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FIELD EDUCATION

Field education is an essential component of the full educational program offered by the School of Social Work. In field education, students have the opportunity to apply concepts and skills and to test their own abilities to work ethically and effectively with people who are seeking social work help.

The partnership between the School and the agency is a natural and necessary characteristic of field education. The field education agency provides a microcosm of the profession at work. The resources of agencies, including line staff, supervisors and administrators, provide critical components of the educational process.

The program could not proceed without the involvement of students with the agency and with the people the agency serves. Here students observe a group of seasoned professionals going about their tasks: the field instructor models the attitudes, behaviors and skills expected of the competent professional; the agency's programs reflect important social policies and issues whose analysis, implementation or change are important aspects of the student's learning. In addition, the operation and management of the agency provide important insights and understandings about the administration of social services.

Concurrently, the School contributes to the agency's goals and ongoing operation. The faculty's knowledge and skill and the scholarship produced by the faculty are offered for the improvement of services. The presence of students in the agency illustrates the promise for the future and the possibilities inherent in education. Taken all together - the agency, the field instructor, the faculty and the student - are the incorporation of a comprehensive educational experience.

This field manual represents the School's effort to clarify the components of the School: its mission, policies,

Field Education Program

The field experience is an integral part of the Social Work Program. It is a special kind of learning experience which complements and "gives life" to classroom learning. It gives the students the opportunity to learn about people, about social problems, about service delivery systems, about helping, and about the student as a helping professional. Students are placed in an agency to experience educationally directed experiences through which they can translate the knowledge, values, and skills acquired throughout the curriculum into professional practice with clients. The field instructor, task supervisor (if applicable) and the university faculty field liaison and seminar instructor closely collaborate to achieve this in the field instruction program. This is done through a semester long internship within a local human service agency. Students are able to observe and work directly with professionally trained agency workers and field instructors, educated social workers, within the context of generalist social work practice.

Social work seniors are required to successfully complete a 400-hour internship during their final semester, either in the Spring or Summer semester. This is done through 15 weeks of the spring semester, interning about 29 hours per week

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student may elect to have present a faculty advisor, who may privately counsel the student but may not address the Committee or question witnesses. No party may be represented by legal counsel at these proceedings. Only individuals having direct knowledge of the alleged safety violation(s) may appear

before the Committee. Members of the Committee must be present at the hearing in order to vote. A student will be released from the placement if a majority of voting members vote in favor of doing so.

5. If the student is released from the placement, the Field Coordinator notifies the Field Instructor and any other agency personnel. The Field Coordinator discusses other options with the student. Issues are documented in the agency record. The School of Social Work Field Office will not place another student at that agency location until reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the safety issue/concern.

6. The Field Office and the student will work together to begin the process of securing placement at a second agency. The student may be able to resume accru

the agency needs, client's schedules, and opportunities for student learning experiences. This is arranged between the student and the field instructor/task supervisor. Any exceptions to this block placement must be approved by the student's Academic Advisor, Field Coordinator, and BSW Program Coordinator. The student participates in field instruction seminars held at the main campus or extended campus during the course of the field placement. These seminars include an orientation on the first day of the semester and weekly three-hour seminars. Summer semester, the orientation is held before the semester and the seminar is a weekly four-hour class.

Dress Code

Students must inquire and follow the agency dress code. As a representative of RU School of Social Work, it is important to present oneself professionally, especially in appearance and attire. Dress in a way that the attention is on the client and not on you.

Field Hours

BSW students are expected to begin accruing field hours, which can include orientations, meetings, establishing their internship schedule, etc., during the first four class days of the start of the semester in which they are enrolled in SOWK 489. If a student does not meet

the field instructor/task supervisor. This agreement must be included in the learning

how many hours the student will intern per week,
what activities the student will work on while completing the hours and
the date when hours will be completed.

Support of this plan will be obtained from the field instructor (and task supervisor if applicable) by their signature on this document prior to submission. If this plan is not submitted to the field committee for approval, any hours accrued past the semester will not be approved by the School of Social Work, which will result in a failing grade.

If the student receives a grade of incomplete for a semester and the Faculty Field Liaison is not available to continue to provide oversight to the student and field placement, the Field Coordinator will assume the role of Faculty Field Liaison.

Supervision

A Field Instructor should be regularly accessible within the agency where the student is placed.

1. Student must meet with their advisor to discuss the proposal and submit a completed proposal packet to the field office (Semester before field begins). Cover form must be accompanied with field application, <http://www.radford.edu/content/wchs/home/social-work/academic-programs/field-program.html>

BSW (SOWK 489) spring placement
BSW (SOWK 489) summer placement

First Friday in October
First Friday in February

the proposal must be reviewed by their advisor. Once the advisor determines the proposal is complete and ready to be submitted, the advisor signs the proposal checklist.

Changing Placements

Field instruction placements continue throughout the semester

Criteria

1. The agency's philosophy, goals, programs, and policies are compatible with professional social work standards.
2. The agency board, administrator, and staff are committed to the field instruction program, its goals and objectives, and due process protection of students as a significant function and responsibility of the agency.
3. The agency is in good standing in the community. It qualifies for membership in those standard setting bodies - national, state and local - appropriate to its field of practice.

The Agency

The roles and responsibilities of the agency include:

1. Interviews a prospective field student and accepts or rejects a student.
2. Considers the student for placement without respect to race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual preference, age, religion, disability (unless student is not able to function in the agency setting with accommodations), or political belief.

3. In consultation with Field Instructor, monitor the student's learning experience, ensuring that the experience is educational in nature,
4. Participate in carrying out the educational objectives of the field instruction curriculum,
5. Consult in the development of the learning agreement.
6. In consultation with field instructor, provide a range of appropriate practice

2. To give the student an opportunity to participate in the planning of the field placement.
3. To ensure that the student understands the agency's expectations of the student.
4. To identify criteria for measuring progress.
5. To facilitate a practice-centered and diversified learning experience for the intern that fits within the overall goals and programs of the agency.
6. To give the intern the opportunity to participate in the planning of the field placement.
7. To ensure that the intern understands the agency's expectations of the student.
8. To identify criteria for measuring progress towards meeting established learning objectives.

Guidelines

The agreement is flexible. It can be changed or adapted as the student's learning

Evaluations are an integral part of student learning. Ongoing evaluation of a student's progress in field is essential to analytical development and self-growth. It is encouraged that each student undergoes continuous evaluation of their own professional skills and educational integration of coursework into the field setting. Therefore, a formal midterm and final evaluation process is to be done. Midterm and final evaluations are completed by both the student and the agency field instructor, on separate forms. This is an opportunity for the student and field instructor to engage in further dialogue as to the student's adjustment