

FAQ about Field Placements

MSW I (Generalist (Non-BSW)) 2 year full time

The generalist field placement is for those students who are admitted to the MSW program without a BSW. The generalist placement is 425 hours over 13 weeks during the summer after the foundation year of course work has been completed.

1. When does the field application packet have to be completed?

Answer:

The packet for MSW I and MSW II are completed at the same time. Students will attend one field orientation, typically in October of the foundation year of course work. Placement for summer begins soon after.

The MSW II field placement follows successful completion of the MSW I summer field placement. The MSW (non – BSW) students are placed at the same time as the MSW advanced standing students.

MSW II clinical/specialization field placement is over both fall and spring semesters in the second year of the program.

MSW Advance Standing

1. I have been accepted to the advance standing program and will begin my course work in the fall semester, when does this mean that I will do my field placement?

Answer:

The one year advanced standing students begin the field placement in the fall after being admitted to the MSW program. The two year part time advanced standing students begin field placement the fall of the second year of their program.

The MSW II clinical/specialization placement is 600 hours (20 hours/week) and begins the first week of the fall semester. Your placement will last until study day of the spring semester.

2. If I get all 600 hours in prior to the end of the spring semester may I stop early?

Answer:

No. The field practicum and seminar courses continue until the official end of the semester.

3. How do I find a placement? Should I be asking now?

Answer:

Do not Contact agencies until you receive authorization from the field office.

You have received a Field Placement form to complete. On that form you were asked for a regional preference, a population preference and a specialization preference. You can be as specific as you wish about those answers-for instance it is ok to say Vanderburgh County. We place students several in Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois.

We do our best to match you with an agency that fits those parameters and with whom we have an affiliation agreement. You must also send in a current resume, HIPAA certification, and a local and national background check.

Upon receipt of your field placement form, resume, HIPAA, local, and nation background checks by the field office, we will begin the process. You will receive notification from the field office (socialworkfield.com) regarding contacting an agency for an interview.

Typically you are asked to send a resume and cover letter to the contact person and establish an interview time. Please DO NOT contact an agency until notified. Contact prior to field notification could result in disqualification from field eligibility. Field dismissal stops forward progress of your master degree.

4. Is there a deadline for the packet to be submitted?

Answer:

We have set a deadline for all of the material to be sent to us by March 1st at 4:30 pm. After that deadline, we will start placing.

5. Am I required to accept the placement offered?

Answer:

As with a job interview, acceptance is a two way process. The agency is interviewing you to ascertain a good match and you are interviewing the agency for a good fit for your educational needs. At the end of the interview if you do not feel that this particular agency meets your educational needs, simply thank them for their time and consideration and state that after hearing about the agency, you find that what you would be doing does not match your educational goals at this time but that you hope that sometime in the future that might be different.

If you were pleased and the agency indicated acceptance, give them the Instructor Guideline Letter to be signed and returned to the Department of Social Work.

The Field office will send student to a maximum of three different agencies. If students are unable to secure a placement after three interviews the field office will not continue to place the student.

6. Where do I find the Instructor Guideline Letter?

Answer:

We have placed a large number of them at the front desk for you to be able to come in and take. They are in the folder marked, "MSW". If you live out of town, you can request that we mail it to you.

7. How many hours make up the clinical practicum?

Answer:

The practicum stretches over both semesters for a total of 600 hours, typically 20 hours a week in the agency. The midterm happens at the end of first semester and the final at the end of the second semester. Simultaneously you will attend a weekly one hour seminar to help you integrate that which you have learned in class with that which you are experiencing in field. The person in the agency who supervises you is called the "Agency Field Instructor or Agency Field Supervisor" and the person who is a part of the Social Work Faculty that teaches your seminar is called the "Faculty Liaison". In some agencies the Field Instructor may have you shadowing a separate person to experience different parts of the agency and that person is referred to as the "Task Supervisor."

8. I would like a placement in the agency where I am employed, is that possible?

Answer:

If your agency meets our other requirements, such as we have an affiliation agreement with the agency and they have an LCSW who is not your current supervisor to supervise your placement, it can be explored.

You will need to email our Social Work Field office and request the Placement in Agency of Employment forms. You and your agency will then need to clearly delineate the job from the placement in terms of both responsibilities and supervisor.

An employee and a student have two different roles and obligations and expectations. As an employee, you are required to satisfy the work expectations of the employer. As a practicum student, you are in an academic course with requirements to satisfy the educational expectations in the syllabus and those of your practicum faculty. As a student, you need time to reflect on your practice experiences, perhaps to use some different approaches in your practice than is the custom at the employment site, to challenge some of the accepted practices at your job, and to carry a learner's size workload. Accreditation also requires that these two roles be clearly separated.