



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Field Education Manual

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UTEP SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

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Social Work Program

Chair's Welcome

Welcome Bienvenidos (as)!

I am honored to serve as interim Chair of the Department of Social Work and am a proud UTEP and UT Austin Alumna as well as a native of the U.S.-Mexico Border region. I would like to welcome you to the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) recognizes field education as the signature pedagogy in social work education. Social work educational programs are evaluated according to student attainments of the nine social work competencies as defined by CSWE. Attainment of these competencies occurs within the classroom and through the application of social work knowledge, values, and skills through their field education experience. Within the agency setting, students provide social work services at the individual, family, group, organizational, community and policy levels of practice. Field education is one of the most important factors in your professional development as social worker practitioners. Students providing direct services to clients significantly increases the attainment of all nine social work competencies.

UTEP sits on a set of rocky desert hills at the base of the Franklin Mountains overlooking the Rio Grande River and the Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua México skyline. Located at the crossroads of the historic Paso del Norte, UTEP serves a multicultural, bilingual, predominantly Hispanic student body. Situated in one of the largest and most dynamic border metropolitan areas of the world, UTEP is rapidly achieving international recognition for excellence in research, community engaged scholarship and leadership.

UTEP is successfully transforming by pursuing a quest for excellence while strengthening our commitment to access, and thereby creating a new higher education model that is not only working in our setting and attracting widespread respect and emulation. Your field education experience is designed to enhance learning by offering an array of practicum sites throughout the border region. Some practicum sites offered are within health, mental health, child welfare, aging, immigration, the military, a Native American tribal entity, corrections, schools, community development, administration or policy and legal advocacy. You will experience challenges that individuals living in the border region regularly encounter. You will witness the oppression and discrimination that often shapes the life experiences of people along the US-Mexico border. You will come to appreciate the strength and resilience of people in facing these challenges. The Field Office has carefully selected accomplished supervisors to guide you through your learning process and provide field seminars to construct the bridge between classroom content and its application to your field experiences.

Our department, faculty, and BSW and MSW Program courses reflect the multicultural region we serve. Professors, instructors, and staff who are predominantly bilingual, conduct research and outreach on health inequalities, migration, resilience, interpersonal violence, mental and behavioral health, homelessness, child welfare, aging and other pressing social issues.

The BSW Program is a foundational base for the MSW Program, which focuses on Social Work in a Border Region and prepares individuals for practice in settings like El Paso and beyond— places that disproportionately serve populations that are undergoing rapid economic and social transformation. Graduates of the programs are professionally prepared to work in any field of social work. Graduates possess added skills and knowledge about how to practice social work with diverse populations and professionals.

Our region and others like it face enormous challenges and opportunities in health care access, substance abuse, mental health care, unemployment, disabilities, public health, migration, and family welfare. BSW and MSW students become well-grounded in how to positively address these social inequalities. Our field placement and course work approaches emphasize community-engagement, the resilience and strengths of individuals and families who are grounded in their culture and community. While confronting challenges, we stress the attributes and assets of the people who have migrated to and settled in this country and this region. At UTEP, we embrace change so we can evolve and further equip our change makers and leaders to support individuals, families, communities, organizations, and society in the most impactful ways.

We look forward to sharing further with you our excitement as being a part of UTEP, a special university and the Department of Social Work and want to be part of who you are and who you will become. Look forward to listening and learning alongside. Together, we can make your dreams a reality.

Gracias.

Eva M. Moya, PhD, LMSW
Interim Chair, Associate Professor





University of Texas at El Paso

College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Program Mission, Goals, and Competencies

MISSION

“ . . . to educate culturally competent and community-engaged social work practitioners to provide services and promote social and economic justice in partnership with the unique multicultural, international population of the U.S.-Mexico border region and beyond. The Department of Social Work is dedicated to student success.”

IN SOLIDARITY - June 18, 2020

The Department of Social Work Stands for Social Justice

We, the members of the Department of Social Work from the proud multicultural and binational community in El Paso, Texas, stand for Social Justice and support our sisters, brothers, and nonbinary companions in the face of oppression, systemic racism, violence, and brutality. Social Justice is a core social work value and it demands that all social workers, whether practitioner, academic, or researcher, uphold our Code of Ethics by taking deliberate actions to ensure that justice and equity exist in all communities. Social workers understand the history of oppression that has led black, brown, and all oppressed people to feel unsafe in their own country. As social workers, from a minority community, we work to dismantle oppressive institutional policies and practices while advocating for vulnerable and oppressed groups. As social workers, it is our duty and responsibility to address racism and all forms of social injustice by supporting and advocating for positive social change, a change where all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ethnicity, age, ability, genetic information, veteran status, or immigration status can live in peace without fear of oppression or discrimination.

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MSW GOALS

Promote the development of professional social work identity that is reflected in a commitment to competent practice through lifelong learning, participation, and achievement

Provide social work knowledge, skills, and values essential to high quality professional practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in a global context.

Prepare social work graduates with advanced knowledge, skills, values, and abilities necessary for culturally and linguistically competent professional practice within the predominantly transnational, multicultural context of the Paso Del Norte (Far West Texas/Southern New Mexico/Ciudad Juarez) border region.

Prepare graduates who are able to use knowledge of mechanisms of oppression to empower client systems at any level in order to create social change and to promote social and economic justice with disenfranchised populations, particularly those living in the border region

Provide a learning environment that embraces an understanding of the utility and process of scientific inquiry as a basis for evidence-based practice and preparing practitioners who are committed to advancing social work knowledge with specific attention to work with Hispanic populations.

BSW GOALS

The field practicum in social work education is an integral part of student training for beginning generalist social work practice. It is designed to help students with the building of knowledge, the development of skills and competencies, establishment of professional identity through practice of the basic methods and techniques learned in the classroom under the guidance, direction, and supervision of agency Field Supervisors and designated faculty Field Liaisons.

The mission of Field Instruction is derived from the Department's own statement of purpose, the CSWE standards of accreditation, and the region served by the University. Please refer to the course syllabi for Field Practicum courses 4380 and 4390 in and Student Performance Evaluation Forms in to review the educational objectives for Field Instruction.

COMPETENCIES

Each student's field assignments are expected to include practice opportunities that will develop basic competencies as defined by the Council on Social Work Education which are required of all graduates of the program.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

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



University of Texas at El Paso

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Social Work Program

Introduction

The Department of Social Work, as a member of the Council of Social Work Education, provides a Field Education Program that meets all educational and accreditation standards. The UTEP Social Work Field Education Program acknowledges the centrality of field education in social work training and its function to bridge classroom content with optimal experiential educational opportunities that permit the actualization of social work professional identity, insight, and competent practice. Grounded on a set of defined curriculum competencies and practice behaviors, the Field Education Program provides educational structures and processes that will enable students to competently practice in a borderland region.

The Field Education Program's specific charge is to channel theoretical content mastered in the classroom to experiential learning opportunities. The program is committed to the principles that optimal field training recognizes that consistency between classroom content and field experience is essential to learning. Specifically, the Field Education Program assumes that quality field education relies on: (a) integrated curriculum designs that comprehensively consider social work training within and beyond the classroom; (b) academic standards that ensure student readiness for experiential learning opportunities; (c) field training opportunities that permit and encourage the application of theoretical and conceptual content; (d) Field Supervisors who are prepared to engage in theoretical application, evidence-based practice, and the assessment of curriculum competencies and practice behaviors; and, (e) field training sites that are both consumers and producers of research.

The following were key components of the Field Education Program that were used in its development and implementation: integrated curriculum design, student readiness, field instruction readiness, and field site readiness. Each is discussed in detail below.

Integrated curriculum design. Quality field training requires curriculum development that reflects the deliberate and ongoing relationship between classroom and experiential training. Curriculum development in the Field Education Program incorporates the intent, structure, content, and processes of field education. In turn, field education is informed by evidence-based practice and the regular assessment of the theoretical orientations that are applied by the collaborating Field Supervisors and field settings. The expected channeling of classroom content into field training will require transparency in terms of the competencies that are imparted and measured throughout the curriculum.

To advance the bi-directional transfer of content between classroom and field training, the Field Education Program developed the *Field Education Manual*. In the manual, Field Faculty identify, organize (into like groupings), and summarize theoretical and conceptual class content across the curriculum in a manner that is transferrable to practicing Field Supervisors and liaisons. The effort to identify and organize relevant theories of the Social Work Program will help differentiate distinct levels of theory, organize direct practice theories into like groupings, and provide an

overview of key aspects of each grouping of theories. A grid that summarizes

key aspects of identified theoretical and conceptual material has been developed by faculty with the leadership provided by the Coordinator of Field Education. The grid is discussed with Field Supervisors during orientation of new Field Supervisors and Field Liaisons.

The theories that the Field Education Program emphasizes through optimal field opportunities include those that are grounded in the generalist perspective. Training emphasizes content that specifically provides (a) an understanding of the strengths unique to persons, families, groups, and communities who live in the borderland region; (b) an understanding of the problem patterns that disproportionately affect the U.S.-Mexico border region including, but not limited to poverty, educational disparity, health and health care inequality, and environmental pollution; (c) a framework for multi-level assessments that consider the social, political, spiritual-faith-religion, cultural, and historical contexts of the borderland region; and, (d) information on interventions that are consistent with the lived- experiences of persons, families, groups, and communities, including Hispanics, military, and Native American populations who reside in the borderland's complex contexts; and, (e) a strengths-perspective; and (f) justice-oriented practice.

Student readiness. Student participation in the Field Education Program requires the successful completion of core courses in the Junior year and concurrent enrollment in social work practice and/or field seminar courses. Moreover, student readiness to execute the objectives of field education will include the opportunity to critically examine their interests and motivations for undertaking social work field training through an interview with the Field Education Coordinator that will be used in identifying potential field placements.

Field instruction readiness: Field Supervisors have been recruited based on their credentials and experience in best and promising practices in the field in general and the borderland region. Credentials are reviewed with copies of resumes.

Field site readiness. The Field Education Program encourages field sites to be both consumers and producers of research, with the intent to develop practicum experiences that support the objectives of the Social Work Program and help identify best practices in the borderland region.

In addition, the Field Education Program is available to provide consultation to encourage field training sites to: (a) use practice methods that are empirically informed (e.g., smoking cessation models); (b) empirically assess program outcomes; (c) systematically test program innovation and field training approaches; and, (d) conduct competency-based assessment of practice behaviors. The Field Education Program facilitates the development of structural components in order to foster evidence-driven practice such as access to library resources; training on current research methods that are aimed towards empirically testing practice approaches and outcomes; and networking with university faculty to participate in research.

The Learning Agreement and Evaluation form used specifically for the Field Experience emphasize skills associated with generalist practice and the social work competencies. Field education will emphasize learning focused on skills in working with indigenous cultures; micro-level interventions that are grounded in culturally acceptable practices; and greater attention to macro level interventions to achieve social and economic justice.

The Field Education Manual that is developed for use by students, field supervisors, task supervisors, and faculty. These Field Education Guidelines outline and describe choice aspects of field education including certain policies and procedures that govern field learning processes. The guidelines describe key persons accountable for field learning experiences as well as their respective roles and responsibilities. The guidelines describe select documents used by Field Supervisors and students, and explanations on how they should be used. In sum, the purpose of the Field Education Manual is to encourage that field training is consistent with the Department of Social Work Program goals and objectives and Council of Social Work Education accreditation standards.

The Field Education Manual should be used in conjunction with the Student Handbook. Policies contained in that Handbook apply to Field Education.

The Field Education Manual is available on the Department's website:

<https://www.utep.edu/chs/sw/>

Please read the Field Education Manual, keep it handy, and refer to it as needed. Any change in policies or other manual content will be communicated to students through postings on Blackboard at the MSW Communication Board. The student representatives to the Field Education Committee are responsible for monitoring the MSW Communication Board and bringing comments or concerns to the Field Education Committee meetings for discussion and decision making. Changes in the Social Work Program are formally revealed to the students during presentation in mandatory classes, through UTEP email correspondence and through the Student Association of Social Workers.

The main purpose of social work education is to prepare students to assume the responsibilities of entry-level generalist social work practice or a graduate level social worker in a variety of social service settings. Undergraduate social work education is a professional educational process, and the field practicum is an essential component. A quality field practicum is designed to provide students with opportunities to apply practice, knowledge, skills, values, and ethics in a social work environment, within an agency setting.

The policies and procedures for the undergraduate field practice at UTEP are contained in the following pages. Its objectives are the following:

1. To orient students, field supervisors, and new faculty to the structure and mechanics of field placements.
2. To state the policies and procedures that govern field placements and the roles of field supervisors, field liaisons, students, and the Social Work Department, as well as the Coordinator of Field Instruction.
3. To explain the responsibilities and expectations that are designed to provide an educationally oriented field experience for social work majors.



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Social Work Program

Field Education Aims

The UTEP Department of Social Work provides a Field Education Program that meets all educational and accreditation standards. The UTEP Social Work Field Education Program acknowledges field education as the signature pedagogy in social work education and its function to bridge classroom content with optimal experiential education opportunities that permit the actualization of social work professional identity, insight, and competent practice.

Grounded on a set of defined curriculum competencies and practice behaviors, the UTEP Field Education Program provides educational structures and processes that enable students to competently practice in this borderland region and beyond.

A salient aim of the Field Education Program is to assist students to understand and respect diversity in general and diversity in the border region. As such, every attempt is made to provide field students with opportunities to practice with a diverse array of clients in agencies that provide culturally appropriate services. Throughout their field education, students are encouraged to (a) examine their own backgrounds to understand personal assumptions, values, and biases; (b) learn from the persons they are serving, thereby gaining respect for their unique strengths, abilities, resources, desires and aspirations; and, (c) apply this knowledge and emergent perspectives to their real-world experience and practice. The expectation of field education is that direct interaction with diverse individuals and groups, meaningful and structured supervision, and related discussions of field experiences in the student seminars will advance student awareness, sensitivity, and appropriate responses to diversity.

The Field Education Program is committed to the principles that optimal field training recognizes that consistency between classroom content and field experience is essential to learning. Specifically, the Field Education Program faculty members assume that quality field education relies on:

1. Integrated curriculum designs
2. Curriculum designs that comprehensively considers social work training within and beyond the classroom
3. Academic standards that ensure student readiness for experiential learning opportunities
4. Field training opportunities that permit and encourage the application of theoretical and conceptual content
5. Field supervisors who are prepared to engage in theoretical application, evidence-based practice, and the assessment of curriculum competencies and practice behaviors
6. Field training sites that are both consumers and producers of research.

This understanding informs the structure and processes that guide the BSW and MSW Field Education Program towards ensuring both programs fulfill their commitment to preparing competent social work practitioners. To ensure the integration of classroom and field more effectively, a two-hour integrative seminar is required every week for BSW students and 2 hours every other week for MSW students as part of their practicum experience.

The Field Education Program provides generalist practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the social work competencies. Practicum sites are selected in which students have opportunities that encourage the development of skills in working with diverse populations. Students are encouraged to develop effective leadership styles and practice skills congruent with providing services within a diverse border population (e.g., Hispanic, Native American, and Military). Students increase their awareness of majority culture values and beliefs and apply theories (e.g., migration and immigration theories) and policies that shape the context of practice in the U.S. Mexican border region. The importance of integrating evidence-based practice is accomplished using evidence-based literature within the field seminar. Given that students can choose practicum sites that allow them to focus their learning on micro, mezzo, or macro practice levels, students gain depth in culturally relevant assessment and generalist intervention strategies specific to their area of practice. For example, a practicum site has been developed with the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo that has accepted BSW and MSW students. These students can focus their learning on direct practice with tribal members. Another practicum site is at El Paso Center for Children where students are able to intervene across the spectrum of services, ranging from (a) assessments of prospective foster/adopt families; (b) conducting home visits as part of the evaluation process; (c) observe interactions between the child and the foster/adopt family; (d) facilitate identification and referral for community resources; (e) analyze the data obtained in the assessment process to produce a report and recommendation to Child Protective Services.



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Social Work Program

Field Curriculum

Practicum Social Work Courses

The MSW program requires 480 hours of practicum to include a 2-hour bi-monthly integrative seminar. The BSW program require 480 hours of practicum to include a 2-hour weekly integrative seminar. Evidenced-based practice suggests that the use of an Integrative Seminar presents an opportunity to address the contemporary issues of theory-practice integration and provides additional support for students in placement as they begin to identify challenges. These seminars are led by the MSW and BSW Field Education Liaisons. The seminars allow students to discuss practicum experiences in relation to ethics, theories, models, cultural competency, evidence-based practice, and policies utilized, as well as to explore alternative approaches to improve their skill base. The integrative seminar also allows students to maximize their learning through peer education. Areas addressed within the seminars highlight any gaps or inconsistency exists within the knowledge base of students. The curriculum changes and pedagogical approaches can be used to enhance their learning. For example, with the move to the Health Sciences Building on the main UTEP campus, the Department of Social Work increased the use of the Center for Simulation Observation Laboratory to facilitate skill development.

The required foundational field instruction courses are offered only to students who meet the program's qualifications for field placement. Students who qualify for field placement are placed in community organizations and institutions under the coordination and guidance of experienced and qualified BSW/MSW agency field supervisors. No field credit hours are given for life or work experiences.

Social work field instruction courses are offered during the regular academic year. Students are expected to be in their assigned agency settings **a minimum of 15 hours per week unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Field Supervisor and Field Liaison.** In keeping with the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) standards, UTEP Social Work Program requires students to meet a **minimum of 240 clock hours per semester** of field training.

During the practicum, students are required to work under direct supervision and guided by their qualified agency field supervisors. Task supervisors may assist in the direction of the field training; however, field supervisors are primarily accountable. **Each student is required to develop a formal individualized learning agreement for each semester.**

BSW Field Courses

There are eight required field practicum courses that comprise undergraduate field education:

SOWK 4380 Generalist Field Instruction I
SOWK 4381 Generalist Field Seminar I
SOWK 4390 Generalist Field Instruction II
SOWK 4382 Generalist Field Seminar II
SOWK 4383 Honors Field Education Seminar I
SOWK 4384 Honors Field Education Seminar II

These field instruction courses are offered only to students who meet the program's qualifications for field placement: To be considered eligible for field instruction, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Receive academic clearance from their academic advisor to begin the field instruction sequence
 - a. Successfully completed University Core and Pre-Professional courses
 - b. Be admitted to the BSW Program
 - c. Have a 2.5 or higher cumulative GPA for all courses completed in the Social Work Program by the end of the Spring semester of the first year of professional social work courses
2. Completed SOWK 2331, SOWK 2320, SOWK 3355, SOWK 3430, SOWK 3325, SOWK 3320, SOWK 3341, and SOWK 3358 with a grade of C or higher in each of these courses.
3. Complete a formal application for field instruction.
4. Attend a field orientation presented by the Department of Social Work Field Office.

Social work field instruction courses are offered during the regular academic year. Students are in their assigned agency settings for a minimum of 14 hours per week unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Field Supervisor and BSW Field Liaison. In addition, the Integrative Seminars meet every week for two hours for a total of 30 hours per semester, which are included in the required practicum hours. This totals 240 practicum hours per semester. The UTEP BSW Program requirements exceed the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) standard requirements of a minimum of 200 clock hours per semester of field training.

During the practicum, students are required to work under the direct supervision of a qualified BSW or MSW supervisor with 2 years of post-degree experience and are guided by a Field Liaison (MSW with 2 years post-MSW experience). Task supervisors may assist in the direction of the field training; however, field supervisors have accountability for the student's educational experience. Each student is required to develop a formal individualized learning agreement in consultation with their field or task supervisor for each semester that is based on the CSWE competencies (see Appendix 2.1-1 a).

SOWK 4380 Generalist Field Instruction I is the first of two foundational practicum courses, is designed to orient students to the structural components of the agency and the community. understand the agency's administrative hierarchy; become familiar with agency policies and procedures; development of professional identity; and acquiring beginning practice skills, with

emphasis on engagement and biopsychosocial assessment with clients/client systems. Students begin to integrate classroom learning with actual practice experiences; the Field Education Seminar (*SOWK 4381*) enhances learning in this area. The nature and diversity of student learning experiences vary from agency to agency, but the student is expected to acquire beginning knowledge, skills, values, and ethics for generalist social work practice from a diverse cultural perspective. Field Instruction I, the first of two practica in this sequence, is designed to orient students to the structural components of the agency and the community, understand the agency's administrative hierarchy, become familiar with agency policies and procedures, and begin the integration of classroom learning to actual practice situations. The nature and diversity of student learning experiences vary from agency to agency, but the student is expected to acquire beginning practice skills, values, ethics, and knowledge for generalist social work practice from a multicultural border perspective

SOWK 4390 Generalist Field Instruction II builds on the learning experiences of *SOWK 4382 Generalist Field Seminar II*. The student is expected to continue developing the knowledge, skill, and values for generalist social work practice, and to continue developing and/or enhancing skills for practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

SOWK 4381 Generalist Field Seminar I allows students to discuss practicum experiences in relation to ethics, theories, models, cultural competency, evidence-based practice, and policies utilized, as well as to explore alternative approaches to improve their skill base. This occurs through the integration of classroom content and field experiences. This course is always taken concurrently with *SOWK 4380 Generalist Field Instruction I*. Students cannot take one course without taking the other. If a student drops either *Generalist Field Instruction* or *Generalist Field Seminar*, they must also drop the linked course. Integrative Field Seminar I accompanies Field Instruction I and is designed to help the student understand the application of theory to actual practice situations; to explore, examine, and evaluate the connections between learning and doing; and to develop a deeper understanding of the diversity of generalist social work practice in the border region. The seminar is instructional, interactive, and experiential in nature, form, and content, and provides participants with many opportunities to enhance the teaching/learning processes that occur in the field by including opportunities for sharing their own field experiences with their peers.

SOWK 4382 Generalist Field Seminar II builds on the learning experiences of *SOWK 4390 Generalist Field Instruction II*. The student is expected to continue developing the knowledge, skill, and values for generalist social work practice, and to continue developing and/or enhancing skills for practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This occurs through the integration of classroom content and field experiences. This course is always taken concurrently with *SOWK 4390 Generalist Field Instruction II*. Students cannot take one course without taking the other. If a student drops either *Generalist Field Instruction* or *Generalist Field Seminar*, they must also drop the linked course. Please refer to Appendix 2.1-1 a for the format of learning agreement and evaluation document that details the competency and associated practice behaviors expected during Field Instruction I & II. Integrative Field Seminar II builds on the first seminar, accompanies Field Instruction II and is designed to give students the opportunity to further develop practice skills and augment newly acquired knowledge and skills. Students are also expected to demonstrate understanding by applying current social work research to practice.

SOWK 4383 Honors Field Education Seminar I allows students to discuss practicum experiences in relation to ethics, theories, models, cultural competency, evidence-based practice, and policies

utilized, as well as to explore alternative approaches to improve their skill base. This occurs through the integration of classroom content and field experiences. This course is always taken concurrently with *SOWK 4380 Generalist Field Instruction I*. Students cannot take one course without taking the other. If a student drops either *Generalist Field Instruction* or *Generalist Field Seminar*, they must also drop the linked course. Integrative Field Seminar I accompanies Field Instruction I and is designed to help the student understand the application of theory to actual practice situations; to explore, examine, and evaluate the connections between learning and doing; and to develop a deeper understanding of the diversity of generalist social work practice in the border region. The seminar is instructional, interactive, and experiential in nature, form, and content, and provides participants with many opportunities to enhance the teaching/learning processes that occur in the field by including opportunities for sharing their own field experiences with their peers.

SOWK 4384 Honors Field Education Seminar II The development of advanced skills and a theoretical basis for advanced social work practice is consistent with honors-level clinical performance in a BSW Program. This course is always taken concurrently with *SOWK 4390 Generalist Field Instruction II*. Students cannot take one course without taking the other. If a student drops either *Generalist Field Instruction* or *Generalist Field Seminar*, they must also drop the linked course. It more effectively prepares BSW students to enter at a more advanced level of MSW coursework. Students will learn and apply more advanced communication skills, practice models, assessments, and interventions, and to develop more in-depth worker-client relationships that are necessary to more advanced therapeutic interventions. These practice skills will be addressed at the individual and family level of clinical practice.

MSW Field Courses

There are four required field practicum courses that comprise foundational field education:

SOWK 5335 Foundation Practicum I

SOWK 5336 Foundation Practicum II

SOWK 5345 Advanced Practicum I

SOWK 5346 Advanced Practicum II

SOWK 5335 Foundation Practicum I, the first of two foundational practicum courses is designed to orient students to the structural components of the agency and the community, understand the agency's administrative hierarchy, become familiar with agency policies and procedures, and begins to integrate classroom learning and unique talents and character traits to actual practice situations. The nature and diversity of student learning experiences vary from agency-to-agency, but the student is expected to acquire beginning knowledge, skills, values, and ethics for generalist social work practice from a diverse cultural and linguistic border perspective.

SOWK 5336 Foundation Practicum II builds on the learning experiences of *SOWK 5335 Foundation Practicum I*. The student is expected to continue developing the knowledge, skill, and value bases for generalist social work practice, and to continue developing and/or enhancing skills for practice with individuals, families groups, organizations, and communities (field instruction OR foundation practicum).

SOWK 5345 Advanced Practicum I is the first advanced practicum course in which students participate in planned direct practice experience and an integrative seminar that integrates

advanced social work knowledge of theory, practice skills, continued development of social work perspective, attitudes, ethics, and values in the border region setting. Students participate in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) simulations.

SOWK 5346 Advanced Practicum II, the second advanced practicum course builds on the learning experiences of *SOWK 5345 Advanced Practicum I*. Students participate in planned direct practice experience and an integrative seminar that integrates advanced social work knowledge of theory, practice skills, continued development of social work perspective, attitudes, ethics, and values in the border region setting. Students participate in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) simulations.

Integrated Seminar Course

The seminar experience is designed to help the student understand the application of theory to actual practice situations; to explore, examine and evaluate the connections between learning and practicing; and to develop a deeper understanding of the diversity of social work practice in the border region. The seminar is instructional, interactive, and experiential in nature, form, and content, and provides students with many opportunities for sharing their own field experiences with their peers. All students will be expected to participate in an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) experience.

Seminars will meet every other week and assignments will be incorporated into the Pass/Fail (S/U) grade for the course.

The grade for Practicum is 50% (earned through final evaluation) and the grade for Seminar is 50%. Students must pass both to receive credit for Field Education. CSWE states that social work educators are responsible for ensuring that students are prepared to practice safely, competently, and ethically with all clients, constituents, and the public. If a student receives a Fail (U) in field education or has been found guilty of an ethical or student code violation, he/she is automatically terminated from the MSW Program. If the student chooses to appeal this decision, the student may file a request in writing to the Director of Field Education for the student's case to be reviewed at a department meeting. Faculty will determine if termination is warranted. When an ethical or student code violation occurs, it is reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). If the student disagrees with faculty decision, student may appeal through OSCCR. Student can grieve their grade by utilizing the grade appeal process with the Student Grievance Committee (<https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-3/academic-policies-and-faculty-personnel-matter/4.15-grade-review-process.html>). If the Student Grievance Committee determines that a hearing committee should be formed to resolve the issue, the Chair of the Student Grievance Committee shall appoint a committee after consultation with the parties involved. The Hearing Committee will consist of an appointed chair of the Hearing Committee and two members of the general faculty outside the department concerned. No person involved with the conciliation effort may serve on the hearing committee.

In a case involving graduate credit, the Hearing Committee Chair and a majority of its members must be members of the graduate faculty. Immediately on formation of a Hearing Committee, the Chair of that Hearing Committee shall give written notice to the student and the faculty member involved. The student and faculty member must be given at least one week's notice prior to the first meeting of the Hearing Committee. Procedures for the conduct of the hearing are available from the Chair of the Student Grievance Committee and Dean of Students Office.

OSCE Standardized Patients

Students will participate in a standardized patient experience, and this will be discussed during your seminar. A reflection paper based on their OSCE experience will be submitted to the seminar instructor. This reflective paper is based on the CSWE competencies in relation to the student's OSCE experience.

IPE – Health Focused Inter Professional Education

We are excited about the many opportunities that our students will have available to them as they begin to work in an Interprofessional manner. The objective of the Health Focused Interprofessional Education (IPE) Community is to assist students with the development of innovative and evidence based interprofessional education models that provide experiences on how to work with other professions.

Assignments

The following is a guide for developing specific student assignments and should serve as a guide in developing the learning agreement. The aim is for students to have all the following experiences during the course of two foundational practicum semesters and two advanced practicum semesters:

1. Assignments in direct service with individuals and/or families. The exact number should be related to the complexity and duration of the assignments and may vary based on other agency requirements.
2. Group assignments in which the student has some direct leadership responsibility. These groups may have a variety of purposes including but not limited to education, increasing socialization, provision of environmental support, social planning or change and task identification/ accomplishment.
3. Participation in staff meetings and case conferences, including appropriate presentations by the student.
4. Opportunities to participate in research as part of the practice experience. This might include literature reviews, research/evaluation designing, information gathering and presentation, data handling, analyzing data, case studies, and/or needs assessments.
5. Participation in activities related to the formulation, implementation and/or evaluation of agency policies, such as board meetings or staff committees.
6. Resource mobilization using the community as well as the agency in serving the client.
7. Involvement in the network of social agencies serving the clientele of the field placement agency.
8. Collaboration and consultation with other staff.
9. Documentation to meet agency and field education requirements.

The Learning Agreement

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) mandates specific educational competencies or learning objectives for all social work programs. These expected educational outcomes have been incorporated into the UTEP MSW Social Work Program's field education Learning Agreement Form. Regardless of the field placement setting, all students are expected to acquire the same set of competencies in three domains: knowledge, values, and skills. The learning goals/objective statements are general and should be individualized to the specific student and agency through the delineation of activities to achieve the defined behaviors.

In social work field education, learning agreements have been used extensively and have shown to improve performance and satisfaction of field instruction for students and field instructors. Learning agreements accomplish this by:

Reducing the subjectivity and ambiguity of field instruction goals, experiences, evaluations, and allowing students to be more self-directed and responsible in determining their learning needs and in critiquing their own performance. The underlying premise is that a student learns better and more willingly when she or he participates in designing a Learning Agreement.

Students are required to identify their own learning needs and career goals, consistent with targeted competencies, and to collaborate with the Field Supervisor in identifying strategies for achieving the expected educational outcomes provided in the Field Education Learning Agreement. Accordingly, at the beginning of each semester, Field Supervisors and students are asked to complete a learning agreement:

The Student Learning Agreement delineates nine competencies (Appendix 2.1-1 a, CSWE 2022) and specifies the behaviors expected for the practicum experience. Students describe the activities in which they will engage to meet the competency skills identified and present a timeline for achievement of the skills. At the end of each semester, a final evaluation completed by the field/task supervisor is used to record the student's progress. In addition, students submit to their seminar instructor assignments reflecting on their work with a client/client system and a on a role plays with OSCEs and IPEs. Another assignment entails the student's presentation of a case from their practicum that includes a complete biopsychosocial assessment and plan of care. The student must include a discussion of the theoretical models used to guide their plan of care and ethical implications relevant to the case presented. These assignments are used to connect the student's learning of classroom content, to elaborate on the skills and theories they used in their role play, and to monitor the student's progress during the semester. Finally, students electronically submit signed, weekly time sheets through a software program. The field/task supervisor and field seminar instructor monitor online both time and activities through the software program. This is also used to monitor the student's progress.

During the first semester, the field/task supervisor may need to be more active in helping some students understand the purpose and construction of a learning agreement. By the second semester, all students should be capable of identifying gaps in their learning that need to be addressed, devising strategies to be incorporated in their renegotiated learning agreements, and submitting them to their field supervisors for input and approval. The student is responsible for uploading the learning agreement in software program for access by the field seminar instructor, the field liaison, and the field/task supervisor.

Agency Evaluation

Reflecting the Department's concern for student feedback, students submit an Evaluation of the Field Experience at the end of each field placement over the two semesters, usually the Spring semester.

The Learning Agreement and the Field Student Evaluation Form are contained within the same document. The expected educational objectives listed in the Learning Agreement serve as the basis for evaluating the student's performance during each semester. It may be helpful for students

and field/task supervisors to read the Field Student Evaluation Form before beginning to work on the Learning Agreement. Familiarity with the Field Student Evaluation Form will bring the purpose of the Learning Agreement into greater clarity.

Time Sheets

All student interns will also be required to enter weekly time sheets in the software program for approval by his/her agency field/task supervisor and seminar instructor. It is the intern's responsibility to maintain accurate records of the total number of hours spent in the field practicum site. Maintaining a copy of these records by the student is strongly recommended. Students who have not completed the required 240 clock hours during the first semester of field will not be allowed to start working on the 240 hours needed for the next semester. Interns who accumulate an excess of hours beyond the total 240 required during one semester will not be allowed to transfer any accumulated time towards the total clock hours required during the following semester. An intern may not engage in accruing hours in their practicum prior to the first day of class in each semester, unless approved by field liaison, and must complete all 240 hours prior to the last day of classes for the same semester. Liability insurance issues drive this requirement. The only exception to this rule is that the student may engage in orientation or trainings relative to their practicum site prior to the first day of classes. Including training or orientation hours requires field liaison approval.



University of Texas at El Paso
College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Admission to Field Education

Eligibility Determination

To be considered eligible for field instruction, it is the policy of the Department of Social Work that students meet the following criteria:

MSW students must:

- be currently enrolled in the MSW Graduate Program
- obtain approval from the academic advisor to verify academic readiness for field instruction
- have met with Practicum Coordinator for practicum advising and placement

BSW students must:

- be currently enrolled in the BSW Program
- obtain approval from the academic advisor approving academic readiness for field instruction
- have met with Practicum Coordinator for practicum advising and placement

The students are responsible for submitting the electronic Field Education Application. If the eligibility requirements have not been met, the student will not be allowed to continue this process until all requirements are met.

Application Process MSW and BSW

Applicants must be in good academic standing with the Social Work Department and anticipate entering practicum. Applicants must submit the following:

1. Approved and current degree plan
2. A completed electronic application for field practicum no later than the deadline date indicated
3. An updated resume

The student is responsible for ensuring that all the above documentation is uploaded into the software program for the Field Office. Applicants missing the requested information will not be reviewed, considered, or processed for field placement until all materials are submitted. Late submissions may limit the availability of practicum sites.

MSW & BSW Admission to Social Work Practicum

Students will access the list of placement sites in the software program prior to attending the Field Exchange Day, typically in February, in which students have an opportunity to meet with agency field supervisors representing placement sites.

The Practicum Coordinator and the BSW Field Coordinator consider their respective application packets. All applicants are notified via email by the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator if their field packet is incomplete. Once the applicant's completed application is received, the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator will inform students of Field Readiness Day, in which attendance is mandatory.

Field Readiness Day, students also have the opportunity to discuss placement options in detail with the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator. Students can also learn about the placements by accessing either the software program or the departmental website (<http://socialwork.utep.edu>) to view placement sites, and where available, a link and/or a video to the practicum's website is provided.

Per CSWE standards for accreditation and UTEP's policy, in order to accept social work interns, social service agencies must have a formal affiliation agreement in place with the Department of Social Work that ensures educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. Agencies are encouraged to have a BSW or MSW level social workers with two years' post-degree work experience who are qualified to provide field supervision and must have been in their current position for a minimum of 6 months. Exceptions may be made to these qualifications for certain types of agencies, such as those which offer professional services that are not otherwise available to populations identified in the Department's mission. If a student is placed at a practicum site that does not have a qualified supervisor on site to provide supervision, the department will provide a MSW for weekly supervision.

What happens if practicum application is denied?

An Application for Admission to Field Education may be denied by the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator if it is established that the student has not met the requisite academic requirements needed or the application packets is not complete by the submission deadline. If the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator denies a field placement request, he/she notifies the applicant via email within seven working days of the decision. The applicant may either contact his/her Practicum Coordinator or BSW Field Coordinator to develop a potential remediation plan or will have ten working days to appeal the decision. The appeal must be filed in writing directly to the Practicum Coordinator and/or the BSW Field Coordinator. If the student decides to go to the next level of the appeal process, the appeal must be made in writing and submitted to the Chair of the Department of Social Work and ultimately the student could file an appeal through the standard University channels.

Students should work with the Practicum Coordinator and/or the BSW Field Coordinator to arrange all field placements.

Preparing for Pre-Placement Interview: Practicum Coordinator and Student Responsibilities

The Practicum Coordinator and the BSW Field Coordinator work to identify field placement sites that match the educational objectives of the program and the learning needs of students.

Once this process has been completed, the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator will:

1. Provide students with the names, phone numbers, and addresses of agencies student agrees to contact for pre-placement interviews
2. Offer students support by allowing them additional opportunities to discuss or explore placement needs and to share pertinent background information about different practicum sites

Students will then proceed in setting up interviews with identified agencies. If, after interviewing, the student has not decided on a preference or has not been selected by one of the field supervisors at one of the pre-placement interviews, the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator will be responsible for selecting and offering the student up to two other agencies for pre-placement interviews and will assist the student in preparing for the interviews, if necessary.

If a student is unable to secure a placement after 6 interviews, the student would be referred to the Field Coordinator for further assistance.

It is the responsibility of the student to work with the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator to attain placement. Students cannot contact agencies independent of the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator. If placement is not secured timely, the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator has the authority to assign a student to a practicum setting that has agreed to accept the student. If the student rejects this option or no placement option has been identified, the student may be considered for placement in the following academic year, unless the student voluntarily withdraws. Inability to locate a placement will require the student to withdraw from both the field instruction and seminar courses until a practicum placement is obtained. If the student is unwilling to withdraw and no placement options can be secured, the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator will have ultimate responsibility for recommending that the student be terminated from the program.

The Practicum Coordinator and/or the BSW Field Coordinator informs either the Coordinator of the BSW or MSW Program and the Chair of the Department of Social Work of his/her and the Field Education Committee's recommendations. The Chair of the Department of Social Work has the final authority to act upon the recommendation. If the Chair concurs with the recommendation, an email will be used to inform the student of the decision and of the right to appeal through the University's appeals mechanisms as described in the University's student handbook and University catalogs

Students may not change placements once accepted. Placement sites can only be changed if there is an issue with the agency that cannot be resolved, such as they are no longer able to meet the requirements of the University and CSWE and only with approval from the Practicum Coordinator. Or if the student did not meet the agency's compliance requirements.

In preparing for the interview, students are required to:

1. Obtain pre-placement advising from the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator
2. Initiate their own pre-placement interviews with Field Office referral of approved agencies, scheduled within two weeks after pre-placement advising at times that do not conflict with classes and that do not interfere with the agency field supervisor's professional duties and responsibilities;
3. Provide a resume to each agency field supervisor for review at the scheduled pre- placement interview;
4. Be prepared to ask and answer any questions during the placement interview itself (including specific agency requirements or need for background checks) and anticipate questions from the interviewer(s);
5. Dress appropriately and professionally for the pre-placement interview (good hygiene, business attire, avoiding extremes in style of dress and make-up);
6. Report results of all pre-placement interviews to the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator and inform either of final placement preference, in order of priority, by e-mail no later than five working days after the last interview;
7. Write the potential field supervisor a thank-you note (can be via email) expressing appreciation for the interview;
8. Keep the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator informed of any difficulties at pre-placement interviews; and
9. Call the other agencies that were not selected to inform them that student is no longer available

CONFIRMING FIELD PLACEMENTS

Once students have completed all pre-placement interviews, the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator follow-up with the appropriate agency Field Supervisors to confirm acceptance or rejection of the students who were interviewed. Agencies have the discretion of rejecting students if, in the agency interviewer's opinion, the student does not meet specific agency requirements. By the same token, students do not necessarily have to make any immediate commitments to an agency if, following a pre- placement interview, they determine that another agency is available and might better serve their educational needs and interests. Students, however, have the ultimate responsibility for indicating a final preference in a timely manner. The Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator works with the student to finalize a selection of a practicum site. However, if the student's selections have already been chosen by other students, then the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator makes an assignment contingent on the availability of a placement site that meets the Social Work Department's and the student's educational goals and objectives.

It is during the follow-up contacts between March and May by the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator that agency field supervisors are briefly informed of official start-up dates for field instruction, the date of the annual *Field Orientation* and other related field education matters. It should be noted that information offered during these contacts is confirmed through e-mailed announcements sent by the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator. Since agency Field Supervisors and students are expected to attend the annual *Field Orientation*, typically scheduled in August, before the start of the regular academic year, this provides additional opportunities for the distribution of informational packets to agency field/task

supervisors and students alike, such as the Field Education Manual (available on-line). Likewise, students should follow-up by email with assigned field supervisors to establish an agreement on specific agency requirements, internship schedules, and/or additional contacts to be made.

APPROVING FIELD PLACEMENTS

The last step in the pre-placement process requires that the Field Education Committee reviews any pending student concerns and makes recommendations along with the Practicum Coordinator and/or the BSW Field Coordinator to the Chair of the Social Work Department. Such concerns may result in the re-evaluation of student readiness or suitability for placement based on agency field supervisor observations and assessment during the pre-placement interviews, and further academic and professional evaluations by the faculty regarding the student's likely performance as a social work practitioner. Such evaluations are consistent with the University's policies and procedures.

If a student is deemed not ready or suitable for field placement during the re-evaluation process, the Committee, via the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator, will inform the Chair of the Social Work Department of its recommendations. The Chair of the Social Work Department will have the final authority to act upon the Committee's decisions. If the Chair concurs with the Committee's recommendations, the student will be notified of the decision via a letter, and of the right to appeal the decision through the University's appeals mechanisms as described in the University's Student Handbook, Student Manuals and University catalogs.



University of Texas at El Paso

College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Agency and Field Instruction Selection

SELECTION OF PRACTICUM SITES

Per CSWE evaluative standards, accredited departments of social work must provide educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. Field agencies are selected according to the following seven interrelated factors:

1. A formal affiliation agreement must be in place with the Social Work Department that ensures an educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experience for the student;
2. Agency consonance with the Department's mission, goals, and objectives;
3. Agency appropriateness for generalist social work learning experiences;
4. Agency commitment to provide educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences to all generalist social work students accepted as interns;
5. Availability of qualified MSW or BSW agency field supervisors capable of providing on-site training, a minimum of one hour of weekly instruction, and supervision on a regularly scheduled basis to social work students;
6. Agency ability to clearly articulate student learning experiences in accordance with the Department's generalist social work education requirements and expectations; and
7. Agency ability and commitment to adjust individual staff members' work assignments to permit adequate time to implement, develop, monitor, guide, and evaluate the student's field practicum experiences.

AGENCY SELECTION CRITERIA

Agencies in which students are placed have a variety of primary missions, including the delivery of services to individuals, groups, families, or neighborhoods and/or the coordination of such services. Departments of social services, hospitals, community service agencies, and community mental health programs are examples of agencies often used for field education. The Department of Social Work continually evaluates practicum agencies to ensure that they are providing a quality learning experience for students and that they meet professional and accreditation standards. In addition, the agencies are evaluated for appropriateness to Foundation and/or Concentration practicum sites. New field agencies are added each year and less appropriate agencies are not used again, or are placed on hold until issues are resolved. When evaluating new field agencies, priority is given to community-based organizations that reflect the global complexity that characterizes the U.S.- Mexico border region and help identify best and promising practices in the border region. In addition, when recruiting agencies for field education, the program ensures that sites:

1. Provide social services and are committed to social work values and practices;
2. Are in good standing in the community and the profession;
3. Have programs which offer students the variety, quality and quantity of learning experiences commensurate with the department's objectives for field instruction;
4. Undertake, individually and collectively, the responsibilities of the teaching role, including appropriate supports to enable field supervisors to maintain an educational focus with their assigned student(s). It is highly desirable for agencies to be able to accept more than one student in their setting;
5. Agree to provide an appropriate place for the student to work, assign the necessary support services and allow for mileage reimbursement whenever possible;
6. Agree to orient students to both the service delivery system, the consumers of services, and the context in which services are provided and utilized. The orientation will include a personal safety plan for the student;
7. Provide services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate across the diversity spectrum represented in global contexts in general and the border region in particular;
8. Demonstrate a commitment to social justice;
9. Willingness to discuss integrated anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) approaches;
10. Demonstrate a commitment to social work education and generalist social work practice;
11. Enter into an agreement regarding the mutual expectations for affiliation prior to a student being placed at the agency;
12. Are both consumers and producers of current research;
13. Use practice methods that are empirically informed;
14. Systematically test program innovation and field training approaches; and
15. Conduct competency-based assessment of outcomes of field students.

During Field Liaison site visits, the liaison insures that the agency is providing appropriate learning experiences for the student. If concerns arise, the liaison will attempt to negotiate more appropriate learning experiences; but if the concerns cannot be resolved, the liaison will then make a determination as to whether or not the student should be reassigned, and the agency continue as an approved practicum site.

FIELD SUPERVISOR SELECTION CRITERIA

Field Supervisors are chosen carefully based on several criteria. All potential practicum instructors are interviewed by the Practicum Coordinator to assess the following attributes:

1. Have a BSW or MSW degree from a CSWE accredited program; it is required that the BSW or MSW have two years post- degree practice, but exceptions are made if the field Supervisor has sufficient practice experience or if the practicum opportunity is essential to the mission of the UTEP Department of Social Work (in such cases an appropriate supervisor is assigned by the Department);
2. Demonstrate a value for social justice;
3. Demonstrate an interest in teaching generalist and/or generalist social work practice;
4. Are recommended by their agency;
5. Have been employed at their agency for at least 6 months;
6. If on-site, he/she is able to be present in the agency at least half the time (8 hours per week)

7. that the students are in the agency for field education, and have assigned a task supervisor during their absence;
8. Are able and willing to participate in the annual *Field Orientation*;
9. Understand the multiple layers of context in the border region and their relationship to social service delivery and utilization;
10. Understand competency-driven field education;
11. Understand the structure and process of field education;
12. Identify roles and responsibilities of student, field supervisor, task supervisor, and field liaison;
13. Understand the importance of student-field supervisor relationship and use this relationship to advance student learning;
14. Understand the theories and concepts that are central to UTEP's Social Work programs;
15. Able to access current literature and information that is relevant to social work practice in their specific contexts, particularly evidence-based literature;
16. Understand research and evaluation methodologies relevant to their respective agencies.

The Social Work Program faculty members take responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective in campus classes and expect field supervisors and liaisons to reinforce this perspective in the field. Field supervisors must submit a resume to the Practicum Coordinator before they are officially approved to serve as field supervisors.

The Social Work Department maintains electronic files of social services agencies that are formally affiliated with the Department. Current resumes for each BSW or MSW staff person who has agreed to take on agency field supervision functions and responsibilities can be located on the software program.

At a minimum, agency field supervisors are required to:

1. Possess credentials that are compatible with the profession of social work and that meet the Department's mission, goals, and objectives;
2. Have a demonstrated commitment to the values of the profession;
3. Demonstrate competence in social work practice;
4. Demonstrate an interest in supporting the UTEP Social Work Department student field educational goals;
5. Demonstrate the ability to teach, model, monitor, and evaluate core skills development of beginning social work students;
6. Be familiar with (and practice if a social worker) the Social Work Code of Ethics; and
7. Have at least two years post-degree work experience in a social services setting.

The recruitment of qualified agency Field Supervisors is essential to the mission and goals of the Department and to the successes of students in field practicum. Recruitment of qualified agency Field Supervisors, however, is contingent on two main factors:

- (a) availability of qualified social work staff in each agency setting and
- (b) commitment on the part of the agency to adjust worker assignments in order to allow adequate time for field instruction.

Recruitment efforts on the part of the Department means working closely with agency administrators and potential agency Field Supervisors to ensure that these two factors have been adequately addressed before any formal affiliation agreements are established.

It is recognized that some professional social workers are not compelled to accept the duties or responsibilities of field instruction because of complex and demanding caseloads, job-associated stresses, and factors of job manageability. Agencies who have formally committed themselves to providing educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored field education and training to all social work interns must determine staff availability for field instruction and supervision well before students are accepted as interns. Employers must also determine what job-related adjustments may be needed in individual worker assignments so that workers who are interested in supervising students have adequate time to engage in actual field instruction and participate in any agency field instruction training offered during the course of the University's regular academic year.



University of Texas at El Paso

College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Operational Policies for Field Education

Required Hours

Field placements are made at a variety of agencies and organizations where students participate actively in the delivery of social services. Students are placed in an agency with the expectation that they will remain in the same agency for the entire academic year (two sequential semesters).

MSW students must complete approximately 15 hours weekly of field time and two hours alternating weeks in the field seminar. BSW students must complete approximately 15 hours weekly of field time and two hours weekly in the field seminar. Field days are dictated by agency needs and are negotiated with the student during the placement process. The specific hours of field instruction are also set by the field placement agency according to the hours that the agency's social work program is open for business. Most social service departments operate from 8:00 to 4:30 or from 8:30 to 5:00. If regular evening or weekend hours are a condition of the field placement agency, such a requirement must be clarified and agreed upon by the student before field instruction begins.

Student placements begin the first week of class and hours must be completed by the last day of classes as noted on the academic calendar. Inability to complete practicum hours (240 hours per semester) during the defined period could result as a "Fail" (U) for field, which translates into termination from the program. Exceptions may occur for extenuating circumstances; these must be approved by the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator. Exceptions will lead to an "Incomplete" for field and must be completed before starting the next stage in field education. Assignment of the grade I (Incomplete) is made only in exceptional circumstances and requires the instructor to file with the Director of Graduate Student Services an outline of the work to be completed and the time span allowable for the work's completion. In no case may repetition of the course be assigned as work to be completed. If the work has not been completed at the end of the specified time, the I (Incomplete) will be changed to Fail (U). Students will not be cleared for graduation until all incompletes have been eliminated from their record.

Holidays and Personal Days

Students are entitled to observe their own religious holidays. Absences for religious observance must be discussed in advance with the field supervisor.

Agency holidays and regular school holidays, as outlined on UTEP's academic calendars found on UTEP's website:

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html> are observed by students in field placement.

In Texas State agencies, students are not entitled to be off on "floating holidays" (unless approved by field supervisor), but they do take off on state holidays when the agency's Social Work Department is closed. Students are permitted to attend jury duty without being required to make up the missed time if the jury date occurs on a field education day.

Absence - Scheduled and Unscheduled

Students are expected to be in the field on a regular schedule and are expected to notify the field supervisor promptly in case of an unexpected absence. Students must make up any time they miss from field education except as outlined above. In the role of social worker, students are important to their clients and the agency's dependable delivery of service. Unscheduled absences can be disruptive to clients, field supervisors, and the operation of the agency. A pattern of missed time can seriously devalue the student's overall performance no matter how effective he or she may be when present in field instruction and could be grounds for dismissal from the field placement agency.

If students are going to be late to the agency or need to be absent on an unscheduled basis, they must notify their field supervisor in a timely manner. It is requested that students call their field supervisor personally, rather than have a third party make the call. Speaking directly with the field supervisor, as opposed to leaving a message, allows the student to inform the field supervisor of any appointments that either must be canceled or covered by another student or social worker during the student's absence. Any unscheduled absence must be reported within 20 minutes of the time that the agency opens.

If a student becomes aware that he/she is going to be absent for more than two days during the academic year, he/she must inform the field supervisor. The instructor and student will meet to create a plan to make up missed time. All missed time must be completed by the last day of classes as noted on the academic calendar. If a plan is successfully created, it will be submitted to the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator for final approval. The student will then be expected to follow the plan. If the student is unable to create an acceptable plan or is not able to follow a completed plan as written, the student, field supervisor and field liaison will meet to address the issue. If an acceptable resolution cannot be reached, he/she will be asked to take a leave of absence and re-enter the field the next academic year.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, students are to abide by the decisions of their field placement agency regarding closure. In other words, if the field placement agency is open for business, the student must attend field instruction even though classes may be canceled at UTEP. If a student is unable to get to an open agency during inclement weather, the absence is considered unplanned and must be made up by the student. Field supervisors are encouraged to adopt a "liberal leave" policy for students who cannot make it to the agency due to weather conditions. Any hours missed due to inclement weather must be made up before the last day of classes.

Field Placement Expenses

Students pay their own transportation costs to and from the agency. Agencies are asked to pay for transportation costs required by field assignments and other petty cash expenses which students may incur while carrying out field assignments. Students must follow agency procedures regarding reimbursement.

Any illness which requires medical attention or hospitalization during field placement is the responsibility of the student and his/her family. Health insurance is recommended (required by some placements) of all students enrolled in the field education program. If health insurance is not available to the student, he/she must anticipate where to access medical care if needed. Registration at local clinics that provide medical care on a sliding basis is recommended. There is a Student Health Clinic available on campus for enrolled students.

Background Checks

Students are advised that some of the facilities used for field placement may require a criminal background check and/or drug screening as a prerequisite to a student's placement. Such background checks may include, but are not limited to, social security trace, criminal history, and drug testing, finger printing and sex offender registries. The Compliance Office in the College of Health Sciences assists students in fulfilling the agencies' requirements. Following these background checks, it is the decision of the host agency and UTEP Compliance Office to determine acceptance of students into its practicum.

In Texas, social work professional practice is regulated by the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners. A formal criminal background check is required for licensure and applicants report all arrests and convictions prior to being eligible to sit for the board examination. It is also required that currently licensed social workers report any new arrests or convictions. All social workers who are employed by state agencies in Texas must pass a criminal background check as a condition of employment. This is also true for federal agencies such as the Veteran's Administration. Students are made aware of this policy through the *program admissions process*, *BSW Student Manual*, *MSW Student Manual*, *Field Education Manual*, *Field Readiness Day*, and annual *Field Orientation*.

Students may choose not to be subjected to a background check. The Department of Social Work will work with the student to identify another appropriate site but cannot guarantee referral to an alternate site that does not require background checks. All students must complete field education requirements for graduation.

Students may contact the College of Health Science and School of Nursing Compliance Office for assistance obtaining background checks and drug tests if their practicum sites do not assume responsibility for these requirements.

Professional Liability Insurance

Students engaged in field education are required to have professional liability insurance through the group plan offered through UTEP. Liability Insurance coverage is based on an academic year; and is tied to academic classes. It does not cover periods in which students are not taking class such as semester breaks. Students are responsible for making sure their liability practice insurance is secured by enrolling in the appropriate field course.

Under this insurance policy students are not covered for any claims relating to the operation of their personal motor vehicles. Since the University has ruled that students cannot provide services for which they are at risk without liability coverage, students may not transport clients within the field as part of their practicum. **AGENCIES SHOULD NOT ASK OR ALLOW STUDENTS TO TRANSPORT CLIENTS USING THEIR PERSONAL VEHICLES WHILE IN FIELD PLACEMENT.**

Dual Relationships in Field

When assigning students to field supervisors and field sites, the Department of Social Work adheres to pertinent standards concerning dual relationships and conflicts of interest. Dual relationships in field training occurs when a field supervisor and student maintain a relationship in more than one area, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively. The NASW Code of Ethics states,

- Social workers should be alert and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment... (Standard 1.06[a])
- Social workers who function as educators or Field Supervisors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and Field Supervisors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries (Standard 3.02[d]).

To prevent exploitation or potential harm to, and favoritism and partiality towards students, students and potential field supervisors should disclose to the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator any dual relationship or conflict of interest. Examples include situations where the potential field supervisor depends on the student for collateral services; the field supervisor has provided clinical services to the student; the field supervisor and student hold a business relationship with one another; and a friendship exists between the field supervisor and student.

Evaluation and Grading of Student Performance

Ongoing evaluation is a key element of the field education process. The Field Education Learning Agreement and Evaluation Form provide the specified educational competencies/objectives against which the student is evaluated. Weekly supervision meetings allow ongoing evaluation of the student's performance, progress, and learning needs.

The program stipulates formal reviews of the student's performance and identification of further learning needs and objectives. It is important that the evaluation **be based on the student's actual performance in the field setting rather than on his or her potential for future practice**. To fully encourage student learning and engagement throughout the evaluation process, we recommend the following steps:

1. The student and field supervisor complete a draft of the Learning Agreement and Evaluation form.
2. The student and field supervisor discuss drafts during supervision coming to an agreement on the student's Learning Agreement.
3. The evaluation is submitted into the software program for access by both the liaison, seminar instructor, and field supervisor.

This process takes time but often results in useful discussions and it encourages student self-reflection.

The field supervisor will meet informally with both the student and liaison at mid-term and discuss the student's progress and goals for the remainder of the semester using the Learning Agreement and evaluation form as a guide. The student will be graded with the Learning Agreement and evaluation form at the end of each semester.

An addendum is required, when either the field supervisor or the student indicate there has been an omission of relevant information, the information reported required further clarification, or the student believes that the evaluation is unfair or unjustified. The addendum may be prepared by either the student or field supervisor, but requires the approval of both, which confirms that they have read the addendum.

Evaluation forms and/or reports submitted to the Field Education Office are the property of the Department and may not be referred to in letters of reference released by the Field Supervisors to others without written permission by the student. Students are advised to download documents from Field Education Office software program and keep copies of these documents.

The Social Work Program retains responsibility for assignment of the field education grades. The field supervisor is asked to evaluate the student's performance and to recommend a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The field liaison in consultation with the field supervisor will assign the final grade. MSW students must pass *SOWK 5335 Foundation Social Work Practicum I* and *SOWK 5336 Foundation Social Work Practicum II* to be eligible to enroll in *SOWK 5345 Advanced Social Work Practicum I* and *SOWK 5346 Advanced Social Work Practicum II*.

Procedures for Appealing Grades

<https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-3/academic-policies-and-faculty-personnel-matter/4.15-grade-review-process.html>

As per the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures section 4.19 a student petitioning a grade change shall follow the procedure as stipulated below.

The instructor shall have the sole authority and responsibility in assigning grades for the course. Grades may be changed if:

- a. grade change is initiated by the instructor and approved by the appropriate department chair and academic dean;
- b. grade change initiated by the department chair with the approval of the academic dean for cases where the instructor cannot be contacted, and there exists clear and convincing evidence for a grade change;
- c. grade change due to disciplinary action imposed by the Dean of Students or Hearing Officer for violation of University rules; or
- d. action taken by the Student Grievance Committee in grade appeal procedures. Grades determined as a result of actions taken in items a. or b. above are final and not subject to change. No other grade change shall occur without the consent of the instructor. The Registrar shall notify the instructor of any change of grade previously assigned.

All student-initiated grade reviews and grade appeals shall be made no later than one year after the official grade has been released to the student; for a student who has graduated, the deadline is three months following the semester in which the degree was awarded.

Any student may request the faculty member to review and re-evaluate a grade previously given. The student may also seek assistance from the department chair or the academic dean in obtaining a grade review by the faculty member. After a grade review, a formal grade appeal process is available in cases where a student wishes to appeal a grade assigned by the instructor.

The formal appeal shall be officially filed with the Student Grievance Committee no later than one year after the official grade has been released to the student; for a student who has graduated, the filing deadline is three months following the semester in which the degree was awarded.

Employment- Based Field Education

Utilizing the work setting as a field placement is an option that can be considered on an individual basis. To be considered acceptable for field placement, the following criteria must be met:

1. The field practicum must be “new learning.” The organization must be one in which social work practice is clearly distinguishable from the practice of other disciplines.
2. The organization must provide social work students with a qualitatively different experience from that provided by regular employment that is appropriate to the required student level of training.
3. The student must answer to a different chain of command, where a qualified social worker serves as a Field Supervisor, a person other than the student’s employment supervisor, and assumes responsibility for the student’s training.
4. The field practicum must have a clearly identifiable educational focus unencumbered by workload and the administrative requirement of regular employment.
5. Student’s obligations to the University for written assignments and projects must be supported by the organization. No exception will be granted on assignment requirements for class, for work related reasons.
6. The agency must be formally affiliated with the University of Texas at El Paso and the Department of Social Work as an approved practicum site.
7. The employment work hours and internship hours must be clearly delineated. The availability of release time for course and field instruction should be ensured.

It is the student’s responsibility to submit the Employment Based Practicum Approval Form to the Practicum Coordinator or the BSW Field Coordinator to consider the place of employment as an acceptable practicum site.

Compensated Practicum

Compensation for Field Placements shall consist of stipends, scholarships, fellowships, Title IV- E funds, salary, grants, or other incentives to complete the field practicum.

The field practicum experience must have social work as its primary function, and it must be “new learning.” The organization must be one in which social work practice is clearly distinguishable from the practice of other disciplines and the student’s learning goals as specified by the Department of Social Work will be paramount to any other tasks and activities required by the agency.

Funding or wages will not interfere with student educational expectations and the field agency will support and encourage opportunities to have the student critically analyze agency function in order to meet learning goals such as constructive criticism of supervision, policies, administrative structure and process, etc.

Element of Risk

Students need to be aware that there is some inherent risk when working in any setting. A list of strategies for minimizing risk in the field has been developed to help students increase their awareness of safety-related issues. In addition, students should review their field placement

agency's policies regarding safety procedures. When students have safety concerns, they should discuss these concerns with their Field Supervisor to determine the best course of action. If safety concerns persist, students should discuss the situation with their field liaison. Students are not expected to take extraordinary or unnecessary risks during their field instruction.

If a student is threatened or injured in the field or is involved in a situation where his/her safety could have been compromised, the student should report the event immediately to the field supervisor and the faculty liaison.

Policy for Non-Discrimination

Students with Disabilities

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in educational programs. The law also requires that covered entities provide qualified individuals with disabilities with reasonable accommodations that do not impose undue hardship. An individual is considered to have a disability if that individual either (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of that person's major life activities, (2) has a record of such impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such impairment.

UTEP and the Social Work Program are committed to providing all admitted students with opportunities to take full advantage of the University's educational programs. It is further the policy of the University to enable students with disabilities to participate as independently as possible in UTEP activities so that campus life will be enhanced and the individual lives of members of the University community will be enriched. The Social Work Program recognizes that students with documented disabilities may desire accommodations in order to best master the objectives of the Social Work Program.

All academic courses (including field education) require that students with documented disabilities, who require academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, or similar accommodations, contact the UTEP Center for Accommodation and Support Services and request accommodations. In addition, if formal accommodations are granted, the "letter of accommodation" needs to be given to the course instructor by the end of the second week of the class requiring accommodation or as soon as possible; thereafter if a disability becomes known during the course.

Procedures for Resolution of Conflict

Every attempt is made to quickly and effectively address any identified concerns or problems related to the field education experience. To assist students in successfully completing their field experience, the UTEP social work program has clearly defined academic and professional standards. Problem-solving roles for all people involved in the field experience and a procedure for working through problems are provided in this section to assist all parties when concerns arise during the field education experience. These defined guidelines would also apply to a student who is requesting a change of placement, subsequent to beginning their field practicum experience.

Roles and Responsibilities

Field practicum instruction involves a triage composed of the student, agency Field Supervisor, and Faculty Field Liaison. All parties are responsible for identifying issues and concerns in the field and are expected to conduct informal direct communication between relevant parties when appropriate. It is expected that most problems will be quickly addressed and easily resolved in this manner.

Student Responsibilities: The student is responsible for notifying both the Field Supervisor and the Field Liaison in a timely manner of any placement or performance concerns, and the Practicum Coordinator if necessary, following the recommended routine process.

Field Supervisor Responsibilities: The Field Supervisor is responsible for ongoing observations of student performance in client and staff interactions and in written documentation. The Field Supervisor is expected to meet regularly with the student to discuss his/her performance and to share this information with the Field Liaison. These supervisory meetings must include a discussion of the student's strengths and progress as well as any potential or noted problems in skill development, job performance, ethical considerations, or any other relevant issues. It is recommended that an informal midterm assessment is completed with the student to provide performance feedback before the formal evaluation is completed at the conclusion of each semester.

AGENCY FIELD SUPERVISORS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency Field Supervisors play a critical role in the development of competency-based, generalist social work professionals and must devote a considerable amount of time, effort, and energy to this endeavor. A collaborative partnership between agency Field Supervisors and students is a must if both are to reap the full benefits of the teaching-learning experience. In this regard, each agency Field Supervisor has the following key roles and responsibilities:

Assists the Social Work Department by conducting pre-placement interviews of students to determine readiness and suitability for field instruction and assessing the fit between student and agency and gives their preference to the Field Coordinator.

Determines the total number of student field instruction positions available based on the agency's commitment to adjust agency Field Supervisor workloads to meet supervisory responsibilities.

Provides the Field Coordinator with evaluative information either verbally or in writing about student readiness and/or suitability for field placement immediately following scheduled pre-placement interviews with prospective interns.

Per CSWE standards, commits to providing a minimum of one hour per week of direct instruction per student.

In instances where both student volunteers and interns are accepted, provides assurance to the Social Work Department that the agency staff members are able to make distinctions between volunteer workers and social work internships.

During the first day of field placement, provides the student(s) with an orientation to the agency setting, its mission, purposes, and policies and procedures (including a safety orientation); introduces the student(s) to agency staff; establishes the parameters of the student-supervisor relationship; and identifies agency-based requirements and expectations.

In cooperation with the faculty Field Liaison, helps the student intern develop a draft of a Learning Agreement by no later than the end of the first month of placement for each semester of placement.

Prepares student-based assignments for skills development in: (a) direct practice: communicating, relationship building, problem-solving, assessment, and use of referral systems for individuals, groups, or families; (b) job management: data collection, scheduling appointments, accurate and timely preparation of forms or documents based on professional general social work requirements, and preparation and submission of weekly field logs and process recordings; (c) networking with other professionals on behalf of specific clients, resource development, or planned social change at the agency level, the neighborhood, or the profession itself; and (d) use of current social science publications for purposes of knowledge building and understanding the use of theory in relation to practice.

Assigns student interns cases for direct practice and other related assignments that are appropriate to the student's level of skills development and experience, and mediates the student's learning experiences by providing constructive feedback on an ongoing basis, demonstrating or role modeling skills development in working with diverse ethnic populations, and exploring issues related to beginning, work phase, and termination processes.

In conjunction with the faculty Field Liaison and the student, prepares mid-term and final term evaluations; recommends a final letter grade (PASS/FAIL) to faculty Field Liaison.

Works closely with the faculty Field Liaison and the Practicum Coordinator and to ensure that the Department's educational goals and objectives are being met.

Field Liaison Responsibilities: The Field Liaison monitors the student's progress through the student's participation in individual conferences, by reviewing the student's work in seminar and evaluations, and during agency field visits or other contacts with the student or Field Supervisor. When problems in the placement occur, the Field Liaisons may assist the student in determining how to address the problem directly, may serve as a sounding board for the Field Supervisor before he/she deals directly with the student, or may refer the student to additional resources to facilitate the student's ability to meet the performance standards of the field placement. The Field Liaison will be actively involved in problem-solving activities related to the student's performance.

Practicum Coordinator Responsibilities: The Director of Field Education is responsible for administering and overseeing all aspects of the field program. It is important that he/she is apprised of relevant field related issues. The Practicum Coordinator is available to all parties for consultation as needed. In addition, if problems are severe enough to warrant discontinuation from the field, the Practicum Coordinator joins the liaison and Field Supervisor and together they make a final decision. Finally, when a student is discontinued, it is the responsibility of the Practicum Coordinator to counsel the student regarding appropriate next steps.

Program Director Responsibilities: Along with the Director of Field Education/Practicum Coordinator, the BSW Field Coordinator, the Coordinator of the BSW and MSW program will ensure that the proper documentation of the student problem is entered in the university system and the student's academic file.

Routine Process for Ongoing Communication and Problem Solving

Although the UTEP Department of Social Work recognizes that an agency can discontinue a student at any time, it tries to engage all parties in problem solving before a student is removed. Problem-solving steps are modeled after the intervention techniques students are commonly taught in social work. In the steps outlined below, areas in need of improvement are identified and then meetings occur to address and resolve the identified issue.

1. Discussion of the issues or concerns takes place between the student and the Field Supervisor. Expectations are clarified and the student and Field Supervisor create a plan to address issues. The Field Supervisor will document what occurs in this meeting and will save documentation for future reference.
2. If improvement does not occur within 1-2 weeks, the liaison is contacted. Within 7 days of this contact, the liaison:
 - a. Will inform the Practicum Coordinator.
 - b. May consult with relevant faculty including the academic advisor to discuss the issues.
 - c. Will meet with the student and Field Supervisor (in person or via conference call if an in-person meeting is not possible) to discuss concerns and create a written contract which outlines expectations and provides benchmarks, a timeline and consequences if expectations are not met.
 - d. Will sign the contract along with the Field Supervisor and student. The liaison will also document the meeting and will submit documentation and a copy of the contract to the Practicum Coordinator.
3. Two weeks after the contract's initiation, the liaison, Field Supervisor and student will meet to review the student's progress toward identified goals. If the student has not made sufficient progress, a decision to discontinue the field placement may be recommended.
4. If discontinuation is recommended, the Practicum Coordinator and other parties as appropriate (e.g. Program Coordinator, academic advisor), will meet with the student to discuss the situation and create an alternative path toward graduation.

Discontinuation from the Field Placement

If a student is discontinued from the field or does not receive a passing grade, a report, which includes written statements from both the agency and Field Liaison, will be completed by the Practicum Coordinator and placed in the student's academic file. This report shall include a recommendation regarding further placement options.

In addition, the Practicum Coordinator will confer with the student to develop a plan to address deficiencies. The student may be offered an opportunity to repeat her or his field experience, after demonstrating that he/she has addressed the concerns leading to the original field termination or failure. Under no circumstances is a student allowed to retake any portion of the field sequence more than once.

If the conclusion is reached that the student is unable to meet academic and/or professional standards in the field or is otherwise unsuited to the profession, the faculty advisor will advise the student of the remaining available options.

These options include the following: 1) dropping the course; 2) retaking the course at a later time; 3) selecting another major; 4) termination from the social work program; or, 5) withdrawal from the university.



University of Texas at El Paso

College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Roles, Expectations, Answerability

Field education necessitates close cooperation between the agency, Field Supervisor, task supervisors, field program, and student. Each has a share in the development of a Learning Agreement which establishes the parameters of these relationships. Each also plays a role in the ongoing assessment of the field education experience.

Expectations of the Field Education Program

1. The field education program staff will consult with the agency field placement coordinator, department head, or Field Supervisor in the placement process, to provide an appropriate match of student and agency.
2. The field program will provide prompt assistance in dealing with all concerns which the agency may have in relation to the field placement.
3. As available, the program will provide feedback to the Field Supervisors as to the student's evaluation of the field experience.
4. The program will invite participation by Field Supervisors on appropriate university committees, such as the Field Advisory Committee.
5. There will be a two-way review and evaluation of the field experience at the end of the year by the program and the agency.
6. As resources permit, the program will provide additional educational support for Field Supervisors such as special seminars, consultations with classroom faculty, and short-term loan of textbooks.
7. The program will explore ways in which it can engage agency-based Field Supervisors in implementing the overall educational goals of the program.
8. The program will maintain ongoing communication with the agency through the field education program/faculty liaison.

Expectations of the Faculty Liaison

Liaisons are included in the field education process to support both Field Supervisors and students in achieving a successful field education experience. Field Liaisons assume a variety of roles including mediation, monitoring, consultation, and advocacy. Specific Field Liaison services rendered depend upon the needs and capacities of the Field Supervisor, the needs of individual students, and the opportunities or limitations of each field agency. Liaisons also

function as on- going “consultants” to the Field Supervisor and the agency in the selection, planning and implementation of learning experiences consistent with the UTEP Social Work Program curriculum competencies and requirements.

Generally, each faculty Field Liaison performs the following roles and functions:

- Promotes and maintains academic, professional, and accreditation standards established by UTEP, the social work profession, and the CSWE, respectively.
- When named a member of the Department's Faculty Field Committee, participates in the review and evaluation of student academic preparedness and suitability for field instruction.
- Creates and maintains ongoing communication between the agency, UTEP, and the Social Work Department to ensure that the student's learning experiences are educationally directed and consistent with the University's mission, the Department's goals, and Field Program competencies and objectives.
- Becomes familiar with the nature of the field experience within an agency, and if necessary, works with agency Field Supervisors and field sites in establishing the agency- based teaching-learning environment.
- Plans a minimum of 1 initial phone contact with the Field Supervisor and two agency site visits in the foundation year and at least one in the concentration year: (a) assess the student's progress, with the agency Field Supervisor and student intern, at the mid-term point of each semester of field instruction; and (b) evaluate the student's overall performance, with the agency Field Supervisor and student intern, on a semester-by-semester basis, to determine if the student's goals and objectives, as established in the Learning Agreement, have been met.
- Monitors the level of supervision/instruction provided to students and the appropriateness of assignments and tasks.
- Assists with the integration of course work and internship experiences.
- Monitors student progress in the internship.
- Seeks agency Field Supervisor recommendations for final letter grade determinations; yet holds the ultimate responsibility for assigning and recording final letter grades for field instruction.
- Assists in preventing, mitigating, and resolving problems as needed to ensure maximum learning for students (via site visits, phone/email contact, or campus meetings). If unable to resolve problems and conflicts on-site, he/she refers the matter to the Practicum Coordinator for further action and/or disposition.
- Documents necessary actions and time frames to resolve issues and /or problems.
- Assists the Practicum Coordinator in the recruitment and evaluation of qualified agency Field Supervisors.
- Assists the Practicum Coordinator in the evaluation of affiliated field site to determine their commitment to social work field education and the availability of qualified social work staff to continue providing optimal field instruction.
- Assists the Practicum Coordinator in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of field practicum orientation seminars and agency Field Supervisor training workshops.

- Assists the Practicum Coordinator in the maintenance of accurate and complete student placement files; all student files pertinent to the field, however, shall be treated as confidential and be kept in a secured filing cabinet in the Office of Field Instruction.

Expectations of the Agency (Field Site)

The prime requirement of an agency affiliated with the program is a commitment to active participation as a partner in professional social work education. This involves an acceptance of the basic objectives of the program's educational program and a willingness to invest time and effort in working with students, the program, and its faculty.

The workload for agency-based Field Supervisors is requested to be adjusted to assure adequate time to meet the learning needs of students. Since a substantial agency investment is required when assuming the responsibility for students, the agency considering affiliation with the Department should assess both its capability to assume the obligations involved and the advantages to be derived from the affiliation. In addition, the agency should be able to provide an appropriate variety of learning experiences at foundation-level practice and/or advanced level for students.

Finally, the agency will need to provide the physical facilities necessary to accommodate students. These include desk space, private space for confidential work with clients, resources for necessary travel including reimbursement for home visits if students use their own cars, and provisions for essential clerical services. Access to internet is highly desired as well.

The program has found it to be educationally advantageous to place two or more students in the same agency, whenever possible. Two students generally do not take much more time because most of the supervision may be conducted jointly if both students are in the agency on the same field days. A valuable dimension often is added to the experience when two students are learning together, and they usually feel less isolated than lone students. It is also desirable to provide students with opportunities for learning experiences with social work colleagues, other than the Field Supervisor, and with staff from other disciplines.

Expectations of the Field Supervisor

Field Supervisors are chosen carefully based on several criteria. All potential practicum instructors are interviewed by the Field Education Coordinator to assess the following attributes:

- Have an MSW and BSW degrees from a CSWE accredited program; it is required that the MSW and BSW have two years post-master's degree practice but exceptions are made if the Field Supervisor has sufficient practice experience or if the practicum opportunity is essential to the mission of the UTEP Department of Social Work (in such cases an appropriate supervisor is assigned by the Department);
- Demonstrate a commitment to social justice;
- Demonstrate an interest in teaching generalist and/or advanced social work practice.
- Are recommended by their agency;
- Have worked at their agency for at least six months;
- If on-site, he/she is able to be present in the agency at least half the time (8 hours per week) that the students are in the agency for field education, and have assigned a task supervisor during their absence; if the supervisor is off-site, he/she must be available by phone during

practicum hours and provide a minimum of one hours of supervision per week;

- Are able and willing to participate in an annual *Field Orientation*;
- Understand the multiple layers of context in the border region and their relationship to social service delivery and utilization;
- Understand competency-driven field education;
- Understand the structure and process of field education;
- Identify roles and responsibilities of student, Field Supervisor, task supervisor, and Field Liaison;
- Understand the importance of student-Field Supervisor relationship and use this relationship to advance student learning;
- Understand the theories and concepts that are central to UTEP's Social Work Program training;
- Able to access current literature and information that is relevant to social work practice in their specific contexts, particularly evidence-based literature;
- Understand research and evaluation methodologies that can be used to conduct research in their respective agencies; and able to engage in evidence-based practice.

The Social Work Program faculty members take responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective in campus classes and expect Field Supervisors and liaisons to reinforce this perspective in the field. In the rare case an agency may not have a Field Supervisor with a MSW or BSW present in the agency, yet the agency has the potential to offer exceptional field education experiences, the Department of Social Work will take responsibility for arranging for a MSW-level supervisor who will work closely with an on-site task supervisor. ACSW certification through the National Association of Social Workers, LMSW/LCSW licensure in Texas, and membership in CSWE are encouraged, but not required of Field Supervisors. Field Supervisors must submit a resume to the Practicum Coordinator before they are officially approved to serve as Field Supervisors.

Expectations of the Task Supervisor

Some agencies assign other human service providers or administrators to be a student's task supervisor. In these cases, the student still must meet with the MSW Field Supervisor at least one hour a week for supervision and integration of classroom theory and learning with practice experience. Task supervisors may be assigned to oversee specific, time-limited tasks or may work with a student daily directing day-to-day activities.

Basic expectations of all Task Supervisors include:

- Participates in planning the field education experience.
- Provides direct supervision of some or all of the student's daily activities.
- Assigns cases & projects congruent with the student's educational goals.
- Orients the student to the agency and to their assignments.
- Gives on-the-spot positive and constructive feedback to the student regarding performance.

- Consults with the Field Supervisor regarding the intern's skill areas and those areas that need extra attention.
- Provides feedback in order to help the Field Supervisor prepare midterm and final evaluations of the student's performance.
- Attends administrative meetings (i.e., Welcome/Orientation/Training Meeting) and attending meetings with the Field Supervisor and with the Field Faculty Liaison at least once during each semester to assess progress being made.
- Notifies Field Supervisors when problems arise.

Expectations of Students

A successful academic education and a successful field education are critical indicators of the student's readiness to assume professional responsibilities. Likewise, ability to meet specified standards signifies that a student is adequately and appropriately performing at the level expected of a social work student. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to review and comply with the academic and professional standards listed below.

Students accepting a field placement must take seriously their commitment to their clients, their Field Supervisor, the agency, and the program. It is expected that students will conduct themselves in a professional manner in their interactions with staff and clients. Students should refer to the NASW Code of Ethics and other relevant social work standards of practice for clarification and guidance. Students should take special note of the NASW Preamble of the Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics/code-of-ethics-english#:~:text=The%20first%20Section%2C%20%22Preamble%2C%22%20summarizes%20the%20social%20work,ethical%20issues%20or%20dilemmas%20in%20social%20work%20practice.>) which states that "the code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve." Accordingly, the student should:

The Social Work Department at UTEP requires that all students meet a minimum of 240 clock hours per semester in a supervised agency setting. In addition to meeting the required clock hours, students must also meet the following requirements:

1. Read and be familiar with the Field Education Manual.
2. Read, become familiar, and conduct themselves in an appropriate and responsible manner, consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and other relevant NASW practice standards that address quality practice in a number of areas including:
 - a. Adolescents
 - b. Case Management
 - c. Child Welfare
 - d. Cultural Competence Health Care Settings
 - e. Health care
 - f. Integrated Behavior Health
 - g. Long-Term Care

- h. Palliative and End of Life Care
 - i. School Social Work
 - j. Substance Use
 - k. Technology (For online listing and access to NASW Practice Standards, go to the following web page: <https://www.socialworkers.org/practice/practice-standards-guidelines>)
3. Read, become familiar, and conduct themselves in an appropriate, responsible, and just manner consistent with the Code of Ethics and policy statements (e.g., policy statements on human rights, migration, refugees, indigenous peoples, and peace and justice) of the International Federation of Social Workers which stress principles of human rights and justice across national boundaries (see <https://www.ifsw.org/>).
 4. Maintain high standards of personal conduct in the capacity of a student social worker.
 5. Strive to become and remain proficient in social work practice and the performance of professional functions
 6. Regard as primary the service obligation of the social work profession.
 7. Act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity and impartiality.
 8. Respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service.
 9. Adhere to commitments made to the field placement agency.
 10. Uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession.
 11. Conform to the working hours, dress codes, rules, regulations, and policies of the field agency and to spell these out in a working agreement with the Field Supervisor, as appropriate. (Avoid extremes in clothing or make-up. Dress neatly and maintain healthy, clean, and professional appearance.)
 12. Complete all documentation as required by their field agency.
 13. Notify Agency/Field Supervisor at the beginning of the semester with the due dates of all required assignments by receiving appropriate syllabi.
 14. Complete time sheet forms and ensure that Field Supervisor reviews and signs times sheets.
 15. Prepare a Student Learning Agreement outlining the goals and objectives for each concurrent semester of field instruction. Each student is expected to work closely with the agency Field Supervisor and faculty Field Liaison in preparing a draft of this document. The final Agreement must be electronically signed by the student and the agency Field Supervisor. Field Liaison will review. Students are expected to keep a copy of this document in their own files.
 16. Upload learning agreement into software program where supervisor will electronically approve.
 17. Complete midterm and final evaluations on software program.
 18. Keep Field Liaison apprised of progress and difficulties in the field.
 19. Notify agency Field Supervisor prior to absences. Time missed due to illness, weather and holidays must be made up. Extended absences and make-up plans must be reported to the Field Liaison.

20. Complete 240 hours in field education each semester spread equally over 15 weeks. Students are expected to complete all required hours on site within the hosting agency. Expectations for completion of hours outside the agency must be arranged with the Field Supervisor and included in the learning agreement and discussed with the Field Liaison.
21. Discuss the need for a leave from placement (e.g., pregnancy, hospitalization, family death) as soon as possible, with both the Field Supervisor and Field Liaison.
22. Responsible for their transportation to and from the agency.
23. Meet agency criteria for placement such as comprehensive background screening and/or medical history.
24. Read and comply with agency policies. In addition to the above academic expectations related to the placement, MSW students are expected to adhere to the following classroom-related expectations in their social work seminars (e.g., SOWK 5335/5336 & SOWK 5345/5346). Social work seminars courses are designed to be taken concurrently with field instruction; therefore, students are expected to attend and master all classes in order to learn sufficient theory and skills to support the decisions they make in field education with and on behalf of their clients.
25. BSW students must register for the appropriate Field Instruction course (SOWK 4380 or SOWK 4390). Registration in the Field Instruction course assures the purchase liability insurance through the University at the time of registration. This must be done prior to the first week of the field practicum. **Students who have not registered for the appropriate Field Instruction course will not be allowed to enter their field practicum site.**
26. At all times adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics in and out of the agency setting, and in the classroom as well. **Any alleged incidents of inappropriate, illegal or unethical behaviors shall result in the immediate removal of the student from the agency. Any substantiated incidents of inappropriate, illegal or unethical behaviors shall lead to immediate dismissal from the field, department and possibly the University as well. Student misconduct is reported to the UTEP Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.**
27. Maintain regular agency hours. Three or more excused or unexcused absences from the practicum can lead to a request by the faculty Field Liaison that the student withdraw from the course. **In the event of an unforeseen absence beyond the student's control, the student must notify the agency Field Supervisor and Field Liaison immediately.**
28. Make up all absences resulting from illness or circumstances beyond the student's control **before the end of the semester in which the absences occurred.** Each student is held directly accountable and responsible for meeting the 240 clock hour requirements per semester regardless of the reasons for the absences. Students must work closely with the agency Field Supervisors and faculty Field Liaisons to determine and record in writing how the hours missed are to be made up. The 240-hour requirement is achieved through a field internship consisting of two eight-hour days per week for 15 weeks, to include two hours per week of seminar. **Any request for exception must be submitted in writing and approved by the Field Supervisor, Field Liaison and Field Coordinator.** Per university and

departmental policies, Incompletes will be given for field instruction courses, including the Integrative Field Seminars, only in exceptional circumstances and only if the student has met two-thirds of the course requirements. The faculty Field Liaison will be required to file with the Practicum Coordinator and the academic dean an outline of the work to be completed and the time span allowable for completion, not to exceed one calendar year.

29. **Students cannot show up at the agency setting after regularly scheduled agency hours without prior permission or supervision from the agency Field Supervisor.** If agency-based assignments require the student's presence and involvement in after-hour agency-sponsored projects or activities, these must be noted in the student's Learning Agreement.
30. Students in Fall practicum who need to complete any hours or receive an Incomplete at the end of the Fall semester will not be allowed to enter into Spring semester until all the hours for Fall semester have been met and the "I" has been satisfactorily removed.
31. Students who receive a final letter grade of "S" or "U" (Pass or Fail) in either Field Instruction I or II, or in Seminar I or II, shall not be allowed to repeat either course.
32. Maintain accurate weekly time sheets; do not apply any excess hours earned in Field Instruction I to the 240 clock hours required in Field Instruction II.
33. Maintain personal and professional integrity in all interactions with agency staff, other professionals, peers, and clients; and refrain from engaging or participating in office gossip about other agency staff and/or clients.
34. Use oral and written communication consistent with the practicum setting and the profession, communicating with clients or agency staff.
35. Familiarize self with and adhere to all agency safety procedures.
36. Work closely with the Faculty Field Liaison and agency Field Supervisor to ensure that the educational objectives of the Social Work Department at UTEP and in this manual are being satisfactorily met (per CSWE curriculum standards, academic credit for life experience or previous work experience must not be given, in part or in whole, in lieu of the field practicum). **Any problem in the field practicum must follow protocol and will first be addressed with the Field Supervisor and then the liaison if problems cannot be resolved. If problems cannot be resolved at this level, problems will then be directed by the liaison to the Practicum Coordinator.**
37. Participate in all regularly scheduled supervisory conferences with either the agency Field Supervisor or faculty Field Liaison. Participate in the scheduled weekly integrative field seminars.

CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES

The majority of today's social workers practice as part of an agency. In agencies, communication between client and worker is shared with others on a "need to know" basis as part of service delivery. Students and employees share information with supervisors as they seek guidance.

Students placed in their practicum agencies are in a position where they attempt to integrate information learned in the classroom with information obtained in the field agency. Thus, to a certain extent, both the agency and the Social Work Department are involved in the sharing of internal agency affairs. On occasion, a student can cause problems if emotionally laden material is shared outside the agency without full awareness of potential repercussions. The Department faculty make every effort to educate students about confidentiality, and violations of policy are considered grounds for reprimand or dismissal from the field instruction course.

Each agency has developed policies, practices, and protocols that accommodate the relevant laws and procedures regarding confidentiality. Agencies are requested to share such information with students at the beginning of the semester. Agencies are also encouraged to share official agency confidentiality policies and procedures with the faculty liaison. Agency review of confidentiality practices will help to ensure appropriate compliance with professional and legal standards and, thereby, help avoid unwanted entanglements or litigation.

Courses in the Department of Social Work have stressed the importance of respecting client, co-worker, and agency confidentiality. If a student makes a case presentation in a class or in a seminar, sharing details of a case is not a violation of client confidentiality if no personal identification information is included. Faculty will evaluate student work in a way that respects client confidentiality and the procedures of the field instruction agency.



University of Texas at El Paso
College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Field Supervisor Trainings & Other Benefits

Field Supervisor Trainings & Other Benefits

In late August of each year (for BSW Advanced Standing and Full-Time 24-Month students), all Field Supervisors are invited to a yearly Field Welcome and Orientation event to meet and greet field students, other Field Supervisors, task supervisors, Field Liaisons, Field Faculty, and others involved in field education. Field Supervisors are introduced to the current *Field Education Manual* found at the Department's website and they learn of field plans for the upcoming year including any changes that will be implemented.

Field Supervisors gain insight into: 1) activities that will help students become acclimated to the agency and to become effective learners in field instruction; 2) ideas for helping students get started with their first clients and other assignments; 3) the social work curriculum so that Field Supervisors will know what information our students are taught prior to and concurrently with field instruction; 4) the Learning Agreement and evaluation process utilizing the CSWE competencies; 5) information on how to reinforce classroom learning in their field sites and how to help students integrate theory with practice. The orientation usually ends with a panel discussion led by experienced Field Supervisors and Undergraduates of the UTEP program. (*Note: this training is free of charge and is offered to current UTEP Field Supervisors*) The Texas Administrative Code in Rule §781.509 (Types of Acceptable Continuing Education), Category 4, states that providing professional guidance as a Field Supervisor for social work interns constitutes acceptable continuing education credit hours if the field instruction is in connection with a college or university accredited by or in candidacy status with CSWE.

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There are other intangible benefits to agencies and Field Supervisors who decide to work with a student, including the privilege and opportunity to:

1. Advance the field of social work by training future members of our profession;
2. Teach vital skills and ethics to students that are central for principled and effective practice in the U.S. – Mexico border region;
3. Be aware of current research, projects, and perspectives that are relevant to social work practice particularly as they relate to border contexts;

4. Inspire students to work effectively across the diversity spectrum;
5. Obtain meaningful help from highly qualified students; and
6. Be challenged and continuously learn from the social work interns.

Throughout the field work experience, Field Education Liaisons meet with the students and their practicum instructors each semester. The Field Education Supervisor will serve as the liaisons from all social work students, except in rare occasions where a faculty member may serve this function. These meetings provide additional opportunity for dialogue with the field agency and the practicum instructor to maximize the learning experience for the student and to address concerns or issues that emerge. During these meetings, Learning Agreements are reviewed. Student progress is discussed and addressed as needed, as are contextual factors within the practicum environment that affect the student's learning experience.

If problems related to the student's performance are identified either during liaison meetings or as they surface, a corrective action plan is developed with the agreement of the student, Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Liaison. This information is first shared with the Field Education Coordinator so that if further action is needed, the coordinator is aware of the history of the problem and actions taken to address the issue. Should the problems not resolve, the Field Coordinator will assume responsibility for further evaluation. If needed, the coordinator can call for a meeting involving the student, the Field Supervisor, the Field Liaison and the Program Coordinator of the BSW or MSW Program. If the concern cannot be resolved, it could result in the student's voluntarily withdrawing from placement and reassigned to a different practicum site or the student may be terminated from placement which will result in termination from the program.

If the student is found to be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct or engaging in inappropriate behavior that disrupts the practicum site, the student can be withdrawn from field education and terminated from the program. The Chair of the Department of Social Work will have the final authority to act upon the coordinator's decisions. If the Chair concurs with the coordinator's recommendations, the student will be notified of the decision via email and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). Different remedial options from OSCCR are available depending upon the severity of the violation leading to the student being withdrawn. If a student does not receive a passing grade for field or has been found guilty of an ethical or student code violation, he/she is automatically terminated from the Social Work Program.

The Field Liaison is responsible for maintaining open communication with students and Field Supervisors to address questions or concerns that arise during placement. This is accomplished through phone, email, and additional face-to-face contact, depending on the situation. If a student fails to achieve a minimal level of a competency by mid-term during the student's field practicum year, the Field Supervisor, student, and Field Liaison will develop a written/formal corrective action plan which may entail weekly meetings with the Field Liaison to focus on developing the student's strengths for that particular competency to assure student success by the completion of their practicum experience.

The Coordinator of Field Education also is responsible for maintaining communication with field sites and practicum instructors. As described earlier, the Coordinator is responsible for planning orientation, educational opportunities, and expansion of practicum sites. The Coordinator communicates through phone and emails any information that needs to be disseminated to practicum sites. In addition, the Department of Social Work maintains a website that provides information, forms, and timelines relevant to field education.

Finally, the Field Education Advisory Committee provides consultation to the field education program, regarding content, policies, procedures, and evaluation. The Field Education Committee is chaired by the Practicum Coordinator, and its members include the BSW Field Education Supervisor, the Coordinators for the BSW and MSW program, a student representative from the BSW and MSW Programs, and several representatives from field agencies. The Field Advisory Committee provides input, feedback and support by knowledgeable professional social workers to enhance the direction of the social work field experience. This committee meets a minimum of two times per academic year to discuss issues related to the practicum experience.



University of Texas at El Paso
College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Administration of the Field Program

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Field Education Program is responsible for the selection and development of field sites and field instruction, the placement of students, and for the ongoing monitoring of the Field Education Program. The Field Education Office provides orientations to the field for students and Field Supervisors as well as ongoing support and assistance to faculty Field Liaisons.

ADMINISTRATORS

Alma R. Armendariz, MSW ararmendariz2@utep.edu (915) 747-6595

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Field Program Advisory Committee

To ensure relevance to practice, the Field Program has a Field Education Committee composed of the Field Director, the Assistant Field Director, two community field supervisors from each program, Title IV-E Coordinator, and a faculty member serving as the Chair. The Field Education Committee functions include:

- Maintain a process for the development of the Field Education Manual.
- Assist in the process of recruiting and maintaining appropriate Field Placements.
- Review and modify the Field Manual on an annual basis.
- Make recommendations to the Director of Field Education for enhancements in field practicum placements.
- Assist in the recruitment and training of Field Instructors.
- Consult in the development and modification of the field education curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Field placement is often the most meaningful part of the social work curriculum for students. It is challenging because it represents a real test of skills, commitment, and knowledge. It is the time when students assume professional responsibility for intervening in other people's lives.

While recognizing that field placement may have its unsettling moments, the UTEP Social Work faculty sincerely hopes that it will be a satisfying experience for all those who participate. Hopefully, it will provide direction, confidence, and a great increase in skill. Field Education may be a lot of things, but one thing it is unlikely to be is irrelevant. Few students ever forget their field training opportunities and experiences.



Social Work Program

Appendix 2.1-1 a

The Nine Social Work Competencies 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

The nine social work competencies are listed in this section. Programs may add competencies that are consistent with their mission to respond to their context. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that make up the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, and the descriptions that precede them represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors. Master's programs extend and enhance the nine social work competencies, and any additional competencies added by the program, for each area of specialized practice. By extending and enhancing the competencies, programs provide master's-level students with the four dimensions (i.e., knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes) relevant to each area of specialized practice. A specialized competency description is developed to incorporate the four dimensions and specialized behaviors for each competency and any additional competencies added by the program.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- a. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context

- b. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- c. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- d. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- a. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- b. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and Standards values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

- a. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and

b. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

- a. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- b. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects well-being, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services.

Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

- a. use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and b. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

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 individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships.

Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- a. apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- b. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

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. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

- a. apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
- b. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

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. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

- a. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- b. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

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 evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- a. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
- b. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities



University of Texas at El Paso
College of Health Sciences

Social Work Program

Glossary of Terms

Practicum Coordinator: The Practicum Coordinator administers the social work field program in compliance with the standards of the Council of Social Work Education, the policies of University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), and the policies of the UTEP Social Work Program. The Practicum Coordinator maintains relationships with current Field Supervisors and recruits new sites and Field Supervisors. The Practicum Coordinator also plays, at times, the role of Field Liaison. The person occupying this position must have a M.S.W. from a CSWE accredited program plus two years post-masters experience

BSW Field Coordinator: The BSW Field Coordinator supports the BSW social work field program. The Field Supervisor maintains relationships with current Field Supervisors and sites. The BSW Field Coordinators also plays, at times, the role of Field Liaison. The person occupying this position must have a M.S.W. from a CSWE accredited program plus two years post-masters experience

Council of Social Work Education (CSWE): The national council that evaluates social work programs and grants accreditation. Accreditation is a system for recognizing educational institutions and professional programs affiliated with those institutions as having a level of performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve. The Commission on Accreditation of the CSWE is authorized to accredit baccalaureate and master's degree programs in the United States. The UTEP Masters Social Work Program has received accredited by the CSWE.

Faculty Advisor: All graduate students are assigned a faculty advisor from the program. The faculty advisor works with the student to plan an appropriate course of study. Each student is advised at least two times per year.

Field Supervisor: The agency representative who instructs the student at the field site. The Field Supervisor provides supervision to enhance learning opportunities, monitors student's progress, process recordings and interactions with clients and staff; and evaluates student performance.

Field Liaison: A faculty member who monitors student's progress through student participation in field seminars, field visits to agency sites, communication with Field Supervisor, evaluation of student's process recordings and evaluation forms. The Field Liaison is the connection between the Field Supervisor, student, and the school. If issues arise, the student and/or Field Supervisor may seek guidance from the Field Liaison.

Learning Agreement: A guideline that states the student's learning objectives during his/her field education experience. This contract is completed by the student in collaboration with the Field Supervisor.

Program Chair: The Program Chair of the Social Work Program administers both the baccalaureate and graduate social work programs at the University of Texas at El Paso. As part of this position the Program Chair is involved in student recruitment, supervision, academic advising, and teaching.

Task Supervisor: This is a person other than a Field Supervisor who sometimes provides day-to-day supervision for a student. It is not necessary for this person to meet all of the educational requirements to be a Field Supervisor. When a task supervisor is used, the task supervisor and the Field Supervisor work together to monitor student progress. However, the task supervisor does not provide formal supervision or complete the evaluation.