MSW
Professor



Kristie Wilder, JD, MSW
Professor

Table of Contents

Introduction	6
Nondiscrimination Policy	6
Disclaimer.....	6
Mission Statements	7
Program Location and Contact Information	7
Accreditation Status.....	7
Roles and Responsibilities in Field Education.....	8
School of Social Work.....	8
Director of Field Education	9
Field Liaison.....	9
Field Instructor	10
Task Supervisor	10
Student.....	11
Field Education Policies, Criteria, and Procedures.....	12
Selecting Field Education Settings and Field Instructors	12
Field Setting Criteria	13
Consecutive Placement Settings	13
Field Instructor Criteria	14
Dual Relationship Policy	14
Placing Students	14
Senior Field Readiness Criteria	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Senior Fieldwork Prerequisite Courses.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Foundation Field Readiness Criteria.....	15
Foundation Field Readiness Assessments	15
Advanced Field Readiness.....	16
Advanced Field Readiness Assessments	17
Specific Practicum Time Requirements for MSW Students.....	17
Advanced Project-Based Hours	20
Field/Class Conflicts.....	19
Special Placement Situations for MSW Students	19
Early Placement Opportunities for MSW Students	19
Early Termination of Placement of Field Supervision.....	21
Student Leave from Practicum	22
Addressing Disruptions that affect Practicum Attendance	20
Placement Process	20
Employment-Based Field Placement.....	20
Long Distance Placements for MSW Students	22
International Field Placements for MSW Students.....	22

Field Hours on Hold	23
Incomplete and Final Evaluation Grade in Field	23
Other Readiness Considerations	25
Confidentiality	25
Safety	236
Harassment	24
Use of Social Media and Technology	25
Attire.....	25
Monitoring Students and Maintaining Field Liaison Contact with Field Settings	25
Monitoring Students in the Field Setting	25
Maintaining Field Liaison Contacts with the Field Setting	26
Student Individualize Field Education Plan and Field Learning Plan	28
Mid/Final-Term Evaluation for MSW Students	27
Scoring of the MSW Learning Plans	29
Field Instructor Evaluation of Student.....	30
Field Liaison Evaluation of Student	30
Evaluating Field Setting Effectiveness	30
Unsatisfactory Performance in Field Setting	29
Student Problems in the Field Setting.....	32
Termination of Field Placement	29
Field Education Non-Academic Dismissal Policy.....	29

Introduction

This *MSW Field Education Manual* has been prepared to assist Master of Social Work (MSW) students, program faculty, field instructors, and field placement setting personnel in understanding the objectives and requirements for the field education component of the social work program at Southern Adventist University (Southern). It summarizes the current educational policies and procedures for the social work programs and provides guidelines and instructions for field placement assignments.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The social work programs make specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning environment in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity are practiced. Social work education builds upon professional purposes, values, and ethics; therefore, the programs commit to offering a learning environment that is nondiscriminatory and that reflects the profession's fundamental tenets.

It is the policy of the School of Social Work (SOSW) at Southern Adventist University that all aspects of the MSW program will be conducted without discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. The School of Social Work and its faculty fully adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics*. We welcome students of different backgrounds, seeking to enrich our program through diversity.

Disclaimer

The policies, regulations, requirements, and procedures in this manual are subject to change without prior notice, if necessary, to keep the policies of the Field Program of the School of Social Work of Southern Adventist University in compliance with state and federal laws, and/or with rules and regulations of Southern, and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). These policies, regulations, requirements, and procedures may affect students and parties associated with the social work field process. Notices of changes to the *MSW Field Education Manual* will be communicated via email, eClass, and/or in the classroom setting (in-person or virtual).

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
MSW PROGRAM**

Mission Statement

Master of Social Work

The mission of Southern Adventist University's Master of Social Work program is to prepare advanced generalist practitioners within a Christian learning environment for service and excellence in evidence-based social work practice.

Program Location and Contact Information

The School of Social Work is located in Daniells Hall (Suite 1107), 4891 Jones Drive, on the campus of Southern Adventist University. Parking is available in an adjacent parking lot. Both the parking lot and Daniells Hall are handicapped accessible.

Mailing Address	Southern Adventist University School of Social Work PO Box 370 Collegedale, TN 37315
Phone Number	(423) 236-2629
Fax Number:	(423) 236-1768
Email Address	socialworkfieldoffice@southern.edu
Website	https://www.southern.edu/socialwork
Office Hours	Monday–Thursday: 8:00 am–noon and 1:00 pm–5:00 pm Friday: By appointment

Accreditation Status

The social work programs are accredited by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), the sole accrediting body for social work programs in the U.S. Accreditation ensures that professional standards are met in curriculum content and delivery. Accredited programs periodically undergo rigorous review by the CSWE in order to ensure compliance with educational standards.

Roles and Responsibilities in Field Education

The effectiveness of Southern's School of Social Work MSW field education program depends on the important roles and responsibilities carried out by:

- the School of Social Work program administration
- the director of field education
- the faculty field liaisons
- the field education placement setting personnel
- the field instructors
- the task supervisors
- the MSW students in the field practicum

This section of Southern's School of Social Work *MSW Field Education Manual* is intended to describe these roles and responsibilities in order to facilitate understanding and effective interaction that supports a meaningful and successful field education experience for MSW students preparing to join the social work profession as advanced generalist practitioners. The responsibilities outlined in this section are also included in the Field Education Placement Setting Contract agreement.

School of Social Work

The MSW program administration in the School of Social Work develops and oversees the field education program. In order to maintain a meaningful field education experience for students, the School of Social Work programs agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To appoint a director of field education from the School of Social Work to be the primary liaison between the university and the placement setting.
2. To consult on the assignments of students to the field education setting to ensure appropriate learning opportunities for students that also fit the setting's service functions.
3. To provide the field instructor with information about the student, the curriculum, and school policies, assisting the field instructor and task supervisor through consultation and conferences when needed.
4. To designate a member of the faculty to serve as liaison to the field education setting.
5. To coordinate meetings of field instructors and faculty to integrate field instruction with the total curriculum.
6. To provide field education training to field liaisons, field instructors, and task supervisors.
7. To provide liability insurance for students completing their field education.

Note: Although the university provides liability coverage for the student while in field, the liability insurance does not provide any coverage for the student's automobile even if using for

field-related activities. Nor does the liability insurance provide any health/medical coverage if student should be become ill or sustain an injury in the field.

Director of Field Education

The director of field education is a faculty member in the School of Social Work who reports to the program's dean and who is responsible for the overall coordination of field education instruction within the framework of the curriculum developed by the programs. The director of field education for the student's placement agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To make initial contact with perspective agency, conduct preplacement assessment, and to direct students regarding agency interview.
2. To assist the field instructor in the understanding and development of the instructor's role in relation to the program's goals and competencies.
3. To assist the field instructor and student with the creation of experiential learning activities and with the ways and means of meeting the goals of the student learning plan.
4. To schedule and document conferences with the student for supervising, instructing, supporting, and reviewing progress toward meeting program goals and competencies.
5. To consult with the field instructor regarding the student's progress.
6. To submit the student's final grade for the social work practicum course.

Field Liaison

Within the MSW program, the field liaison role falls under the director of field education. When the director of field education is unable to act as the liaison, the programs may assign field liaisons to students in the field education practicum. The School of Social Work assigns a full-time or adjunct faculty member as a field liaison for each student in the field education programs. The faculty field liaison agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To complete field liaison training.
2. To maintain contact with the field instructor and carry out at least one site visit during the practicum cycle for MSW students.
3. To maintain telephone and email contact as needed.
4. To interpret the connection between classroom curriculum and practicum for the field instructor.
5. To provide, as necessary, supervisory support for field instructors.
6. To ensure that the educational focus of the field placement is maintained.
7. To ensure that learning activities are appropriate, and where they are not appropriate, to assist the field instructor in developing additional assignments.
8. To provide feedback on the student's progress toward proficiency in the program competencies.
9. To respond to problems raised by student or field instructor and to bring to the attention of the director of field education any student who experiences difficulties in practicum.

Field Instructor

The emphasis of field instruction is on the development of a sound educational practicum experience. In working toward this, the field instructor serves as an administrator, educator, and model. The field instructor agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To supply the program with a current CV or résumé each academic year that a student is in placement at the request of the Office of Field Education.
2. To assume on-site responsibility for the student's field education experience (including the responsibilities of the task supervisor, listed below, when there is no task supervisor utilized in the placement).
3. To collaboratively assess the learning needs of the student within the context of the program's competencies and to establish appropriate learning activities.
4. To assign tasks that are suitable in terms of the student's capacity to carry out functions in the field education setting, recognizing the student as a developing professional.
5. To prepare and conduct individual weekly *one-hour* scheduled supervision conferences with the student.
6. To help the student integrate theoretical knowledge and knowledge from previous experiences with the student's present practice, challenging the student to expand professional skills, knowledge, and values.
7. To confer frequently with the task supervisor and director of field education regarding the student's progress.
8. To advocate for student access to learning experiences within the field setting and the professional community.
9. To meet program requirements by attending meetings for field instructors including the mandatory annual field instructor training, writing evaluations on student performances, and signing and submitting field-related paper on the program's designated tracking system.
10. To contact the faculty liaison/director of field education where there are concerns.

Task Supervisor

When a qualified field instructor is not available within the field setting, Southern's School of Social Work provides the opportunity for students to utilize a task supervisor as the person they are immediately responsible to in the field setting. However, all students must have an approved field instructor who meets with them weekly for supervision in order to reinforce the social work perspective. The School of Social Work will assign a qualified field instructor in those situations where a task supervisor is used. This approved field instructor will be known as an "Independent Field Instructor". The task supervisor is not required to have a social work degree. The task supervisor agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. To complete field instructor training(s) provided by the School of Social Work.

2. To orient the student to the field placement setting, familiarizing the student with the setting's structure, policy, objectives, accountability mechanisms, and relationship to the community.
3. To review safety procedures with the student, especially those that may be unique to the setting and its clientele.
4. To work closely with the student in the delivery of services by scheduling the student's work assignments, integrating the student's work with the work of the setting's personnel, and assisting the student in meeting professional standards in the workplace.
5. To collaborate frequently with the field instructor and student regarding the student's progress.

Student

The student agrees to the following responsibilities regarding field education:

1. To schedule a preplacement meeting/conference with the director of field education.
2. To complete MSW Orientation Online Field Module in the student's eclass homeroom.
3. To complete Field Intake Form. The form is located in the software for tracking practicum activities.
4. To schedule an interview with perspective agency AFTER receiving directive from the Office of Field Education.
5. To submit the following required field documents with signatures in the program's designated tracking system prior to starting practicum:
 - a. Field Agency Contract
 - b. Field Education Confidentiality Statement
6. To review confirmation email from the director of field education regarding a secured placement. Unless this email has been sent, the School of Social Work does not consider the placement as confirmed. (The unconfirmed field student may not be covered with liability insurance. *Students who begin working in field agencies prior to confirmation may not be permitted to use those hours to complete their field work requirements.*)
7. To secure transportation to and from the field education placement setting and assume responsibility for mileage costs not covered by the field setting.
8. To prepare a field education learning plan with the field instructor's input, revising it as necessary.
9. To assume professional responsibility and appropriate accountability for assigned client services and other field activities.
10. To adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the Southern Adventist University's Student Handbook Policies and Procedures. See handbook: <https://www.southern.edu/graduatestudies/docs/administrative/grad-handbook.pdf>
11. To initiate and participate in weekly supervisory conferences with the field instructor, prepare and submit a weekly journal to document field work, share reactions to and

questions about the field education experience, and advise the field instructor of new learning needs.

12. To participate in selected field setting activities (e.g., staff meetings, conferences, in-service training, and committee work), when these are not in conflict with campus-based courses, seminars, or other commitments.
13. To obtain field-setting approval for the use of any case material or records outside of the setting while maintaining accepted standards of confidentiality.
14. To inform the field instructor of classroom assignments that relate to field instruction and share material when relevant.
15. To connect with their field liaison for a site visit at the mid-term at the mid-term of 200 or 250 practicum hours.
16. To **confer monthly** with the director of field education about learning experiences and any problems or concerns related to the field education assignment.

Field Education Policies, Criteria, and Procedures

This section of Southern's School of Social Work's *MSW Field Education Manual* specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field education settings and field instructors, placing and monitoring students, maintaining field liaison contacts with field settings, and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness. This information also describes how these field education elements are congruent with the program competencies.

Selecting Field Education Settings and Field Instructors

Selecting field education settings and field instructors is a central and ongoing activity of the director of field education. The director of field education initiates and maintains contact with community agencies and service providers in order to facilitate the development of collaborative educational agreements. After identifying a potential field setting, the director of field education proceeds to the next step in the selection process by meeting with personnel and determining the eligibility of a setting social worker to become a field instructor. When a field setting meets the program's criteria for setting selection and a qualified field instructor agrees to accept students, the director of field education and the setting's personnel will discuss and complete any necessary paperwork. Once the setting is secured, the field instructor undergoes mandatory training (face-to-face/online).

Field Setting Criteria

In order to be eligible as a program field setting, the setting must offer adequate field education opportunities for students as evidenced by the following criteria:

1. The setting employs a qualified MSW social worker who can serve as a field instructor, or is willing to make provision for qualified supervision to complement agency services (see field instructor qualifications below).
2. The setting provides services that will expose students to the experiences required in the program's field learning plan and meet the program's competencies for field instruction.
3. The setting can offer opportunities for students to engage in social work services, assuming a workload of a MSW foundation- or advanced-level social worker under the supervision of a field instructor.
4. The setting can offer opportunities for students to engage in the full range of social work service provision on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice for foundation-level practicums, or opportunities for students to engage in specialized social work service provision for advanced-level practicums.
5. The setting will accommodate for *one hour* of weekly field instruction per student.
6. The setting is able to supply adequate workspace, equipment and access to needed resources for students to learn and perform their duties in a professional manner.
7. The setting will provide release time for field instructors to attend trainings and workshops offered to supervisory personnel working with students.

Note: In order to make the best matches available, the MSW Program recommends placements based on having screened perspective settings and students. Students and agency field instructors accept the placement after an on-site interview of the student.

Consecutive Placement Settings

Field placements are educational experiences that serve the purpose of broadening the student's preparation for generalist practice through experience in a variety of service delivery systems. It is the recommendation of School of Social Work that students *do not* continue in one agency for two consecutive placements. However, we understand that an agency could provide a unique opportunity for an advanced practicum with a focus on a particular emphasis. To remain in the same placement for a consecutive year, the student and agency must provide evidence that the student's experiences are distinctly different from those of their foundation year practicum. This is to ensure that students have exposure to a variety of learning experiences and applies to BSW graduates who enter the MSW program and MSW first-year students entering the second year.

Student must complete an "Application for a Two-Year Practicum" in order to be considered for this opportunity. *Submitting this form does not guarantee approval of the request.* Please contact the Field Education Office at (423)236-2629 for more information regarding this request.

Field Instructor Criteria

Field education settings, when possible, shall supply a qualified field instructor as defined by the following criteria:

1. Depending on the student that is assigned to an agency, the field instructor must hold a MSW degree from a Council of Social Work Education-accredited social work program. In the event that a field instructor does not hold an accredited MSW degree, the School of Social Work will assume responsibility to reinforce a social work perspective. This is accomplished through oversight by the Field Education Office.
2. The field instructor must have at least two years of experience in the field setting or be approved by the program.
3. The field instructor may not have any documented NASW sanction in force on record.
4. The field instructor must have adequate time available to supervise and engage with the student and agree to provide *one hour* of direct field education supervision weekly.

In cases where a qualified field instructor is not available within the field setting, Southern's social work program provides the opportunity for students to utilize a task supervisor as the person they are immediately responsible to in the field setting. Task supervisors must have at least one year of social service experience. However, all students must have a fully-credentialed field instructor who meets with them for a minimum of *one hour* per week for field supervision in order to reinforce the social work perspective. The School of Social Work will work with the student to identify a qualified social worker to provide a supervision field instructor in those situations where a task supervisor is used. This qualified social worker is an *independent field instructor*.

Dual Relationship Policy

When assigning field instructors to students, the School of Social Work adheres to pertinent standards in the *NASW Code of Ethics* concerning dual relationships and conflicts of interest. In the context of field education, dual relationships occur when a field instructor maintains a relationship with a student in more than one domain, whether professional or personal. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively. In the event that a dual relationship does exist, the student must contact the Field Education Office prior to field placement. The student cannot begin to accrue hours until the field instructor is approved.

Placing Students

The programs ensure that students are properly prepared to enter the field education experience. Courses in the program curriculum reinforce specific areas of field readiness, including knowledge regarding the program's competency practice behaviors and the *NASW Code of Ethics*. The programs have developed assessments that serve as field education placement criteria for foundation and advanced MSW students.

Foundation Field Readiness Criteria

A MSW foundation student must meet the criteria listed below to begin the foundation practicum experience. The student may not begin to accrue hours in the field until the director of field education has confirmed the placement. Criteria for eligibility are the following:

1. The student must meet with the director of field education.
2. The student must have completed or registered for three of the following core courses: Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families (SOCW 509), Social Work Practice with Groups, Organizations, and Communities (SOCW 514), HBSE I or II (SOCW 511, 512), and Integration of Faith and Foundation Practice Seminar I or II (SOCW 541, 542).
3. The student must complete all the required foundation field readiness assessments at the program's benchmark level (see table below) that are located in the Foundation Homeroom on eclass.
4. The student must submit a completed MSW Field Placement Intake form and resume via Tevera.
5. After placement has been confirmed, complete in Tevera the Field Agency Contract and Field Confidentiality Statement forms.
6. *The School of Social Work requires Foundation MSW students to have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 for eligibility to begin field. The SOSW will schedule an academic review with their school advisor for any student who receives a grade below the academic requirement to develop a plan to begin or remain in field.*

Foundation Field Readiness Assessments

The overall goal of social work practicum experience in an advanced generalist program is for students to develop and gain expertise in assessment and intervention at all levels of client systems including individuals, families/groups and organizations/communities.

The foundation year practicum student's social work practice is a progressive continuum that begins with the observation of social work practice by professionals in the field and transitions to practicing alongside professionals. The social work practice experience culminates in the student's performance of autonomous social work practice at a foundation level (supervised by the practicum instructor and/or task supervisor).

Foundation Practice Continuum

Social Work Autonomous Practice Expectations

1/3rd to 2/3rd hours...observing & skill building / last third 3/3rd practicing alongside

Assessment	Course Associated with the Assessment	Benchmark Proficiency
Ethical Standards Assessment	Orientation Module	Assessment at 95% or higher
Values and Professionalism Assessment	Orientation Module	Assessment at 90% or higher
Culture, Cultural Awareness, and Cultural Competency	Orientation Module	Assessment at an 80% or higher
Field Quiz	Orientation Module	Completion of MSW Field Practicum quiz at 90% or higher

Advanced Field Readiness

A MSW advanced student must meet the criteria listed below to be eligible to begin the advanced practicum experience. The student may not begin to accrue hours in the field until the director of field education has confirmed the placement. Criteria for eligibility are the following:

1. The student must be accepted into advanced standing or have completed foundation-level classes.
2. The student must meet with the director of field education.
3. The student must complete the field orientation module that includes the advanced field readiness quiz, which requires a 90% for passing. This is located in the Social Work Advanced Homeroom in eclass.
4. The student must submit a completed MSW Field Placement Intake form and resume via Tevera.
5. After placement has been confirmed, complete in Tevera the Field Agency Contract and Field Confidentiality statement forms.
6. *The School of Social Work requires MSW students to have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 for eligibility to begin field. The SOSW will schedule an academic review with their school advisor for any student who receives a grade below the academic requirement to develop a plan to begin or remain in field.*

Advanced Field Readiness Assessments

Advanced Practice Continuum

Autonomous Advanced Practice Expectations

First 1/3rd Observing /
Practicing alongside

2/3rds to 3/3rd Practicing alone under supervision

What is meant by autonomous practice? To answer this question, it is helpful to start with looking at the definition of the word “autonomous”. Autonomous is defined as having the ability to undertake or carry out activities independently. This definition includes being able to react and develop responses to situations with self-reliance. From a social work practice perspective, autonomous practice exists at different skill levels and with multiple systems. For instance, a bachelor’s prepared social worker is capable of autonomous social work practice at the BSW skill level. Social work autonomous practice expectations should always match the level of skill and preparation of the social worker. Autonomous social work practice becomes more complex as the skills and training level of the social worker grow from a BSW or foundation prepared social worker to an advanced/MSW prepared social worker. Similarly, as practice skills and preparation (through observing and doing alongside) increase during the practicum experience, the social work student increases their level of autonomy in practice, eventually completing practice tasks on their own (under supervision).

As an example, we can consider the social work practice task of a clinical mental health assessment. If an advanced MSW student is in a setting where clinical mental health assessments are completed, the student would need practice experience through the field placement in order to complete the assessment autonomously, in addition to course material. In this situation, the continuum of autonomous practice would start with observing clinicians completing assessments. Next, the student would participate, alongside a clinician, in completing the assessments. Finally, the student complete assessments on their own, under supervision.

Specific Practicum Time Requirements for MSW Students

It is expected that students will complete their field hours on site. (Exceptions would be project-based activities or prior approval from the director of field education to accrue hours away from placement.) Weekly supervision is required. Plan with the field instructor for vacation or other times she/he will be away.

Students in the foundation practicum are required to accumulate a minimum of 400 field hours with a minimum of 10-13 hours per week. Advanced practicum students must complete a minimum of 500 hours with a minimum of 13-16 hours each week*. Student journals must reflect qualitative content that is consistent with the number of hours accrued each week. Students must follow rubric posted on eclass and in the course syllabus. If journal documentation

is not descriptive or lacks detail, students may be required to redo the journal in order to receiving a passing grade.

To fulfill the contractual agreement and requirement, students are expected to attend practicum every week that the academic semester is in session. Fall MSW starters must continue at their practicum until the third week of April, even if the minimum required 400 or 500 hours have been met at an earlier time. *Winter MSW starters must continue at their practicum until the week prior to Thanksgiving, even if the minimum required 400 or 500 hours have been accrued early. Exceptions such as, but not limited to, are illness, emergencies, and school holidays. If a student must be absent from practicum, the student must seek approval from the agency and their field instructor. They must also document the absence in their journal. If a student misses, or plans to miss, practicum for more than two weeks in the semester, they must connect with the director of field education.

**MSW Winter Starters must reserve 150 hours for the fall semester to practice skills learned during the semester.*

Practicum is designed to allow students to integrate knowledge gained from the classroom with the real-life experience and skill development that their field settings provide. It is for this reason that students are expected to be in their practicum settings over the course of two semesters. It is expected that students do not finish their practicum before the end of their 2nd semester. When starting in Fall, students are expected to finish practicum by the first Monday of August of the succeeding year. If an extension is needed, student must submit a field request form. Students requiring an extension may be required to register for SOCW-543 (Foundation Program Continuation Seminar, 1-Credit) or SOCW-643 (Advanced Program Continuation Seminar, 1-Credit). For more information, contact the Office of Field Education.

NOTE: Foundation students may not matriculate to advanced standing until all foundation coursework (including completing all practicum hours) is complete.

Advanced Project-Based Hours

Description: One of the innovative features of Southern Adventist University's field education program involves project-based experiences offered as practicum opportunities for Advanced standing MSW students. This was implemented in response to some agencies not being able to intentionally provide all opportunities needed for students to demonstrate the practice behaviors on their learning plans.

Experience: The partners involved in the innovative project-based field experience include individuals who have a Master's of Social Work and/or licensed social workers, agencies in the community, such as non-profits, community assistance programs, mental health community agencies, etc., and the city government. The innovation was implemented because of a discovered need. Students can work with their field placement agency or another agency to find

out what they could do to benefit the client population. Implementation would first require that students have a field instructor as well as a task supervisor who would oversee their specific project. Often students are able to use an agency to meet the program's clinical requirements and then use project-based experiences in order to meet the requirements for the macro-level administration component.

Resources: The effective function and operation of the project-based practicum experience requires the following resources:

1. Visits by the director field education to each project site/location,
2. Collaboration between the field instructor and task supervisor on monthly journals, mid-term and final learning plan evaluations,
3. Supervision by both task supervisors and field instructors to ensure that students are applying and making connections to their advanced-level learning plan,
4. Additional travel costs associated with the project-based site visits, and
5. Additional investment of time.

Field/Class Conflicts

Students must not miss class to participate in fieldwork activities. The course instructor must approve any exceptions. In addition, regular or supplementary field experiences are not to be scheduled in conflict with students' class participation.

Special Placement Situations for MSW Students

The majority of students will be placed using the regular placement procedures. A minority, however, may petition the Field Education Office for an exception, which includes employee-based, long-distance, early, and international placements.

Early Placement Opportunities for MSW Students

The School of Social Work may partner with agencies that initiate an early placement process due to a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, competitive placement settings and/or needs of the population served. Agencies and students should present compelling reasons of educational benefit to be eligible for an early placement.

Early Termination of Placement of Field Supervision

Early termination of placement setting or field supervision is only considered under extenuating circumstances. It is very difficult to develop an adequate learning experience for a student in a new placement in mid-semester or mid-year, thus petitions for termination of placement must involve the director of field education. If the student or field instructor initiates a change in practicum, she/he must first contact the director of field education and participate in a formal problem-solving process meeting. If the problem-solving process results in the decision to terminate, the student and field instructor must complete a Termination of Practicum Petition

form. Students may be subject to losing hours. A student may not be assigned a new practicum until she/he has approval from the director of field education. The student will be expected to complete an Appeal Plan prior to starting in a new practicum. Students should expect the entire change process to take at least four to six weeks.

Student Leave from Practicum

It is understood that occasional illness or other emergencies may necessitate absence from the practicum. Students are expected to work out these arrangements with the field instructor.

If the absence is more than two weeks, the director of field education should be notified by the student and field instructor.

Addressing Disruptions that affect Practicum Attendance

There may be a situation where a student is unable to continue or maintain consistent attendance in practicum due to extenuating circumstances. This includes, but is not limited to, severe medical incidents, emergencies, or disruptions/changes in their academic goals. Student may choose to petition to *pause*, or hold their practicum hour accrual and attendance. This will only be considered under extenuating circumstances and after the student completes a “Disruption in Practicum/Pause Request” form. Contact the Office of Field Education for this form.

Placement Process

Students should immediately make an appointment with the director of Field Education to discuss practicum options. Students must complete the Online Orientation Modules via eclass, students will need to order their access to Tevera*. In Tevera there is a MSW Student Field Intake form and students must submit a PDF copy of their resume.

*If students cannot obtain Tevera before the start of the semester, please contact the Field Office for alternate instructions.

Employment-Based Field Placement

An Employment-Based practicum is a field placement in an organization in which the student is also employed. To ensure an employment-based practicum will meet the CSWE accreditation requirements, there is a specialized process for students to request approval for an employment-based practicum. Employment-based practicums are not guaranteed and cannot be required of an employer. Both the Office of Field Education and the employer must agree to an employment-based practicum in order for it to be approved. The following employment-based guidelines are:

1. Student assignments and employee tasks may qualify as field hours when directly linked to the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) and level of practice (generalist or specialized). If all nine competencies cannot be met, the student and agency will work together to develop a plan to meet the remaining competencies. Depending on the student’s professional development goals

and/or agency requirements, the student may request to add/create new projects to support their learning, or instead the internship role may be entirely different and separate from the employment role.

2. Students will communicate with their employer in advance to determine the possibility of an employment-based practicum prior to completing the employment-based application.

Three types of employment-based practicum:

- a. Type 1: The student's job meets all nine social work competencies. Therefore the student's job counts as their internship as is.
 - b. Type 2: The student's job meets some but not all of the nine social work competencies. New learning activities (tasks/responsibilities/projects) will be identified to meet the remaining competencies. Therefore, the student's job PLUS the added new learning activities count as their practicum.
 - c. Type 3: The student's practicum is within the same organization but is entirely separate from their routine job. The internship meets all nine social work competencies.
3. Supervision for the student's employment-based practicum must be provided by a field instructor who meets the requirements (a professional with a MSW depending on student level) that has at least two years of post-graduate work experience.
 - a. Field instructor must be a different person than the student's current employment supervisor.
 - b. In situations where there is no employee qualified to serve as the student's field instructor, an independent field instructor will be assigned. For employment-based practicum using an independent field instructor, an on-site task supervisor is required. The task supervisor must be an agency employee and works directly with the student. The task supervisor's role may be fulfilled by the student's employment supervisor.
 - c. The employer must have an existing Memorandum of Agreement and complete the Prospective Field Education Setting Assessment form and assume all the agency responsibilities as outlined in the field setting criteria section on [page 9](#). If the employer is not an existing partner, the new agency affiliation process will be initiated.
 4. Students who desire to have a field practicum in the setting where they are also employed must have worked a minimum of three (3) months, submit a completed Employment-Based Field Placement Application in Tevera, and be approved by the Field Education Office. A job description and a clearly defined field education learning plan are required before the placement can be confirmed. The student's employer must agree in writing to allow the student to fulfill field education requirements in the employment setting. The student must be supervised by someone other than her/his employment supervisor.
 5. Once the student has received approval from the Field Education Office with an employment-based practicum, the field instructor assures that the student's field

placement is designed to provide them with opportunities to demonstrate developing competence in specific practice behaviors. Throughout the practicum experience, the director of field education and the faculty field liaison will collaborate with the field instructor to ensure the academic integrity of the employment-based practicum. In situations where an employment setting does not provide sufficient opportunity for the student to demonstrate the competency practice behaviors, it will be necessary to make arrangements to develop a plan to meet all nine competencies even if it involves an outside project.

6. Student completing field requirements over three semesters may accrue up to 16 hours per week toward required field hours. Students completing field requirements over two semesters may accrue up to 20 hours per week toward required field hours.

Long Distance Placements for MSW Students

The School of Social Work recognizes the importance of providing flexibility for students seeking field placements located beyond the university's greater community. With our growing online student population, the Office of Field Education is prepared to establish and expand our partnerships with agencies throughout the United States of America and abroad. A student should meet with the director of field education as soon as possible to discuss practicum options. It is the student's responsibility to identify at least six potential agencies and submit the information on the MSW Student Field Intake form. Students must complete the online field modules in eclass and submit a resume and completed intake form in Tevera. The agency and field instructor must be approved by the Office of Field Education prior to any practicum assignments being confirmed.

International Field Placements for MSW Students

The foundation year field practicum placement is an integral part of laying the groundwork for generalist social work practice. For this reason, foundation field practicum placements for students living in the United States are required to take place within agency settings in the domestic United States.

Advanced students from the United States desiring an international field practicum experience must petition the director of field education. In order for an international practicum placement to be arranged and approved, it must comply with all policies, procedures, and requirements pertaining to the field education program.

International students taking the online program will be placed in their local communities. Students must meet with the director of field to discuss practicum opportunities, complete the online field modules in eclass and submit a resume and completed the MSW Student Field Intake form in Tevera.

Field Hours on Hold

A student's hours will be placed on hold if submission deadlines for documentation are not met. When a student's hours are placed on hold, per the signed Field Agency Contract, the student is still required to go to their practicum, but hours will not be counted. Hours begin accruing again once documents have been submitted and the Office of Field Education is notified that all documents are updated. However, hours while on hold are not retroactive. After one occurrence of hours being placed on hold, the Office of Field Education may restrict a student from going to practicum until documentation is submitted and the Office of Field Education is notified. If hours are restricted, a reinstatement meeting must occur.

If students miss practicum due to illness or vacation etc., this must be indicated in the journal and a zero placed in the number of hours accrued on the timesheet. In addition, if hours are on hold, students still need to write a journal complete with information of what they did at practicum even though the total hours is zero, as hours are not accrued during this time.

If a student has their hours placed on hold more than twice during an academic school year, the student must meet with the Field Team. In this meeting, field readiness will be re-assessed and an evaluation of student continuation in the field program would be decided.

Incomplete and Final Evaluation Grade in Field

Incompletes (I) are given until all field-related requirements have been met. Scores of **4 or higher** are required by the end of the practicum year to receive a passing grade. Journal scores of 16 or high are also required to pass.

Other Readiness Considerations

In addition to the competency-related readiness factors presented and assessed by the MSW program, information regarding confidentiality, use of social media and technology, safety practices in the field, and awareness about harassment are in the MSW integrative seminar courses. These courses are **either prior to or** concurrent with, students entering their field practicum.

Confidentiality

Students are required to sign a Field Education Confidentiality Statement form in Tevera before starting their field practicum.

Safety

The safety of our students, staff, faculty, agency partners and community members is of utmost importance. The School of Social Work recommends the following safety guidelines for students in the field. When a student initially joins an agency for the practicum, the student and agency

staff should review the agency's established safety policies and procedures for handling specific situations that are potentially difficult or threatening, such as client's threat of harm to self or others, medical emergencies, evacuation or shelter-in-place plans, etc.

Additionally, the following practice suggestions are intended to assist the student in developing a plan to address safety concern:

1. Students should always be alert to their surroundings and of any potential factors that could put them at risk of harm.
2. Valuables should not be brought to placement settings or left in cars, and agencies with in-person on-site practicum should provide a secure place for students to store their personal belongs such as wallet, ID, and/or cell phone.
3. Students are expected to adhere to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and University guidelines, along with any federal, state or local recommendations and/or restrictions, regarding communicable disease such as the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - a. If a student is on-site, it is the expectation that the organization is observing CDC guidelines regarding personal protective equipment (PPE) and, if PPE is required, that it also be provided, if possible.
4. Agencies should have safety policies in place for home visits and after-hour meetings:
 - a. Students should notify appropriate agency staff when community visits (i.e. home visits) are planned, and provide information about who will be visited, the address and the expected length of time for the visit;
 - b. Take a cell phone, if available, on home visits, especially when there are indications of possible domestic dispute, physical violence, vicious animals, or if the client lives in an isolated or high crime area.
5. If the student is meeting with a client whom the student does not feel safe with, it is important to discuss the situation fully with agency staff and develop a plan for addressing safety concerns.
6. Seek out training opportunities to identify typical responses to emergency or hostile situations and plan of action related to these types of situations.
7. Avoid sharing personal phone numbers with clients or discuss with agency staff and instructors prior to distributing the number.

Harassment

The School of Social Work will not tolerate any form of harassment including:

1. Sexual/physical harassment.
2. Emotional/verbal harassment.
3. Racial/ethnic harassment.
4. Cyber harassment.

5. Any conduct that intimidates, threatens, or endangers the health and safety of any person.

Students are encouraged to examine policy within the practicum setting regarding harassment and should notify the faculty field liaison and the director of field education immediately in the event there is any incident that appears to involve harassment.

Use of Social Media and Technology

While at field practicum, students must refrain from checking their personal phones and devices for emails, phone calls, and text messages that are personal in nature and from conducting personal internet browsing from agency computers. Use of social media including text messaging, tweets, Instagram, and Facebook-type postings should never reference information or events related to field placement. **Work-related electronic documents that may be confidential in nature should not be downloaded or saved onto personal or home laptops, computers, or devices.** Other precautions should be taken to protect the boundaries between personal and professional and to protect the safety and privacy of the client and agency as well as the privacy of the social work student.

Attire

While expectations vary from agency to agency, students must follow the same dress code that is required of agency employees. Agency policies including, but not limited to dress, tattoos, and/or body piercings, must be adhered to.

Monitoring Students and Maintaining Field Liaison Contact with Field Settings

Students are closely monitored in their field education experience. Field placements are evaluated to ensure they are providing a quality learning experience for students and that they facilitate the achievement of program competency practice behaviors. Monitoring the quality of field instruction may be accomplished through face-to-face, e-mail, electronic meetings (Zoom, Teams, etc.), and phone contacts among student, field instructor, director of field education, and field liaison.

Monitoring Students in the Field Setting

Oversight of students in field education takes place through the integration seminar courses. The faculty who teach these courses monitor students' field placement experiences through specific class discussions and assignments.

While in the field setting, the student is assigned to a qualified and trained field instructor. It is a program requirement for the student and field instructor to meet for a minimum of *one hour per week* for direct supervision. The ongoing evaluation of a student's performance is an integral part of the field instructor's responsibilities. During weekly supervision, the field instructor and

student discuss the documentation in the journal for that week. This may include performance strengths and weaknesses, progress towards achieving competence in the practice behaviors, and professional responsibility. It is advised that the field instructor submit comments in that week's journal during the supervision meeting in order to approve their time for the week.

The monthly document (Monthly Field Journal August, Monthly Field Journal September, etc.) is due to the director of field education by the first Sunday of the following month for MSW students (example: August journal is due the first Sunday of September). PLEASE NOTE: *Blank journal forms for subsequent months will not appear in Tevera until the first day of the month.*

Maintaining Field Liaison Contacts with the Field Setting

The School of Social Work assigns a faculty field liaison to each student registered for practicum. The field liaison must be either a full-time social work faculty member or an adjunct faculty member contracted as a field liaison. Field liaisons undergo training to prepare them to serve in their role as a primary contact person between the MSW program and the field setting.

Field liaisons will make a field setting site visits during the course of the practicum cycle (usually at the mid-term) to assess the student's learning and to provide guidance and support to the field instructor. The field liaison is expected to visit the field setting at least one time during the practicum cycle. In addition to the face-to-face visit(s), email correspondence or phone conferences may also be scheduled at the student's, task supervisor's or field instructor's request, in order to address concerns in the field placement. Electronic liaison visits may be utilized for students in long distant placement settings.

Student Individualized Field Education Plan and Field Learning Plan

Evaluation is an important part of the educational process and should be ongoing throughout the year. The Field Education Learning Plan is the primary tool for evaluating a student's progress.

The Individualized Field Education Plan (IFEP) is completed to support the student and agency in discovering activities and projects for the learning plan. This form must be submitted to the director of field education in Tevera *within two (2) weeks* of starting a practicum.

The learning plan is developed by the student and the field instructor. The director of field education or the field liaison may offer additional information with suggestions. The initial learning plan is *due four (4) weeks* of starting a practicum.

If students fail to submit the IFEP or learning plan on time, the student will cease to accrue field hours and the field instructor, task supervisor and field liaison will be notified. Per policy the student will be required to continue in the practicum placement, but will not accrue practicum hours until these documents are submitted to the director of field education through Tevera (See Field Hours on Hold, [page 23](#)).

Mid/Final-Term Evaluation for MSW Students

Student learning evaluation is guided using the MSW Field Education Learning Plan instrument on both the foundation and advanced levels and makes explicit what the student's learning activities will be. The field instructor can use the learning plan to direct the student to the educational opportunities (cases, projects, meetings, etc.) that are most appropriate for the student's current skills and which are related to program competencies and practice behaviors. The learning plan may be modified as mastery is achieved, new needs emerge, or additional field education experiences become available.

Scoring of the Learning Plans MSW

The learning plan evaluation scale is as follows:

1. Unsafe Performance
2. Beginner Performance
3. Standard Performance
4. Professional Performance
5. Exceptional Performance

By the end of the field practicum experience each student is required to achieve a level **of 4 or higher** on each practice behavior in the learning plan evaluation to successfully complete the field education requirement. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the learning plan for the field instructor to review, provide feedback and sign in Tevera.

Field Instructor Evaluation of Student

Ongoing evaluation of a student's performance occurs both informally and during structured weekly supervision appointments. Evaluation of the student's learning is accomplished during weekly face-to-face (in-person, virtual, or phone) supervision through: (1) identifying performance strengths and weaknesses, (2) evaluating progress towards achieving mastery of the practice behaviors, and (3) verifying the weekly journal and time (form is in Tevera). The student writes journals each week to discuss with his/her field instructor. At the end of the month, the student submits the journal form in Tevera to be reviewed by the field instructor and the director of field education

Field Liaison Evaluation of Student

Faculty field liaisons maintain contact with the student and field instructor and schedule visits in the practicum setting. The liaison visit is an opportunity to assess student learning, student/field instructor interaction, and the field setting in general. Feedback is solicited from both the field instructor and the student about their perceptions concerning the student's field experience. The field liaison records observations and data gathered from the setting visit on the Field Liaison Contact Form. This feedback is shared with the director of field education in Tevera. Field liaisons are assigned to students in Tevera.

Evaluating Field Setting Effectiveness

The MSW program continually evaluates field placement settings to ensure they are providing a quality learning experience for students. Field setting effectiveness is monitored through both formative and summative means. These evaluation measures address how well the setting provides learning experiences that enable students to develop and demonstrate all of the program's competencies.

Formative evaluation of field settings occurs weekly through the information students share in the Integration of Faith and Practice Seminar classes or in their weekly field journals. If students experience significant negative interactions or circumstances, they report those experiences to the seminar professor/field liaison. The professor/field liaison immediately informs the director of field education of any negative interactions or circumstances. The director of field education, in collaboration with the Field Team, determine whether or not the problem the student is experiencing is performance related. Some examples of non-performance situations that can result in negative field experiences are the following:

1. Inadequate setting resources or learning opportunities to support field education requirements.
2. Unanticipated "mismatch" of student and field education setting needs.
3. Agency reorganization.
4. Personality or ideological clash between field instructor and student.

All reported negative experiences are followed up. The director of field education may set up an appointment with the student to discuss the situation in a more in-depth way than is done in the class setting, or, if the situation falls outside the expected professional standards of the profession or seems to indicate that the setting is not meeting program criteria, the director of field education may contact the field setting to explore the situation from the perspective of the setting's personnel. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the director of field education will set up a meeting with the student and setting personnel to determine a course of action. On rare occasions where an appropriate and equitable solution is not found, the director of field education may elect to change the student's placement.

Summative evaluations of field placements occur several times throughout the field experience. The field liaison visits provide opportunities for field setting evaluation and documentation. Students also give direct feedback about field settings at the end of their placement cycle through the Field Placement Evaluation, which is completed as part of their practicum class.

In the event that a field setting is thoroughly evaluated and the director of field education concludes that it does not meet the program's criteria as an effective setting for field education placements, the setting is removed from the program's roster. The setting may be reinstated after it is evident that the inadequacies have been appropriately addressed.

Unsatisfactory Performance in Field Settings

The field instructor plays a pivotal role in identifying unsatisfactory performance early in the practicum experience and should discuss areas of concern with the student and notify the field liaison and director of field education immediately. If the student does not demonstrate measurable growth in the identified areas within a reasonable period of time, the field liaison and director of field education should be notified. A joint meeting with the student, field instructor, field liaison, and director of field education should convene to develop strategies for remediation.

Student Problems in the Field Placement

The School of Social Work requests that the field instructor document and notify the director of field education promptly regarding any concerns about the student's performance in the agency. This includes, but is not limited to, any incident of professional misconduct that has been committed during field practicum. All incidents will be documented by the student's field instructor and sent to the director of field education. If needed, a meeting with the student, field instructor, field liaison/director of field education and at times a member of the MSW Leadership Team, will be held to assess and consider a plan for remediation. Students should be aware that they are to uphold the policies of the practicum placement, the *NASW Code of Ethics*, the policies of the School of Social Work, and the policies established by Southern Adventist University for student conduct. Behavioral deviance to any of these entities may result in formal disciplinary action.

Termination of Field Placement

When attempts to resolve the problem fail, a student may be asked to leave the placement or repeat their practicum. In the case of this occurrence, at the discretion of the director of field education and the MSW Leadership Teams, there are several possible outcomes:

1. The student will be placed in a different agency and may be asked to repeat their practicum.
2. The student may be required to complete an additional number of field hours in their field placement.
3. The student may receive an "F" and/or be dismissed from the MSW program.

Field Education Non-Academic Dismissal Policy

This policy addresses the issue of non-academic dismissal from field education and is separate from policies regarding academic standing. A student may be dismissed for failure to comply with non-academic standards, even though the student is in good academic standing.

The School of Social Work uses the *NASW Code of Ethics* as the standard for professional social work conduct. Prior to beginning field placements, students are required to sign a commitment to support and uphold the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Consistent failure to demonstrate compliance with social work values, ethics, or professional behavior may warrant non-academic dismissal from

field placement. Non-academic dismissal from the field may also result in dismissal from the MSW program.

Reasons for non-academic dismissal from field placement include, but are not limited to:

1. Insensitivity for human needs, inflexibility, inappropriate attitudes toward diversity, or lack of social consciousness.
2. Lack of professionalism.
 - a. Inability to establish and maintain positive and constructive interpersonal relationship with client and field instructor,
 - b. Inability to perform professional duties due to personal problems, refusal to accept and follow instructions through on field placement assignments,
 - c. Attendance problems or failure to communicate with field instructor about schedule difficulties,
 - d. Consistent lateness,
 - e. Inability to meet deadlines or complete work.
3. Inability to demonstrate appropriate control of emotional involvement.
4. Inability to demonstrate professional assertiveness.
5. Inability to work as part of a collegial network.
6. Inability to recognize and resolve ethical conflicts and dilemmas within the social work practice.
7. Inability to prioritize duties or responsibilities.
8. Inability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries.

A student's right to appeal a non-academic field education dismissal will be granted through the standard procedure outlined in the School of Social Work *MSW Policy Handbook*.