

# **CSUSB School of Social Work MSW Field Education Manual**



**2023-2024**

## **Purpose**

This manual has been prepared to assist students, agencies, Field Instructors, and Faculty to understand the objectives, policies, and procedures governing the field education program for the Master of Social Work (MSW) program at California State University, San Bernardino. It is designed to answer the most frequently asked questions about the MSW field education program, its policies, and procedures, and to clarify expectations, rights, and duties of all involved in a social work field education program.

The contents of this manual are based on best practices in the field of social work that are guided by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) standards, and University and the School of Social Work policies. Valuable suggestions and information from past and current Department Chairs, Faculty Members, Field Instructors, Field Liaisons, and MSW students have been integrated into this manual.

**CSUSB School of Social Work**  
**Student Professional Field Education Commitment Form**

To all social work students: Please complete and electronically sign this form in the Intern Placement Tracking System (IPT).

I have read and understand:

Objectives of Practicum	Yes	No
Sequence of Field Class	Yes	No
Roles and Responsibilities of Field Education Staff	Yes	No
Roles and Responsibilities of Practicum (Field) Instructor	Yes	No
Roles and Responsibilities of Faculty Liaison	Yes	No
Roles and Responsibilities of Field Director and/or Field Coordinator	Yes	No
Expectations for Practicum and Seminar Performance	Yes	No
Learning Plan Agreement form	Yes	No
Outcome Evaluation	Yes	No
Grading Policies for Field Education Courses	Yes	No
Problem Solving Process	Yes	No

If you have marked "No" to any of these areas, please make an appointment with the Director of Field Education to clarify any confusion.

**This form should be completed and signed in IPT prior to entering Practicum.**

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB), Master of Social Work, Field Education Program. This Field Education Manual has been developed to provide information and guidance to students, Field Instructors, program administrators and Faculty. The manual begins with a brief overview of the mission and goals of the School of Social Work, the objectives of the MSW program, and the curriculum. Next, the purpose and structure of the practicum program is covered, including required hours, criteria for admission to field education, placement procedures, procedures, and qualifications for selecting field sites and instructors, expectations of students in the field, and the learning agreement that shapes the student experience in the practicum. It is not intended to be exhaustive and will continue to be revised and updated as needed. The most current copy of the Manual will be maintained on the CSUSB School of Social Work website.

The field education program is a means to achieve the goals of the MSW Program at CSUSB. It is structured to meet the Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education (2022, CSWE), specifically Standards 3.3 Field Education and Accreditation Standards (EPAS, 2022) nine Core Competencies.

### **1.1 School of Social Work Mission**

CSUSB's School of Social Work Master of Social Work program provides accessible, dynamic, and rigorous academic programs that prepare students with generalist (BASW) and specialized advanced generalist (MSW) professional values, knowledge, and practice skills to effectively enhance the well-being of the diverse populations and communities of our region, state, and world.

Accessibility means that we attract and retain a student population reflective of the region's population and provide social work education opportunities to students in historically unserved and underserved areas.

Dynamic means that we change and innovate to reflect changes in the professional knowledge base, technology for practice and teaching, regional demographics and needs, and national and global trends that affect human well-being.

Rigor means that the education is rigorous and demonstrated by comprehensive assessment of the values, knowledge, and practice competencies that we expect our students to acquire during the program.

Serving the diverse populations and communities of our region, state and world means that our programs prepare students for practice in a regional, state, and global context of dynamic diversity.

1. We enhance social work educational opportunities for students within our region and in historically unserved and underserved areas through increasing accessibility and program completion, especially for first generation college students, students from the dynamically evolving ethnic communities in our region, and students in remote areas.
2. We continually update curriculum and teaching practices with current research and best practices reflective of the needs and trends of our region, nationally, and globally.
3. We offer and measure attainment of a competency-based, generalist and specialized advanced generalist level curriculum consistent with the needs of our area for practice skills with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and the skills of policy advocacy.
4. We offer a curriculum that emphasizes practice consistent with the aims and values of the social work profession and that meets the needs of diverse, vulnerable, and unserved and underserved populations, especially in our region.
5. We support Faculty in providing leadership to the profession and to the community with their research and expertise.

### **1.2 Accreditation Standard 3.3—Field Education**

The field education program goals and learning objectives incorporate the overall goals of the School of Social Work Program at CSUSB. Practicum, seminar, and events are structured to meet the Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education (2022, CSWE), in particular; Standard 3.3, Field Education, and incorporates the nine Social Work Competencies. The program discusses how our field education program:

- 3.3.1 The field education program ensures generalist practice opportunities for all students to demonstrate the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) with all system levels: individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in field settings.
  - a. The program describes how its field education program ensures that generalist practice opportunities are provided to all students to demonstrate the nine social work competencies in field settings with all system levels: i. individuals, ii. families, iii. groups, iv. organizations, and v. communities. b. The program addresses all program options.
- M3.3.2 The field education program ensures specialized practice opportunities for all students to demonstrate the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) with one or more relevant system levels in field settings for each area of specialized practice.
  - a. The program identifies the relevant system level(s) for each area of specialized practice.

b. For each area of specialized practice, the program describes how its field education program ensures that specialized practice opportunities are provided to students to demonstrate social work competencies within each area of specialized practice in field settings with each identified system level.

c. The program addresses all program options.

3.3.3 The field education program provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and a minimum of 900 hours of field education for master's programs.

a. The program describes how it ensures the accrual of a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs or a minimum of 900 hours of field education for master's programs.

b. The program describes how its field hour requirement is articulated to students and field personnel.

c. The program addresses all program options.

3.3.4 The field education program has a process for identifying, approving, and engaging with field education settings. The field education program has a process for orienting and engaging with Field Instructors. The field education program has a process for evaluating Field Instructor and field education setting effectiveness.

a. The program describes the field education program's process for:

i. identifying, approving, and engaging with field education settings;

ii. orienting and engaging with Field Instructors; and

iii. evaluating Field Instructor and field education setting effectiveness.

b. The program describes how these processes are articulated to students and field personnel.

c. The program addresses all program options.

3.3.5 The field education program has a process for orienting students, placing students, monitoring, and supporting student learning, implementing student safety protocols, and evaluating student learning congruent with the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program).

a. The program describes the field education program's process for:

i. orienting students;

ii. placing students;

iii. monitoring and supporting student learning;

iv. implementing student safety protocols; and



v. evaluating student learning congruent with the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program).

b. The program describes how these processes are articulated to students and field personnel.

d. The program addresses all program options.

M3.3.6 The program ensures that all master's students receive field supervision from an individual who holds a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and who has at least two years of post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work.

a. The program describes its process for ensuring that field supervision is provided by an individual with the required degree and practice experience.

b. The program describes its process for assigning a qualified Field Instructor to provide supervision when an individual with the required degree and practice experience is unavailable in the field setting.

c. The program describes how these processes are articulated to students and field personnel.

d. The program addresses all program options.

3.3.7 The program has a policy documenting whether it permits field placements in an organization in which the student is also employed. If permitted, student assignments and employee tasks may qualify as field hours when directly linked to the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) and level of practice (generalist or specialized). Field education supervision may be provided by the same supervisor if field education supervision is distinct from employment supervision and the supervisor meets the requirements of Accreditation Standard 3.3.6. The policy documents how the program assists students with field education continuation or change in situations where a student becomes unemployed in an organization where field education has co-occurred with employment.

a. The program provides its policy related to field placements in an organization in which the student is also employed. If permitted, the program's policy includes:

i. how the program ensures that student assignments are directly linked to the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program) and level of practice (generalist or specialized);

ii. how field education supervision is distinct from employment supervision time, even when provided by the same supervisor; and

iii. how the program assists students with field education continuation or change in situations where a student becomes unemployed in an organization where field education has co-occurred with employment.

b. The program describes how these policies are articulated to students and field personnel.

c. The program addresses all program options.

Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline: to think, to perform, and to act intentionally, ethically, and with integrity.

The field setting is where students apply human rights principles from global and national social work ethical codes to advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. It fosters a learning environment where anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion are valued. Field education is designed to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the explicit curriculum in the field setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria and measures of student acquisition and demonstration of the nine social work competencies. Responding to the changing nature of the practice world and student demographics and characteristics, field education programs articulate how they maintain or enhance students' access to high-quality field practicum experiences. Field education programs develop field models to prepare students for contemporary and interprofessional social work practice, including the use of various forms of technology.

The program's field education director serves as an essential contributor to the curricular development, administration, and governance of field education. (CSWE, 2022)

Assessment is an integral component of competency-based education and continuous programmatic improvement. Assessment involves the systematic gathering of data that serve as evidence of student learning outcomes; anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (A DEI); and program outcomes through demonstration of the nine social work competencies at both the generalist and specialized levels of practice. (CSWE, 2022).

### **Competencies**

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 (A DEI) 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

## **2.0 ORGANIZATION OF THE MSW CURRICULUM**

### **2.1 Generalist Curriculum**

The *Generalist* (foundation) curriculum is grounded in a liberal arts base and provides students with a common professional core that prepares them for the Advanced Generalist year of the program. Foundation courses cover the essential knowledge, values, processes, and skills of generalist social work practice and introduce students to current issues in a range of fields of practice and prepares them to make informed choices about specialized study in the Advanced Generalist year. Students complete 6 units of practicum (SW 6081 and 6082) in the Generalist year of field practicum.

### **2.2 Specialized Advanced Generalist**

After building on the generalist model in their Foundation Generalist year, students then focus on Specialized Advanced Generalist practice during their Advanced year. Students choose a specialization to which they will apply their specialized advanced generalist micro and macro practice knowledge. Students take 6 units of practicum (SW 6083 and 6084) in the advanced year of practicum.

For further information on the curriculum, please refer to the Student Handbook.

### **2.3 Stipend Program**

The School of Social Work at CSUSB has a specialized stipend program that is administered through the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC).

CalSWEC's Title IV-E program provides specialized, professional education and financial support to MSW students preparing for or continuing a career in public child welfare. Title IV-E refers to a regulation under the Social Security Act that pertains to the provisions of services for foster children. The Title IV-E Project Coordinator at CSUSB administers this program and is also responsible for placing students receiving Title IV-E funds for their practicum. These placements must be completed in a public or private non-profit agency that serves children in foster care and/or children at risk of removal from their families because of abuse or neglect. More detailed information can be found on the School of Social Work website.

## **3.0 FIELD PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND GOALS**

### **3.1 The Role of Field Instruction in Social Work Education**

Historically, social work educators have been among the early definers and defenders of experiential education. Practicum experience was seen not as the final phase of formal learning, but ongoing and concurrent with classroom instruction. Originally, universities provided supervision to students placed in agency settings. However, various field education models have been used, but the most widely used contemporary model is agency-based supervision. Today, field education programs through universities have become responsible for developing field education curriculum, selecting, and preparing Field Instructors, and developing techniques for students to integrate classroom learning with hands-on practicum learning experiences.

### **3.2 Goals of Practicum**

The field practicum experience focuses on the multifaceted nature of the social work profession and the learning tools for professional social work education and practice. Through guided, experiential learning, it provides opportunities for application of theory, critical thinking, and professional development in the practicum setting.

In the Generalist (foundation) year of practicum, the focus is on learning and applying generalist practice skills and includes a broad range of assignments directed at helping the student develop competencies in engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, termination, and follow-up at the micro, mezzo, and macro practice levels. The skills associated with the generalist model include preparing students for intervention, communication, analysis, contracting with the client system, utilizing various roles, and stabilizing change.

In the Advanced Generalist year, the students are expected to demonstrate and apply social work practice knowledge, skills, principles, values, and ethics involving more complex situations at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Specialized advanced generalist social work practice is operationalized in terms of three roles:

- Change Agent
- Interprofessional / Interagency Social Work
- Social Work Leadership

Generalist (first year in practicum) and Advanced Generalist students (second year in practicum) develop learning plans that are evaluated in practicum based on EPAS core competencies, which have been translated into behavioral indicators of competence in the Learning Plan Agreement.

Students are assigned a different practicum, separate learning plans and outcome evaluations for their Generalist (foundation year) and Specialized Advanced Generalist years. The core competencies and overall performance of the student are evaluated by the Field Instructor each semester.

## **4.0 FIELD EDUCATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1 Social Work Student**

Social work students are adult learners with life experiences that are acknowledged and respected. The student as an adult learner is expected:

1. To take the initiative in examining the educational objectives and the learning assignments at the practicum site
2. Maintain professionalism which includes (in part):
  - ✓ Arriving and leaving their practicum according to schedule or notifying the Field Instructor of unforeseen circumstances (wishing to take time off from field to study for a test or write a paper are not unforeseen circumstances)
  - ✓ Following agency policies and procedures, completing required agency forms and assignments competently and in a timely manner
  - ✓ Dressing according to agency standards and expectations
  - ✓ Avoiding dual relationships with clients and/or staff
  - ✓ Demonstrating sufficient written and oral skills to effectively communicate information, ideas, and feelings.

- ✓ Demonstrating the requisite interpersonal skills to relate effectively to other students, Faculty, staff, clients, and practicum professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession.
  - ✓ Recognizing and coping with their own current and past life stressors using appropriate, adaptive coping strategies and formal services if necessary
3. To inform the Field Instructor, Faculty Liaison, and Director of Field Education, and/or Field Coordinator/Field Designee about ethical or practical concerns or matters that might jeopardize the quality of their learning experience, client well-being, and/or the viability or retention of the practicum or practicum personnel.
  4. To refrain from behavior that interferes with the learning and/or performance of other students and professionals or behave in a manner inconsistent with the NASW Code of Ethics, or the expectations of the School of Social Work, or CSUSB.
  5. To use supervision effectively (e.g., actively seeking feedback on performance and prepare agenda items for meetings with their Field Instructor, and humbly and willingly accepting constructive criticism from their Field Instructor).
  6. To engage actively in the evaluation process, seeking ongoing feedback from their Field Instructor and participating in the formal evaluation process.
  7. To prepare for weekly conferences with the Field Instructor and address any problems or dissatisfaction with the practicum experience and engage constructively in finding solutions, if possible. If the problems cannot be resolved, the student should contact their Faculty Liaison immediately.
  8. Attend, participate in, and complete all required field education activities, including practicum hours, seminar assignments, and events.
  9. Seek out resources to better understand cultural dynamics and methods of navigating human diversity, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive practices.
  10. Be sure to meet weekly with their agency Field Instructor for a minimum of one hour of individual supervision.
  11. Attend orientations, trainings, and other meetings that are arranged by the MSW Program.
  12. Attend monthly Integrative Seminars with their Faculty Liaison.
  13. Practice within the NASW Code of Ethics, the student intern's scope of practice, and adhere to all pertinent legal (e.g., reporting laws, etc.) and ethical (e.g. professional boundaries, professionalism, etc.) requirements.

#### **4.2 Director of Field Education**

The Director of Field Education is responsible for developing practicum curricula and administrating the practicum, including the maintenance of effective working relationships among agencies, students, Faculty liaison, and Field Coordinators. The Director of Field Education ensures that there are sufficient, appropriate practicum settings to meet student needs and program standards. Further, the Director arranges for placement of students in practicum settings consistent with their interests and learning needs. The Director of Field Education works with the Program Coordinator of the stipend program and the Field Coordinators for the Pathway Distance Education, Advanced Standing, Title IV-E, and BASW Programs. The Director of Field Education is ultimately responsible for the overall functioning of the field education department and resolving field education-related problems.

#### **4.3 Program Coordinator and Field Coordinator**

The Title IV-E, the Pathway Distance Education, Advanced Standing, and BASW Programs have Field Coordinators, who work directly with the Director of Field Education. They are responsible

for the administration of the practicum including the maintenance of effective working relationships among agencies, students, and Faculty liaison, and for working with the Field Director in the development of field education course curricula. It is also their job to ensure that there are sufficient appropriate practicum settings to meet student needs and program standards, and for coordinating or facilitating the placement of students in practicum settings consistent with their interests and learning needs.

On occasion, the Pathway Field Coordinator, Title IV-E Field Coordinator, or Advanced Standing Field Coordinator may also serve as the Faculty Liaison. When this dual role occurs, it is important to note that if the student has a concern with the Field Coordinator and does not believe they can resolve the issue directly with them, the student can reach out to the Director of Field Education for assistance.

#### **4.4 Field Education Sequence Committee**

The Field Education Sequence Committee is a sub-committee of the School of Social Work Curriculum Committee. The School of Social Work Director appoints the Chair of the Field Education Sequence Committee and its Faculty members. This committee collaborates with the Director of Field Education on field education-related matters such as selection of sites, placement problems, and issues related to integration of classroom learning with field education. The Field Education Sequence Committee recommends curriculum policy changes to the Director of Field Education for submission to the Curriculum Committee. The committees meet each semester and at the call of the Director of the School of Social Work.

The field team also reaches out to community partners and attends community meetings throughout the academic year to gain input and recommendations for curriculum changes. This information is provided to the Field Sequence Committee.

#### **4.5 Faculty Liaison**

The Faculty Liaison, also known as Field Liaison, must hold an MSW from a CSWE-accredited program of social work. They are the faculty member who serves as an educational consultant to the Field Instructor (described in Section 4.7).

The Faculty Liaison approves the Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation for the student, holds regularly scheduled conferences with both the student and Field Instructor, leads the Integrative Seminar, evaluates the student's learning, and assigns a grade of credit/no credit. The Faculty Liaison visits the agencies, maintains ongoing communication with the Field Instructor, and participates in student and Field Instructor orientations, seminars, and other field meetings. The Faculty Liaison reports on student progress to the Director of Field Education and coordinates individual student education issues between the School of Social Work and the field instruction agency.

#### **4.6 Agency/Field Education Setting**

Students will only be placed in agencies that have been screened, approved by the Director of Field Education, and a Learning Site Agreement has been signed and fully executed by the CSUSB Procurement Department. Agencies are approved based upon their ability to provide students with the learning opportunity to acquire practical professional experience through instruction and supervision activities reflective of the School's overall curriculum goals. The following criteria are used to assess the agency's capacity to provide appropriate practicums:

1. Acceptance of active and collaborative participation in professional education for social work. This is a basic requirement involving the acceptance of the NASW Code of Ethics, the School's mission, objectives, and program curriculum, as well as a readiness to invest time and resources into the social work education process.

2. Capacity to designate an agency professional to serve as Field Instructor (see Roles and Responsibilities section). Agency Field Instructors should assess their workload to ensure adequate time to meet student needs is feasible. Thus, agencies considering becoming a practicum site should assess their ability to assume the obligations involved and advantages derived from this venture very carefully.

Other expectations of agencies include:

1. A commitment to high educational standards as reflected by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).
2. The overall responsibility for the development of the agency's participation in this social work educational joint venture should rest with the agency's Executive Director or senior staff member.
3. Learning experiences with individuals, families, groups, agency administration, organizations, and communities (as indicated by the Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation) must be made available by the agency.
4. The agency is expected to ensure the availability of records prepared by students for learning instruction and evaluation at the School, subject to professional safeguards.
5. Physical facilities necessary to accommodate students will be provided by the agency. When possible, these will include desk space, telephone, and computer (if these are required to perform intern responsibilities), facilities for private interviewing, resources necessary for home visits, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

#### **4.7 Practicum (Field) Instructor**

The Field Instructor is the student's supervisor at the placement site and assumes responsibility for the student's learning and practice experience. The Field Instructor provides ongoing feedback, supervises, teaches, and assesses student acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values. In collaboration with the student, the instructor is responsible for developing a student Learning Plan Agreement based upon the criteria established by the MSW Program. Field Instructors are selected based on the quality of their field instruction and commitment to educational standards of the MSW Program.

The Field Instructors *must have an MSW from a CSWE-accredited program*. In addition, CSUSB requires they have at least two years of post-MSW experience, six (6) months experience in the practicum setting and have completed (or plan to complete within one year of providing field instruction) the Field Instructor Certification training.

To ensure the highest quality of field practicum for our students, it is expected that the Field Instructors will:

1. Complete the required certification training that includes an orientation to the School's curriculum, policies, and procedures.
2. Develop a clear Learning Plan Agreement with the student concerning performance

expectations. These expectations must be stated in terms of behavioral learning goals, methods of achievement, and standard of measurement through using the Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation.

3. Provide at least one hour a week for individual supervision with the student or a combination of individual and group supervision that together totals at least one hour per week. Group supervision alone **cannot** be substituted for individual supervision.

- ✓ The Field Instructor of record holds administrative and clinical oversight of the student's work at the practicum. If the student is providing therapy, the student is working under the license of the social worker (field instructor) of record.

4. Provide feedback to the student concerning their performance in writing on an ongoing basis, including completing the end of semester student evaluation each semester. If the Field Instructor and/or Preceptor has any concerns about any aspect of the student's performance, professionalism, adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics, etc., the assigned Faculty Liaison should be notified immediately to discuss their concerns and assist in developing a plan of correction.

5. Make available or develop specific practice opportunities that will enable the student to fulfill the expectations of the Learning Plan Agreement (LPA).

6. Inform both student and Faculty Liaison about any unusual opportunities, conditions, or problems at the earliest possible convenience; evaluate student progress on an ongoing basis; and involve the student in the preparation of these evaluations.

Some CSUSB requirements may be waived in special circumstances. In such situations, close supervision of the Field Instructor must be provided by the Faculty Liaison and the arrangement must have the advanced approval of the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator.

Occasionally, a CSUSB Faculty member is designated to provide Field Instruction for a student. This occurs when an agency does not have a Field Instructor who meets the university requirements or does not have an employee who meets the criteria available to provide the field instruction. In such a case, the CSUSB Field Faculty or a staff hired through the Title IV-E grant funded program, agrees to provide the social work perspective BUT the agency will RETAIN responsibility for supervision and oversight for all student activities and cases.

#### **4.8 Preceptor**

While the Field Instructor has overall responsibility for the student's instruction in the placement setting, a Preceptor may provide additional instruction or supervision. The Preceptor is an agency employee, who is a secondary source of information and guidance, e.g., for a specific service assignment, or to provide day-to-day administrative supervision.

The Preceptor may be an agency administrator or supervisor. In agencies where the Preceptor is in an administrative position (often a director or supervisor), they may oversee cases and activities assigned to the student and may monitor the student administratively in terms of agency policies and documentation. However, the Preceptor needs to have direct communication



with the Field Instructor to determine case assignments, learning activities, and evaluate the student's progress to ensure assignments are appropriate to student learning and university requirements.

The Preceptor is considered enrichment to field education but **does not** substitute for a Field Instructor and the minimum one hour of individual weekly supervision/instruction. In agencies where a Preceptor is administratively overseeing cases and activities of a student, the Director of Field Education or designated Program Field Coordinator needs to be informed of the practicum structure and plan. It is recommended that the Preceptor attend the Field Instructor Certification training.

#### **4.9 Non-MSW Supervisor**

In those uncommon cases in which an agency meets all criteria for a placement agency except the presence of an 'on-site' MSW Field Instructor, the Director of Field Education may approve day-to-day supervision by a non-MSW supervisor. However, the agency must provide a qualified MSW Field Instructor, who meets weekly with the student for the regularly scheduled one-hour individual supervision to provide the social work perspective over their field education course; however, the non-MSW Supervisor will retain responsibility for the student's overall practicum experience and evaluation. In clinical settings, a clear line of responsibilities for clients' welfare is essential (e.g., during the student's absence or if malpractice is alleged). The Field Instructor must meet all criteria for the selection of Field Instructors.

In rare cases, a CSUSB Title IV-E Field Education Faculty is designated to provide Field Instruction for a student. In such a case, staff hired through the Title IV-E grant funded program agrees to provide the social work perspective, BUT the agency REMAINS responsible for supervision and oversight for all student activities and cases.

### **5.0 THE FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE**

#### **5.1 Purpose**

Field Education plays a pivotal role in the MSW curriculum. It offers the opportunity to apply, refine, and integrate conceptual based knowledge acquired in the classroom with real life experiences in social agencies.

Field Education at the CSUSB School of Social Work consists of three components: 1) practicum course, 2) events, and 3) seminar. Through these three components, students will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and level of competence necessary to enter professional practice. The field education course experience and classroom should be mutually reinforced in all curricular areas: research, human behavior, social policy, and practice with individuals, groups, organizations, and community.

#### **5.2 Structure**

##### **5.2.1 Placement Concurrent with Classes**

There are four sequential field education courses that run concurrently with classes (SW 6081 and 6082 – Generalist (Foundation) Year and SW 6083 and 6084 – Specialized Advanced Generalist Year). Each student has one placement for Foundation year and one placement for Advanced

year. Practicum experiences are designed to build upon one another in developing a competent practitioner. They are also intended to give the student an opportunity to learn about more than one agency's organization and culture and therefore gain a more comprehensive perspective of social work practice.

### **5.2.2 Student Involvement in Placement Choice**

Generalist (Foundation) Year practicums are assigned by the Director of Field Education, the Title IV-E Field Coordinator, the Pathway Field Coordinator, or the Advanced Standing Field Coordinator. The student's interests, learning needs, and agency availability are taken into consideration, however the Generalist Model of Social Work Practice equips social work students with the requisite knowledge, skills, and values to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. We strive to place students within their area of interest, practice settings / populations cannot be guaranteed. A pre-placement interview between the students and the Director of Field Education, the Title IV-E Field Coordinator, the Pathway Field Coordinator, or Advanced Standing Field Coordinator begins the process of locating a field education course. Students who are receiving grant-funded support are limited to placements available for the specialization they have chosen. (See FIELD EDUCATION COURSE; PLACEMENT PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS for further detailed information).

\*\* Pathway Distance Education Students, who are not in the Title IV-E grant funded program, have a requirement to submit four placement ideas, in their local areas, but are clearly instructed NOT to contact any agency, as students cannot seek or arrange their own placements.

### **5.2.3 Areas of Practice Experience**

Students are expected to complete field education course assignments in micro, mezzo, and macro areas of practice. The Field education program ensures that generalist practice and specialized practice opportunities are provided to all students to demonstrate the nine social work competencies in practicum settings with all system levels:

- i. individuals,
- ii. families,
- iii. groups,
- iv. organizations, and
- v. communities.

(CSWE, 2022)

## **6.0 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **6.1 Orientation**

A mandatory field education orientation takes place annually prior to the beginning of practicum and the fall semester. The purpose of orientation is to review the field education program mission, policies and structure, documentation, competencies, and expected outcomes. It provides an overview of the various roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the student, Field Instructor, Faculty Liaison, Field Coordinators, and Director of Field Education. It provides an opportunity to discuss students' questions and concerns associated with the field education process with field Faculty members. Additionally, the students are oriented to the Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) online software (Alceasoftware), which students, Field Instructors, and Faculty Liaison use to perform vital field practicum tasks, including developing the Learning Plan

Agreement, documenting semester evaluations, etc. ***Students cannot enter the field education course if they do not complete the field orientation modules and attend the Field Orientation.***

Prior to attending the field education synchronous orientation and entering practicum, students must complete online modules that may include, but are not limited to: 1) Child Abuse and Mandated Reporting, 2) Adult Protective Services and Mandated Reporting, 3) Ethics and Boundaries (i.e., Ethics vs. Law, Confidentiality, Mandated Reporting, HIPAA, Advertising Professional Services, Duty to Protect, Cultural Competence, Informed Consent, Multiple or Non-Sexual Dual Relationships and Sexual Relationships with Clients), 4) Safety in the practicum, and 5) Telehealth.

## **6.2 Confidentiality and Privacy**

Students must follow the NASW Code of Ethics and all agency policies on confidentiality and privacy. All practicum and related schoolwork, including class discussions and written material, should always protect clients' right to confidentiality and privacy.

Students must read, understand, and agree to abide by all HIPAA laws and regulations. Students are expected to know the specific practices related to HIPAA at their assigned agency. Students who violate HIPAA will be referred to the Student Review Committee and risk immediate dismissal from the Social Work program.

Students should be aware of the impact and consequences of electronic media on possible breaches of confidentiality. Students should **never** have the phone numbers of clients in their personal cell phones or computers. If a student has a concern about a specific request to use a personal cell phone, they should immediately speak with the Field Instructor to determine best practices and if the concern is not resolved, the student should contact their Faculty Liaison for consultation. Additionally, students must not disclose any information about clients on social media such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or all other social media platforms. Personal cell phones, laptop computers, etc. should be cleared with the agency prior to use. Students are responsible for following all agency policies regarding the use of personal devices.

When confidentiality cannot be maintained, the student must obtain written consent for release of confidential information appropriate to the agency's procedure on confidentiality.

At no time should a student transport client documents without the documents being secured and the approval of the Field Instructor to ensure policies of the agency are being followed and HIPAA/best practice guidelines are being followed.

## **6.3 Practicum Hours**

Students are expected to be in their field education course a **minimum** of 240 hours per semester (16 hours per week), or 480 hours for the Generalist (Foundation) placement year, and a **minimum** of 300 hours per semester (20 hours per week), or 600 hours for the Specialized Advanced Generalist placement year. At the completion of the MSW degree program, students will have accumulated a **minimum** of 1,080 hours of practicum experience. If at any point during the academic year a student becomes concerned about practicum hours, the student should reach out to their assigned Faculty Liaison immediately to discuss the concern and work toward a solution.

Students are responsible for observing regular agency working hours and practicum schedule as arranged by the Field Instructor. Students **cannot be absent more than one field day per semester and are required to make up any hours lost through absence, tardiness, etc.** Students who miss, or anticipate missing, more than one day, whether consecutive or not, regardless of the situation, are required to notify their Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison to discuss the situation at the time of the event. The Faculty Liaison will consult with Field Director/Field Coordinator if a student misses more than two days per semester. The agency should also keep a record of attendance to certify the completion of a specific number of practicum hours at the end of the semester. Students are required to complete and electronically sign the time log form located in IPT (Intern Placement Tracking data system) at the end of each semester to receive credit. It is essential that students complete an accurate time log weekly. Given the time log is signed by the Field Instructor, the student's account of hours needs to match that of the Field Instructor's.

Placement hours are typically between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Some placements may require some evening and/or weekend hours; however, these are considered the exception and should be discussed and approved by the Field Coordinator and/or Director during the interview process. Students in the 3-year and Pathway Distance Education Programs may believe they can "adjust" their full-time jobs or attempt to "fit-in" their practicum hours; however, this creates great difficulty for both the students and the agencies and may not be viable. Prior to being accepted to the MSW program, ALL students signed a Statement of Understanding regarding the field hour requirement to successfully complete the program. The School stresses the importance of being available during typical work hours (8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.); otherwise, the student will likely not secure a practicum given the agency's hours of operation and the Field Instructor's availability. Students must be available to participate in the daily operations of the agency, i.e., staff meetings, case conferences, and in-service training, etc. Due to limited availability of alternative practicums, based on agency schedules, the Field Education Team cannot place students with alternative scheduling needs. Inability to meet the traditional 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. field education course schedule may result in an academic Leave of Absence or inability to continue in the program.

Students may not begin their practicum before the start of the fall semester and must follow the academic calendar posted on the CSUSB website. **The School of Social Work assumes no responsibility for any student who engages in field education course activities, outside the specified policies, and those time periods listed on the Learning Plan Agreement.** If a student is asked to begin practicum prior to the start date specified in the CSUSB Social Work Master Calendar, the student is **required** to contact and seek approval from the Director of Field Education and/or specific Field Coordinator. All modifications to practicum schedules require written approval by the Director of Field Education and/or specific Program Field Coordinator.

Students are **not** permitted to work extra hours during the semester with the intention to "bank" practicum hours to complete any semester before the official last day of practicum. Practicums' start and end dates are listed on the Master Calendar and are provided to students at the beginning of the academic year. There are a few exceptions to this policy, primarily regarding school-based placements where the time schedule is client-driven or for select agencies where the start date is later than the academic start date. Students in such agencies are notified of the adjusted schedule prior to interviewing with the agency. The purpose of the limitations is to ensure that field education courses, including practicum, stay in sequence with practice classes.

Seminars are NOT counted as practicum hours unless your practicum day and time is during the scheduled seminar time. Students accruing hours toward the PPSC CANNOT count seminar hours

toward the PPSC.

Students are **not** permitted to complete academic homework or employment work during practicum hours. Practicum hours are for the sole purpose of gaining practicum-focused practice education and experience. Logging practicum hours, while completing work other than agency specific assignments or documentation related to practicum, is unethical and can be considered falsifying hours. Process recordings are considered “practicum related,” and can be completed during your practicum hours, with approval from the designated Field Instructor.

All students are expected to remain in the same practicum site for the entire academic year for which the assignment is made. Any student who discontinues their practicum assignment prior to the end of the academic year (or before all requirements are met) for any reason may be referred to the Student Review Committee for a Level 2 review and **may** be required to restart the entire practicum experience. This requirement applies regardless of whether academic credit has been received for any part of the practicum assignment that is being terminated.

No block placements (40 hours per week) are available, and no social work practicums are currently available in the summer. Practicum typically does not extend into the summer months beyond the School’s official last day of spring semester. However, if an agency wishes to retain their intern to continue work beyond this date, the student is no longer operating as a student intern of the CSUSB School of Social Work. Accordingly, the student is not covered by the University’s malpractice policy beyond the official last day of practicum and may be required to secure their own private malpractice insurance or be covered by the agency’s malpractice insurance policy.

We cannot emphasize strongly enough that leaving a placement early can have very serious consequences including a student being accused of client abandonment and abandoning the work site. It would result in the student being referred to the Student Review Committee for a level 2 disciplinary hearing and could result in the termination of the practicum by the agency.

### **6.3.1 Working within Scope of Practice**

“Scope of practice” is defined as the activities that an individual student-intern is permitted to perform at their agency practicum site. Those activities should be based on appropriate education, training, and experience. Students should reach out to their Faculty Liaison with any questions regarding an intern’s scope of practice at their practicum site. **The School Social of Work assumes no responsibility for any student who engages in activities, duties and responsibilities not approved by their practicum and/or that are not listed on the Learning Plan Agreement.**

### **6.3.2 Attendance and Punctuality**

Students are responsible for observing regular agency working days and hours as arranged by the Field Instructor. Students are responsible for maintaining an accurate record of practicum hours in IPT. At the end of each semester both the student and Field Instructor sign the time log. Students may be required to complete an agency time sheet, but this does not replace the time log they are required to complete in IPT.

Students are expected to arrive to practicum on time (i.e., *before* the start of their shift) and not leave until their entire shift is completed. Practicum is to be approached like a “real job” and you are accountable as such. Attendance and punctuality reflect well (or poorly) on a professional and remember that you may one day need a letter of recommendation from your Field Instructor

and/or Preceptor when you apply for a practicum/job at another agency. Any time missed from practicum, as well as any supervision and assignments, must be made up ASAP. *Please refer to the Student Handbook regarding our Policy on Course Absences.*

#### **6.4 Furloughs and Mandated Time Off**

Some agencies mandate that their employees take furloughs from work or other times off, e.g., the day before or after a holiday. These are not regular holidays. Therefore, if the student's placement time is affected, such time needs to be made up. The Field Education Team will work with the student should this occur while placed at a practicum.

#### **6.5 Holidays, Winter Intersession, and Spring Semester**

**Holidays:** Students are allowed those holidays that are observed by BOTH the agency or the University, and can receive 8 hours of practicum credit, **with the agency's consent. However,** if the agency requires a student to make up hours for any reason, including for continuity of care for the clients being served, the student is required to honor the request of the agency.

If the agency is open on a University-observed holiday, the student is expected to report to practicum. Failure to do so will result in an absence from practicum, and this time must be made up by the student. In some cases, a student may be asked or required to report to their practicum during a school break, e.g., winter or spring break, to ensure continuity of care for the clients. This is in keeping with the NASW Code of Ethics and being a responsible and ethical social work practitioner. Thanksgiving is **NOT** a holiday where students can accumulate hours due to the holiday. Students may observe other religious holidays not observed by their practicum, but these are treated as absences to be made up by the student AND must be negotiated with the Field Instructor prior to the absence. If the practicum is on an adjusted schedule, the student is required to work with the agency to meet the needs and requirements of the clients.

If the agency is closed on a day when the student is scheduled to report to practicum, the student can accrue these practicum hours, with the consent of the agency, and up to two days total for the year. Some agencies will require students to make up these hours. Students are expected to discuss agency and University holidays and break periods with their Field Instructor during the first few weeks of the fall semester to avoid any confusion or misunderstandings about attendance.

*Please Note: School districts may operate on an adjusted schedule in terms of holidays and mid-semester breaks. Students placed at a school district were informed of possible adjusted schedules when being matched and were asked to discuss the practicum schedule during the interview. The holiday policy may not apply to school district placements. It is expected that students completing their practicum at a school district have agreed to follow their policy. At the beginning of the practicum, students should request the practicum calendar from the agency. Students will need to account for school-based practicum days off, as they do not count for practicum hours.*

#### **Winter Intersession:**

1. The CSUSB Academic Calendar lists Winter Intersession between December 22, 2023-January 17, 2024, however in the BASW and MSW programs, students are required to return to practicum on January 8, 2024, or January 9, 2024, depending on practicum days.

- a. Please note: Some practicums will only allow students to take two weeks off during winter intersession to ensure their clients' continuity of care. It is important for students to discuss agency requirements during the initial interview to determine requirements. No student can be in practicum from December 22-January 3.
2. The benefits of implementing a decreased winter intersession are two-fold: 1) continuity of care for agencies and clients is made a priority, and 2) it allows students at the end of the spring quarter to make up hours if needed due to unforeseen absences.
3. For county-based programs or the Title IV-E program, employment-based practicums usually require students to resume full-time work status during any winter or spring break. Students in these situations are required to discuss their agency's policy about this matter prior to applying for and accepting the practicum opportunity.

### **Spring Semester**

1. **Spring semester** practicums will begin January 8, 2024, or January 9, 2024, depending on practicum days. Students will continue practicum through May 3, 2024.

Spring semester practicum ends approximately two weeks prior to the end of spring semester. If a student has unforeseen absences, this two-week period allows time to complete the minimum hour requirement.

2. Spring break is scheduled for April 2-April 6, 2024.
  - a. Please note that although the university encourages agencies to allow students spring break, this is at the discretion of the agency.
  - b. Please note: If you intern at a school district, you may be required to take time off during the school district spring break versus the CSUSB spring break. Students need to account for this time off and make up the hours or adjust spring break hours to the school district schedule. There is allocated time during the academic year to complete all required hours.
  - c. Employment-based practicums may not allow spring break off due to the agency policy.

### **6.6 Illness and Other Emergencies (Health and Mental Health)**

Students are expected to call the Field Instructor (or text, if this is the Field Instructor's preference) prior to the beginning of the practicum day to report an illness or any emergency requiring an absence or tardiness during the student's scheduled day/hours. Missed hours must be made up before the end of the semester, or at some other period via special arrangement with the Field Instructor.

Absences that exceed more than one practicum day per semester, whether consecutive or not, regardless of the situation, are required to be reported to the Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison by the student. The Field Instructor will report a student's absences that exceed two consecutive practicum days to the Faculty Liaison either via telephone or email. "No-shows" (absence without notifying Field Instructor/Preceptor) are unacceptable unless a medical emergency prevented the student from contacting their Field Instructor or Preceptor at least 4 hours prior to the expected start time for practicum. If no such emergency is responsible for a no-show, the student may be referred to the Student Review Committee (SRC) for a level 2 hearing for unprofessional conduct.

Students may experience a variety of circumstances impeding their ability to continue with, or complete practicum. These can range from personal difficulties to extraordinary unforeseen

circumstances. In these situations, students are encouraged to self-disclose anything that could impede their progress/completion of practicum, so that options can be discussed.

Students have an ethical responsibility (4.05) to "not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility." "Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others" (NASW, 2021).

In the event a Faculty (academic or field education), Instructor, or agency staff become aware of a student in crisis, the necessary precautions will be taken, which may include but not limited to contacting the CSUSB CARE team, county Crisis Response Team, and/or the police. The University is committed to the health and safety of students, Faculty, and the community. Therefore, it is the expectation that Field Instructors and/or agency representatives contact the CSUSB Field Education Team of any concerns regarding the health and safety of a student.

## **6.7 Insurance**

CSUSB provides all social work student interns with malpractice insurance, which is charged to the student during fall semester registration. The exception to this may be when a student is interning at their place of employment, and malpractice insurance is covered by the agency. Students must be working in an official capacity as agreed between their Field Instructor, agency, and the CSUSB School of Social Work, and an affiliation agreement must be in place to be covered under this policy and only during the academic year. Professional liability is effective when the student is registered as a student in the School of Social Work.

Students are responsible for acquiring and maintaining their own health, accident, and/or automobile insurance that the agency may require. CSUSB does not provide health and accident insurance for practicum participants and is not financially responsible for any medical bills incurred as a result of emergency or other medical treatments. It is highly recommended that students seek out medical insurance prior to beginning practicum such as Medi-Cal.

## **6.8 Accommodations and Title IX**

### Accommodations:

Students are responsible for requesting any reasonable accommodations for seminar class or their practicum site by enrolling in CSUSB's Services for Students with Disabilities and consulting with their designated Field Coordinator and/or Director at the time of the practicum interview. If an accommodation need is determined once the student has been placed with the agency, the student is highly encouraged to discuss their specific needs with the Faculty Liaison and/or Field Instructor at the agency. The determination of accommodation requests can include a review of whether the requested accommodation is reasonable for the setting and/or agency and whether there are limits to the scope of accommodation. This will be determined by the CSUSB's Services for Students with Disabilities in consultation with the School of Social Work Field Education Program. Accommodation in a practicum experience may be different from those approved in a classroom.



### Title IX:

The California State University does not discriminate on basis of gender, which includes sex and gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation, in its education programs or activities. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and certain other federal and state laws, prohibit discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation in employment, as well as in all education programs and activities operated by the University (both on and off campus), including admissions. The CSUSB School of Social Work fully supports and abides by Title IX policies. The protection against discrimination on basis of gender or sexual orientation includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, gender-based dating and domestic violence and stalking.

The determination of accommodation requests can include a review of whether the requested accommodation is reasonable for the setting and/or agency and whether there are limits to the scope of accommodation. This will be determined by the CSUSB's Title IX Office, in consultation with the School of Social Work Field Education Program. Accommodation in a practicum setting may be different from that approved for a classroom.

### **6.9 Criminal Background Checks (Live Scan)**

Criminal background checks are commonly required, as part of the onboarding process, for persons placed in many practicum settings. Any criminal record (infraction, charge, misdemeanor, or felony) may make a student ineligible for placement in certain agencies. Students are advised that a lack of disclosure about a criminal background during the agency interview process may result in a denial of placement at some agencies. It is strongly recommended that students with any level of criminal background openly discuss their specific situation with their designated program Field Coordinator during their pre-placement meeting so they can get a better understanding of the potential challenges of placement, on a case-by-case basis.

Students may be ineligible for placement, or terminated from an agency, if criminal background information comes to light without prior disclosure to them. The Field Director or the designated program Field Coordinator can provide insight to students regarding potential opportunities and barriers to securing a practicum site but cannot guarantee placement or choice of placement. Information disclosed will be used only for the purpose of determining appropriate practicum options. Please note: If a student cannot be placed, they will be unable to continue in the MSW program.

If a student is arrested or charged with a new offense or is convicted before commencing and/or while a student in the program, the student is required to disclose this information to the Director of the School of Social Work, Director of Field Education, designated Field Coordinator, and Academic Advisor within 48 hours of arrest, charge, or conviction. Students may be terminated from the program if an arrest or charge comes to light without immediate disclosure.

Failure to provide the required disclosures or notices will be deemed as deception and will be handled as a form of academic dishonesty in addition to any other violations. Arrests, violations and/or convictions which violate University and/or School policies or standards could result in sanctions. Please see the NASW Code of Ethics, "4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud and Deception."

Students who are arrested, charged, or convicted before commencing and/or while enrolled as a student in the program are not permitted to return to practicum until further notice. The student will be referred to the Student Review Committee for an initial review of the situation. The student assumes the risk involved with disclosing

information and thus may choose not to disclose information. However, if the student chooses not to disclose information, the Student Review Committee will be unable to determine a course of action based on the program guidelines and Code of Ethics.

If a student is charged with a new offense before commencing and/or while enrolled as a student in the program, the student will most likely be required to take a leave of absence until the case has been resolved and a decision has been made by a court of law. A student may be permitted to complete classroom coursework for that semester but will most likely be unable to continue in subsequent semesters until a resolution has been reached in their case because the nature of the program largely requires that core courses be taken concurrently with practicum. Once the outcome of the specific case or circumstance has been determined/resolved, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Director of the School of Social Work, Director of Field Education, MSW Field Coordinator, and Academic Advisor. At that time, the student will be referred to the Student Review Committee again to review the specific factors and their implications for the social work profession and the student's ability to return to the program and practicum.

### **6.10 Immigration Status**

The University does not check on the immigration status of students. However, practicum sites may require documentation of a student's citizenship/resident status through a valid Social Security number and/or valid California driver's license, identification card, or visa. The School cannot guarantee a student's placement if an agency requires such documentation. International students are required to be cleared by international studies and show proof of a valid visa that allows them to study full time in the United States prior to being admitted to the Social Work Program as this will impact a student's ability to participate in Field Education.

### **6.11 Safety**

Student safety is of utmost importance and concern at the practicum site. Students should make every effort to understand the safety protocols at their practicum by discussing them with their supervisor, support staff, and by reviewing agency handbooks. (For further information on specific safety protocols, refer to the Student Field Education Orientation Modules).

During the admission process and prior to entering practicum, students are informed that their participation in practicum may be accompanied by certain risks. Risks include but are not limited to 1) driving to and from the practicum site, or while during practicum activities; 2) unpredictable or violent behavior of certain client populations served by the practicum site; and 3) exposure to infectious diseases, including tuberculosis or other airborne pathogens, hepatitis, HIV or other bloodborne pathogens.

All risks cannot be prevented, and some could result in bodily injury, up to and including death, and each student has agreed to assume these risks beyond the control of the University, School, Faculty, and Staff. It is the student's responsibility to understand and follow the practicum's policies and procedures designed to identify and control risks, including safety and security procedures and blood borne pathogen policies, and to obtain any immunizations which the Practicum Site may recommend, or that the University requires. Students agree to follow CDC and CDPH guideline to reduce the risk of infections, and prior to beginning practicum they signed the acknowledgement of risk form related to the risks associated with practicum and that they are otherwise capable, with or without accommodation, to participate in the practicum.

## 6.12 Counseling

Working in the profession of social work can elicit strong emotional responses in students, given the severity of issues that some clients report. When dealing with a client issue that has become too difficult or overwhelming, students are encouraged to utilize the resources of the CSUSB Student Counseling Center (<https://www.csusb.edu/caps>) or consult a mental health professional in your health insurance network.

Students have an ethical responsibility (4.05) to "not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility." "Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others" (NASW, 2021).

## 6.13 Social Media

Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will be respected by various sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, they assume that anything posted can be seen, read, critiqued, and shared. Whatever is stated, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g., blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, Faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image or that of their classmates, colleagues, agency, School, or University.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are strongly urged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing the social work profession as well as CSUSB and the School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader communities.

## 6.14 Policy and Procedure for the Use of Employment Setting for Practicum

The goal of work is performance, while the goal of the practicum is student learning through the

application of social work and other bases of knowledge. However, it is possible for a student to obtain a placement at the agency where they currently work provided that the educational experience is unique to their job responsibilities and includes substantial "new learning" in the areas of knowledge, values, and skills. The student's regular work may not be considered a practicum unless the student submits the Job Conversion or Job-Related Form and all requirements for this rare exception are met.

Approval of the use of an employment setting as a practicum is dependent upon the ability of the agency to safeguard the student's learning needs. This normally means that a different supervisor in a different department/unit would supervise the practicum with different clients that are not a part of the student's regular work assignments, and the work must be at the MSW level.

Students requesting a practicum at a current job site must complete the Job Conversion Application or Job-Related Placement Application. The application describes the student's current work assignments and identifies how practicum activities will be significantly different from employment responsibilities. At no time may the student's employment duties/work bleed into their practicum duties/work on their practicum days/hours. The job conversion proposal will be reviewed, and a decision made by the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator. Criteria for consideration includes (but is not limited to):

1. There must be an MSW employed at the work site who is NOT the employment supervisor who is willing and able to be a Field Instructor.
2. The Field Instructor must be an MSW and cannot have any authority over the student's employment status. The MSW Field Instructor must meet the qualifications required of all Field Instructors.
3. The practicum learning opportunities/tasks/assignments must differ from the employment tasks AND must be in accordance with both the general educational criteria of the School of Social Work and those appropriate to the student's chosen educational level/goals.
4. Job conversions and job-related placements must be approved in writing by the agency and the Director of Field Education. *Job conversion and job-related placement forms are available on the CSUSB website.*
5. The request for job conversion or job-related placement must be discussed prior to the Placement Interview with the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator to allow for time to investigate it as a viable option. Documentation to support the request must be submitted at the Placement Interview.

PLEASE NOTE: If the student is a county employee participating in the 20/20 program or approved for the Title IV-E program, there are specific requirements that need to be met to be considered for an employment-based placement and a 2-year placement at a county agency. The student's employment duties need to be different from each year of practicum. This is approved ahead of time, prior to the practicum beginning, through a formal interview and acceptance process. Please see CSUSB website for further details regarding these programs.

Any deviations at all to the above must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator.

### **6.15 Policy on the Use of the Same Agency for Both Years of Practicum**

Practicum experiences are designed to build upon one another in developing a competent practitioner. A competent practitioner can demonstrate social work practice skills in both direct and indirect practice in a diversity of agency settings. To maximize learning students are placed in two different agencies. However, in limited circumstances, an exception to the “two-agency” rule may be approved. For example, if there are limited placement options in a geographical area, the agency is large and diverse and can provide two unique experiences and a different Field Instructor each year, an exception may be considered. Additionally, if the student is a county employee participating in the 20/20 program or Title IV-E program, there are specific requirements that need to be met to be considered for a 2-year placement at a county agency. An exception must be approved in advance by the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator.

### **6.16 Withdrawal from Field Education Course Enrollment**

If the student withdraws from their field seminar or leaves their practicum without notification, they will not receive credit for hours previously completed because field education is based on a year-long, two-semester sequence with (in most cases) a year-long learning plan, and there is a limited number of agencies that will accept a student for less than a full academic year. Withdrawal from the field practicum or seminar may require the student to repeat the entire year. Should an emergent situation develop requiring a student to withdraw from the field education sequence at any time, the Faculty Liaison/Advisor, **and** the Director of Field and/or designated Field Coordinator should be notified at the earliest possible time and a written plan approved by the Director of Field and/or designated Field Coordinator developed to avoid the necessity of repeating any part of the Field Education Sequence.

If, at any time, a student exits their practicum, their clients' well-being should be the principal concern. So, except in the most extreme emergencies, the proper termination processes should be followed, and the agency's transfer of cases procedures adhered to. All property of the agency should also be returned (keys, case records, etc.), and failure to abide by these guidelines could constitute a serious violation of professional ethics and lead to dismissal from the MSW program following a Level 2 Student Review Committee hearing in response to the breach.

### **6.17 Student Request to Postpone or Quit a Practicum**

A student who finds that they must defer enrollment in the field education sequence requirement of the MSW Program due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, personal emergency, etc.) must discuss the issue(s) with the Field Director or designated Field Coordinator and their Academic Advisor and submit an electronic Request for a Leave of Absence (LOA), the information and instructions for which may be found here:

[https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/LOA-Adobe%20Sign%20Process\\_0\\_0\\_0.pdf](https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/LOA-Adobe%20Sign%20Process_0_0_0.pdf).

The Request for a Leave of Absence must be specific and include:

- a. The name of the School of Social Work Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Carolyn McAllister, [cmcallis@csusb.edu](mailto:cmcallis@csusb.edu).
- b. A proposed curriculum plan for completing practicum and concurrent program requirements.
- c. The duration of the Leave of Absence; and
- d. Delineation by the student of their understanding of the impact that the delay will have

on completing the MSW.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all LOA paperwork is completed, reviewed, approved, and submitted as instructed.

A student may not discontinue or withdraw from their practicum or seminar to avoid receiving an unsatisfactory grade for any portion of their field education experience. Any student who withdraws from the practicum or seminar and is not in good standing, e.g., grades or conduct, will not be allowed to re-enroll in a field education sequence.

The special circumstances necessitating the discontinuance of a practicum or seminar must be discussed with the Faculty Liaison, Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator, and Academic Advisor. Prior to the student's re-entry into the field education sequence, a meeting will be held with the student, Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator, Faculty Liaison, and Academic Advisor to determine readiness to re-enter a practicum or seminar, review audit requirements and to finalize any outstanding arrangements. The Field Director or designated Field Coordinator and Academic Advisor will propose the specifics and timing of re-entry into the field education sequence in consultation with the MSW Graduate Coordinator.

#### **6.18 Interruption of Practicum**

Students who are employed should clearly explain to their employers that they are not available for "on call" work, or to respond to emergencies during practicum hours. Personal cell phones, pagers, text messages, and personal telephone calls should not interrupt students' work and attention at their practicum sites. Students should make alternate arrangements for others to contact you, e.g., during your coffee or lunch break, or after practicum hours, etc.

#### **6.19 Agency Dismissal of Students from Practicum Sites**

Agencies, with or without the consent of the CSUSB School of Social Work, may dismiss students for illegal, unprofessional, or unethical conduct or for any violation of that agency's expected intern conduct, or of its policies and/or procedures according to that agency's internal personnel regulations, or failing to comply with any part(s) of the NASW Code of Ethics. When a student is dismissed from an agency, a referral to the Student Review Committee (SRC) Level 2 will be initiated by the Faculty Liaison and the Academic Advisor will be notified. The SRC process will be followed as described in the Student Handbook.

Dismissal from a practicum for violation of an agency policy or procedure, for unprofessional conduct, and/or a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics can also constitute grounds for dismissal from the MSW program following the Level 2 Student Review Committee hearing. All social work students are responsible for knowing the NASW Code of Ethics and the information contained in the MSW Student Handbook and MSW Field Education Manual. Ignorance of any part of the Code, Handbook, or Manual is not an excuse for breaches in professionalism or professional ethics.

#### **6.20 Termination Initiated by Agency or Social Work Program due to Student Performance Concerns**

A supervisor or administrator of the agency retains the right to terminate a student's placement because of significant behavioral concerns. Additionally, the Director of Field Education may terminate a student's placement due to serious acts of omission or

commission by the student in either the field seminar class or practicum. Reasons for termination include (but are not limited to):

- On-going inability to meet learning objectives (competencies) as outlined on the Student Learning Plan.
- Failing to follow mandated reporting requirements.
- Illegal drug use while at the practicum site, reporting to the practicum site under the influence of alcohol or legal or illegal substances, and/or failing an agency drug screening.
- Presenting a risk to and/or jeopardizing the safety or boundaries of clients, staff, or Faculty either intentionally (e.g., verbal abuse toward others; sexual impropriety; dual relationships, poor boundaries, etc.) or unintentionally (e.g., via carelessness, laziness, forgetfulness, etc.).
- Not maintaining consistent days and hours at the practicum site.
- Being unable to openly accept feedback, constructive criticism from their supervisor.
- Personal issues significantly impact a student's ability to meet agency, client, University and School expectations and obligations.
- Failure to report previous criminal convictions to their Field Education Faculty members.
- Violation(s) of the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Failing to attend seminar class.
- Verbal or physical threats to Faculty, staff, students, or others at CSUSB.
- Being charged with a legal offense as an accepted or current student.
- Repeated unprofessional or inadequate communication with peers, Faculty, and agency partners.

The Director of Field Education or designee will thoroughly review the reason(s) for termination and refer the matter to the Chair of the Student Review Committee for review and final disposition (Level 2). The Director of Field Education or Field Education Department representative will be present at all Student Review Committee meetings related to field education. (See Level 2 Review as outlined in the MSW Student Handbook).

### **6.21 Repeat Policy (Re: A Grade of No Credit (NC) in Field Education)**

If a student receives a 'no credit' (NC) for a field education course for any reason they will be referred to the Student Review Committee (SRC) for a Level 2 SRC hearing, to determine the student's status in the program. An NC grade is equivalent to a failure in a course.

### **6.22 Performance that May Result in a Student Review (Level 1 or Level 2)**

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- A Field Practicum grade of "No Credit" requires a repeat of that semester of practicum. Receipt of a "NC" in practicum places the student on probationary status and may result in a meeting with the Student Review Committee to resolve the problem. The student needs to pass (practicum and seminar) in all subsequent field education courses. If students receive more than one "F" (or "No Credit" in Field Practicum), then they may be dismissed from the program.
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student. (Students must adhere to University

guidelines for expected behavior). For complete University policy and procedures, see California State University, San Bernardino Bulletin of Courses, Academic Regulations, Plagiarism and Cheating.)

- Behavior judged to be in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics.
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the Student Discipline Code (See CSUSB Bulletin of Courses).
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else.
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to the social work profession.
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior.
- Failure to meet any of the NASW Code of Ethics or legal standards, Field Education Department Policies, or School of Social Work Criteria for Evaluation of Academic Performance. In some of these circumstances, Faculty are required to contact other entities, such as the Police Department or the CSUSB Student Conduct Office.

## **6.23 The Two Levels of Review**

### **6.23.1 Level 1 Review**

Whenever a faculty member, adjunct faculty (faculty liaison), or field instructor has concerns regarding a student's academic performance, or professional/ethical conduct in the classroom or field practicum, they shall meet with the student to resolve the concerns. If the issues are not resolved, the student's Academic Advisor should be contacted to help address the concern and do further fact finding (A note of these meetings and activities should be placed on the log at the front of the student's file). If the issues are still not resolved, the faculty member or advisor will make a referral to the Chair of the Student Review committee for a Level 2 Review. If the concern is of a very serious nature, it may be necessary to go directly to a Level 2 Review.

### **6.23.2 Level 2 Review**

A Level 2 Review involves the Student Review Committee (SRC, which is composed of the Chair of the Student Review committee, and at least two other Faculty members not parties to the problem). The person making the referral and the student's advisor, as well as other Faculty whose expertise is required (e.g., field education department and program staff) will attend.

Within five business days of receiving the referral, the SRC Chair will:

- Notify the student of the referral using the student's CSUSB email address.
- Provide the student with the referral form and supporting documentation.
- Inquire about the student's preferences for meeting dates and times.

The SRC Chair will schedule the SRC hearing to take place no sooner than two business days after the student has received the referral documentation, and no later than 10 days after the referral was made. The SRC will take into consideration the student's meeting preferences; however, it is the student's responsibility to respond to the notice for an SRC meeting, and to attend the meeting (in person, via phone, or via videoconferencing), even if the meeting cannot be scheduled during the student's preferred dates/times. Should the student fail to respond and/or attend, the SRC will meet and will render a decision without the student's input. Should the student withdraw from the MSW program or from the University while under referral to the SRC, the SRC process will continue with or without the student's participation and a recording of the SRC's decision will be included in the student's file.

After the level 2 SRC hearing has occurred, the Chair of the Student Review committee will discuss the recommendations with the Dean's office for final review/approval, and then will inform the student of the decisions which can include one or more of the following actions:



- Permit the student to continue in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
- Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program. A remediation plan will be developed in consultation with the student, the advisor, and the concerned Faculty member as needed. This plan shall:
  - a) specify the concerns of the Faculty member in as much detail as possible.
  - b) indicate the actions to be undertaken by the student.
  - c) indicate the date by which the student must demonstrate the required level of knowledge, skill, behavior, or ethical conduct.
  - d) the plan may indicate the name of a mentor (may be the advisor if the student chooses) who will meet regularly with the student and report progress to the SRC (see below Role of the Mentor)
  - e) be signed by the Academic Advisor, and Faculty member who initiated the concern.
  - f) be reported on regularly by the mentor (see below)

The student will be given a copy of the plan and asked to sign it indicating they received a copy of the document. The student will also be informed, in writing, of the right to rebut the Plan or grieve the decision. All students who have been placed on a remedial plan are also automatically placed on academic probation. Plans and reports will be filed in the student's file and reported to Graduate Studies.

The SRC Chair shall, on or before the date specified in the plan for completion of the remediation, review the student's progress. One or two actions must be taken to resolve the concern:

1. The plan is met, and the concern is alleviated. This is communicated in writing to all those in the above paragraph, plus the Director of the School of Social Work and members of the SRC.
2. The concern is not alleviated. The SRC shall make a recommendation, which may be that the student be dismissed from the program. In some situations, the SRC will recommend that the student no longer continue in the social work program. This decision will be forwarded to a meeting of the full Faculty and if confirmed by the full Faculty, is final at the School level. That decision will be communicated to the student in writing including information on the right to appeal through the university's academic grievance process (see CSUSB Bulletin of Courses).
  - At the time a student is dismissed from the program, they are dropped from classes and are no longer enrolled. This will be communicated to the Office of Graduate Studies and the University Office of the Registrar. This may require repayment of financial aid funds. If a student is dismissed from the MSW program, they are dismissed from the university as well.

## **6.24 Grievances and Appeals**

Field Education students have the same "Due Process" rights in practicum as in classroom courses regarding grades and CSUSB Social Work Programs decisions. These are described in the MSW Student Handbook, the University Bulletin and other university documents.

## **7.0 PLACEMENT SELECTION PROCESS AND REQUIRED PRACTICUM COMPONENTS AND REQUIREMENTS**

This section of the manual covers the process for selecting the student's field site and the required components of field education: 1) Pre-Field Orientation, 2) Seminar, 3) the Learning

Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation, 4) Process Recording, 5) Supervision and Evaluation. Participation in each of these required components is essential to achieving the goals of the field education program. Students should be familiar with all the required components of the field education process and plan to actively participate in each. The components of field education are intended to 1) provide orientation through the experience, 2) to provide guidance in shaping the experience to the student and agency while meeting MSW program goals, and 4) to provide the supervision and evaluation necessary for achieving and assessing desired behaviors consistent with the nine CSWE competencies.

## **7.1 Generalist (Foundation) Year Practicum Application and Interview Process**

### Application Process

1. Once a student has applied to and been accepted into the MSW program, the Director of Field Education, Pathway Program Field Coordinator for the distance education students or Title IV-E Field Coordinator for child welfare stipend students will send an email to the student requesting an in-person or online practicum interview.
2. Students complete a Practicum Application online through the program's Intern Placement Tracking System (IPT).
3. Based on students' interests, learning needs, agency resources, and in some cases personal circumstances, the Director of Field Education or designated Program Field Coordinator will meet with the students to discuss placement options and a two-year practicum plan.
  - a. The Generalist (first) year practicum process is intended to expose students to areas of diverse practices/populations they have not been exposed to and/or have no experience. The goal is to build a generalist social work skill set in social work methods and antiracist and anti-oppressive practices on a micro, mezzo, and macro level.
  - b. The Advanced Generalist (second) year) of practicum is intended to be in a practice setting that aligns with the student's specialization, area of interest, and possible research interests. The goal is to build upon the generalist practicum experience and assist the students in developing more advanced social work skills, methods, and antiracist and anti-oppressive practices across diverse populations.
  - c. Note: Students who receive a stipend (Title IV-E) will have additional requirements to consider when being placed. The goal is to provide opportunities to work with clients and agencies that provide services to children, adults and families receiving Child Welfare System (CWS) services or at risk of entering the CW.
4. After the Director of Education or designated Field Coordinator has met with the student, discussed placement options and a tentative two-year practicum plan, and identified the placement site that best meets the student's needs, a formal referral is made to the student and that agency by the Field Director or Field Coordinator. The goal of the two-year plan is to encourage the student to begin to think about short and long term career goals.

### Student/Field Instructor Interview

The student is instructed on how to contact the agency and set up their interview. The purpose of the interview is to determine if the placement is acceptable to the student and if the student is acceptable to the prospective Field Instructor and any other interested agency official. The student is instructed to take their current resume to the interview (or asked to email it to the Field Instructor before the in-person interview) and to attempt to secure a practicum with an agency.

Given the limited number of practicums, and the recent additional new social work programs,

agency availability has become much more limited and competitive.

### Placement Confirmation

If the placement is acceptable to all parties involved, confirmation of this is communicated and shared by the Director of Field Education or with the designated Field Coordinator, either through email or completion and submission of the Interview Confirmation Form to either of the Field Faculty Members. Once the placement is secured, the student will follow up with the Field Instructor no later than late June to discuss pre-practicum requirements (i.e., Live Scan criminal background check, TB tests, physical exam, etc.).

### Second Interview

1. On rare occasions, a placement may not be acceptable to either the student or the Field Instructor. In this situation, the student will report back to the Director of Field Education and/or the designated Field Coordinator. Feedback from the previous interview will be discussed with the student.
2. If necessary, the student will receive coaching on interviewing skills and/or be offered a mock interview prior to being referred for a second interview. However, being referred to a second interview will be based upon the Director of Field Education and/or designated Program/Field Coordinator determining that the student has the necessary skills, temperament, maturation, and readiness to be successful in their practicum.
3. If the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator reviews the attempts made to secure a placement and determines that the student is not ready or is inappropriate for practicum, the student will not be referred for a third interview.
4. While the School of Social Work attempts to secure appropriate practicums for all students, in accordance with the placement procedures listed above, it does not guarantee that all students will be successful in the placement interview.
5. Students who are denied a placement by two different agencies, who refuse to accept two agency offers, or who refuse an interview with an agency will be required to meet with the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator. The Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator has the option of referring the student to the Student Review Committee, or to indefinitely terminate the practicum privilege, due to being unsuccessful in securing a placement after completing two interviews. The MSW Student Handbook, specifically the Student Review Process, will be followed in such cases. The criteria for assessing appropriateness for the social work profession include criteria including but not limited to (MSW Student Handbook):
  - Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills
  - Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice
  - Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice
6. If the student's employment and/or other competing factors in their personal life impair or prevent them from securing a practicum, the process of pursuing placement will be suspended, and the student will be referred to the Director of Field Education and/or the SRC for review. The decision to suspend the practicum referral process is at the discretion of the Director of Field Education and/or designated Program/Field Coordinator, and/or the Student Review Committee. Further, the student will not be permitted to sign up for the field education course (SW6081).

**Students are prohibited from independently contacting an agency for a placement.** There are many variables involved in the placement process, which a student may not be aware of. To ensure that the learning needs of students are met, a formal process for selecting practicum sites from the approved site list has been developed. The process contains multiple steps to ensure that the placement sites have the expertise and capacity to properly train students and that the roles and responsibilities of the partners in the Field Education process (University, agency, student) are clearly understood before students are placed in an agency.

If a student is interested in an agency that is not currently an approved placement site, the student may discuss their interests with the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator and provide them with agency information. However, the student is **prohibited** from contacting the agency directly.

## **7.2 Advanced Generalist Year Practicum Application and Interview Process**

### Application Process

1. At the end of the Fall semester, returning students apply for a practicum using the Field Practicum Application Form, located in IPT.
  - Advanced Standing students apply for a practicum once admitted to the program in the Spring prior to entering the Advanced Standing program in the Summer (Summer Bridge Course) using the Field Practicum Application Form, located in IPT.
2. Once the student completes the form and submits an updated resume, they sign up for a practicum interview with the Director of Field Education, the Title IV-E Coordinator, the Pathways Distance Education Field Coordinator, or the Advanced Standing Field Coordinator.
3. The interview will provide the student with two agency referrals based upon the student's chosen specialization, with consideration given to the student's previous experience, geographical accessibility, long range career goals, areas of special interest, and the availability of placements. Students will be referred to the agency via email.

### Student/Field Instructor Interview

The student is instructed on how to contact the agency and set up the interview. The purpose of the interview is to determine if the placement is acceptable to the student and if the student is acceptable to the prospective Field Instructor and any other interested agency official. The student is instructed to take their current resume to the interview (or be asked to email it to the Field Instructor before the in-person interview) and to attempt to secure a practicum with an agency.

Given the limited number of practicums, and the recent additional new social work programs, agency availability has become much more limited and competitive.

### Placement Confirmation

If the placement is acceptable to all parties involved, confirmation of this is communicated and shared by the Director of Field Education or with the designated Field Coordinator, either through email or completion of the Interview Confirmation Form. Once placement is secured, the student will follow up with the Field Instructor no later than late June to discuss pre-practicum requirements (i.e., Live Scan background check, TB tests, physical exam, etc.).

### Second Interview

1. On rare occasions, a placement may not be acceptable to either the student or the Field

Instructor. In this situation, the student will report back to the Director of Field Education and/or the designated Field Coordinator. Feedback from the previous interview will be discussed with the student.

2. If necessary, the student will receive coaching on how to perform in an interview and/or be offered a mock interview prior to being referred for a second interview. However, being referred to a second interview will be based upon the Director of Field Education and/or designated Program/Field Coordinator determining that the student has the necessary skills, temperament, maturation, and readiness to be successful in their practicum.
3. If the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator reviews the attempts made to secure a placement and determines that the student is not ready or inappropriate for practicum, the student will not be referred for a third interview.
4. While the School of Social Work attempts to secure appropriate practicums for all students, in accordance with the placement procedures listed above, it does not guarantee that all students will be successful in the placement interview.
5. Students who are denied a placement by two different agencies, who refuse to accept two agency offers, or who refuse an interview with an agency will be required to meet with the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator. The Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator has the option of referring the student to the Student Review Committee, or to indefinitely terminate the practicum privilege, due to being unsuccessful in securing a placement after completing two interviews. The MSW Student Handbook, specifically the Student Review Process, will be followed in such cases. The criteria for assessing appropriateness for the social work profession include criteria including but not limited to (MSW Student Handbook):

- Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills
- Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice
- Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice

6. If the student's employment, and/or other competing factors in their personal life, impair or prevent them from securing a practicum, the process of pursuing placement will be suspended, and the student will be referred to the Director of Field Education and/or the SRC for review. The decision to suspend the practicum referral process is at the discretion of the Director of Field Education and/or designated Program/Field Coordinator, and/or the Student Review Committee. Further, the student will not be permitted to sign up for the field education course (SW6083).

**Note:** Students who are participating in the Title IV-E Program engage in a structured interview process and are required to complete their Advanced year placement with a county public child welfare agency.

### **7.3 Learning Plan Agreement**

At the beginning of the academic year, the student, and the Field Instructor, in consultation with the Faculty Liaison, develop a learning plan structured by the Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Evaluation of Skill form (LPA) through the electronic Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) Database program (IPT). The Director of Field Education, designated

Field Coordinator and/or Faculty Liaison(s) will provide training on how to access and use the IPT during the orientation held prior to the academic year and through an online training module.

The purpose of the agreement is to formalize the expectations for student learning (knowledge) and performance (skills) by developing learning opportunities that allow the student to demonstrate behaviors consistent with the nine CSWE competencies. Since students come to the MSW Program with different needs and various levels of experience, the learning agreement should be reflective of an individual student's unique needs in addressing learning opportunities in practice within the framework of the overall program goals. The Field Instructor supervises the process of the development of the learning agreement and determines what is feasible given the resources of the agency. The learning plan agreement serves as a roadmap for the student learning as they work to achieve at least a minimal level of competency in the nine areas.

Toward the end of each semester, the Field Instructor rates the extent to which the student's observable competency behaviors were achieved. Activities in the fall semester are expected to help the student begin mastering the competencies by the end of the spring semester.

#### Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation Development

Procedure The following procedure is recommended beginning the first week of placement:

1. The student reviews the Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Assessment form.
2. The student discusses the agency mission statement, learning opportunities, expectations of the Field Instructor, Field Instructor's practicum plan, practicum objectives, expectations, and learning activities with the Field Instructor and, with the assistance of the Field Instructor, assesses their learning needs.
3. Together the student and Field Instructor document specific learning activities in the Learning Plan Agreement form and complete all sections of the learning plan at the beginning of the year to formulate the learning opportunities based on the agency mission, structure, client population, and policies.
4. The Field Instructor reviews, modifies the plan as appropriate, and discusses the modified plan with the student and Faculty Liaison. The student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Liaison signs the revised plan after all agree with it.
5. After student and Field Instructor complete the learning plan outline, they are then required to document the site-specific learning opportunities/activities intended to develop the student's skills which demonstrate behaviors reflective of each competency. There should be a minimum of three learning opportunities listed under each competency.

#### **7.4 Process Recordings**

Process recordings (written and/or auditory) in conjunction with regular supervisory guidance are important tools in the learning process. The process recording is an educational tool that

helps the student review, reflect, internalize, assess, critically analyze, and understand the client encounter, including the latent issues and feelings that contribute to that interaction, from micro, mezzo, and macro level perspectives. This affords the student the opportunity to explore and apply the conceptual knowledge from the classroom to social work practice.

A minimum of six process recordings are **required** per year (Seminars 2-7), however an agency may require additional process recordings. They are to be reviewed and signed by the Field Instructor and discussed during supervision. **One** process recording is to be submitted to the Faculty Liaison via Canvas in Seminars 2-7 and will be used by the Faculty Liaison as one indicator of the student's progress in applying knowledge gained in the classroom in the practicum.

Please refer to your seminar syllabus for the due date of your process recordings.

The format for the process recordings will be reviewed at the Pre-Field Orientation and/or will be covered in the Seminar.

### **7.5 Supervision**

Regularly scheduled, individual, one-hour weekly conferences with the Field Instructor are a required feature of the practicum. Students should log one hour of supervision per week on their time log. This consultation is a mutually interactive process between the Field Instructor and the student and is used to assess the student's learning activities, including the integration and generalization of concepts from the classroom to applied practicum experiences, and to resolve problems.

Weekly supervision provides an opportunity for the Field Instructor to give ongoing feedback to the student. It informs the student about their performance of practicum goals, helps students identify their performance strengths and weaknesses, review process recordings, discuss case issues/dynamics, and evaluate their progress toward achieving the goals identified in the Learning Plan Agreement. Field Instructors may utilize process recordings, case histories, and presentations to explore case dynamics, client-student interaction, and systematic thinking. Additionally, the Field Instructor may request the student to seek consent from their client(s) to audiotape one or more sessions for review and analysis with the Field Instructor during their supervision hour, for the student's professional and personal growth.

**If there are any difficulties in maintaining regularly scheduled supervision, the student should immediately bring this matter to the attention of their Faculty Liaison.**

While other learning opportunities are encouraged, such as attending trainings, workshops, lectures, conferences, etc., these are not substitutes for the one hour of weekly individual or combination of individual and group supervision sessions.

### **7.6 Integrative Seminar**

As an integral part of the 6081-6084 sequence, all Generalist (Foundation) year and Specialized Advanced Generalist year students are required to attend their monthly field seminars online. The purpose of seminar is to provide a forum for discussion of students' practicum experiences, to synthesize and integrate theoretical and practical knowledge obtained from practicum and CSUSB coursework, and to link this material to CSWE core competencies.

#### **Attendance:**

The field seminar is a part of the student's concurrent learning with their practicum and meets

online via Zoom eight (8) times throughout the academic year. **Attendance is mandatory** and seminars are scheduled for two and a one-half hour each, which may count towards practicum hours if approved by the Field Instructor and if the seminar is held on a regularly scheduled practicum day. Any unavoidable absence should be discussed as soon as possible with your Faculty Liaison before the seminar. Missing two seminars for any reason is likely to result in a “no credit” grade for seminar and practicum (SW6081- 6084). Should this occur, the student will not be permitted to continue in the MSW program that academic year, will be required to re-enroll in not only the seminar and practicum the following year, but also the social work practice courses the following academic year because the MSW curriculum is sequential and concurrent in nature. The student may be required to repeat that entire academic year of seminar and practicum, as well as their social work practice course(s), depending on how well the student performed up until the time of the “no credit” determination, and pending a decision rendered by the Student Review Committee on this matter. Additionally, it should be noted that excessive and/or regular tardiness or leaving the seminars prematurely may constitute an absence from a seminar, and this determination is made by the student’s seminar instructor.

#### **Participation in Zoom Seminar:**

Participation credit for the Seminar is determined by several criteria, listed below. To receive full credit for Seminar attendance, you must attend and demonstrate the following:

- 1) Active involvement in Zoom synchronous class discussions (video and audio turned on for entire class period; audio should be muted when not speaking).
- 2) Arriving on time and ready to participate in class (video and audio on).
- 3) Demonstrating a commitment to a distraction-free class learning environment, which includes the following: video on for entire class period, no personal cell use, no personal laptop or tablet use, laptop/tablet/cell use as it pertains to course material and course participation only, appropriate questions and attention to content and respect for Faculty Liaison and peers, as demonstrated by verbal and non-verbal communication.

***To obtain credit for the Field Education Courses, students need to obtain a minimum of 83% in the seminar course AND successfully complete the required practicum hours. Please review the course syllabus for details.***

#### **7.7 Required Meetings**

Integration of information learned in the classroom with experiences learned in the practicum is a critical combination of professional learning and preparedness to competently enter the profession. The following meetings are required to facilitate the integration of material:

1. Field Education Orientation
2. Scheduled supervision (see Supervision section above)
3. Group meetings, training, staff/team meetings, and case conferences arranged by the Field Instructor
4. Periodic, usually once or twice each semester, online Zoom meetings with the Faculty Liaison, individually and/or in groups of students and Field Instructor
5. Seminar held online through My Coyote Zoom meetings.
6. Additional meetings arranged by the Faculty Liaison, for example, a group of students meeting in the Faculty Liaison’s office to discuss activities, common problems, or issues.
7. School events as listed on the CSUSB School of Social Work Master Calendar
  - Professional/Career Development Day (Virtual/optional for Title IV-E students)
  - Title IV-E Day (optional for non-Title IV-E students)



- SoCal Job Fair (optional for graduating students)

## 7.8 Evaluations of Practicum

Ongoing evaluation of the student’s progress is a function of the supervisory process. Any concerns about the student’s progress by the Field Instructor should be brought to the attention of the student and Faculty Liaison as soon as possible, so corrective action (Level 1) can be initiated. Please review the Level 1 and Level 2 sections of this manual and the Student Handbook.

Written and verbal feedback will be sought from students and Field Instructors as to what was most helpful in the field education program and what changes they would recommend. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to provide this feedback on an agency basis as well.

## 7.9 Written Evaluations

Written evaluations of the student’s progress are to be inserted in the “Field Instructor Narrative” section of the IPT Database, Learning Plan Agreement. The Faculty Liaison will document progress mid-semester to reflect outcome of the semester practicum visit. The following procedures are recommended:

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Step 1 | Prior to the due date, the student completes a self-assessment of themselves using the electronic Learning Plan Agreement /Comprehensive Skills Evaluation (LPA) located at the IPT website.   |
| Step 2 | The Field Instructor completes the same document, evaluating the student on all the competencies listed therein.   |
| Step 3 | The Student and Field Instructor review their completed LPA during a weekly supervision meeting, discuss ratings, and process any differences that may exist. The School requires that Field Instructors include “narratives” of their intern’s progress to identify the student’s strengths and areas needing improvement in more detail/specificity at the end of each semester. |
| Step 4 | The Field Instructor electronically saves and submits the LPA to the School via the IPT website.   |
| Step 5 | The Faculty Liaison is then responsible for reviewing the evaluation, electronically signing the LPA in IPT database, and posting the student grade as per university protocol.  |

The following scale is in the student’s IPT online Learning Plan Agreement.

### 7.9.1 Performance Evaluation

Please use the following Key in evaluating your students.

#### **EVALUATION KEY**

#### **Evaluation Key**

N/O (Not Observed) Student has not had the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge,

values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes related to the behavior.

- 1 (1-20% of time) Student shows little or no ability to perform behavior(s)  
2 (21-49% of time) Student sometimes effectively achieves the behavior(s)  
3 (50-79% of time) Student usually able to effectively achieve behavior(s)  
4 (80-95% of time) Student has frequent/very good achievement  
5 (96-100% of time) Student has consistent/superior achievement

An email to the Faculty Liaison is required when a student shows little ability or an inability to perform at least 20% of listed behaviors at any time after Week 5 of the academic semester. This indicates a serious problem with the student mastering a basic skill level. Additionally, most first-year students are not expected to receive a score of '5' on their evaluation until spring semester. Such a level indicates mastery of a skill at the Generalist (Foundation) year level or at the Specialized Advanced Generalist year level.

### 7.9.2 Fall Semester

The expected levels of performance for a first semester student are levels **2** and **3**. There are likely to be *N/O (Not observed)* scores as well because much of the student's time will have been spent in orientations to the agency setting and observations of other professionals. Any N/O's given in fall semester will be addressed during the spring Faculty Liaison visit with the student and Field Instructor and a plan needs to be in place to address how the student will gain experience and be able to demonstrate an acceptable level of the competency behavior.

The Faculty Liaison will meet with the Field Instructor and the student early in the semester to review the Learning Plan Agreement and at least once every semester thereafter. In-between meetings, the Faculty Liaison is available to answer the Field Instructor's questions and discuss any issues of concern about the student. The Faculty Liaison should be contacted under the following circumstances:

- The student continues to perform at level **1** on any specific behavioral measure.
- The student is performing at level **2** on more than 75% of the behavioral measures in any one of the core areas.

### 7.9.3 Spring Semester (Final Evaluation)

The expected levels of performance for a spring semester student are **4** and **5**. The Liaison should be contacted under the following circumstances:

- A student is performing at level **1**, **2**, or **possibly a 3** on any specific behavioral measure.

### 7.9.4 End of Year Evaluations

The field education program is a collaborative effort between the agencies, Field Instructors, Field Liaisons, and the Director of Field Education and/or designated Field Coordinator. To ensure that the overall program continues to function at the highest level, the following evaluations are required at the end of each practicum year.

1. Student Evaluation of the Practicum
2. Practicum Process Evaluation by Students

3. Student Evaluation of their Faculty Liaison/Academic Advisor
4. Evaluation of Field Education Administration by Field Instructors
5. Evaluation of Practicums by Faculty Liaison
6. Evaluation and Feedback Integrative Seminars

The forms for all student evaluations will be provided to each student through an electronic evaluation form provided by the School of Social Work at the end of the academic year.

All evaluations are considered confidential and are utilized for program and Faculty evaluation and development.

### **8.0 GRADE FOR FIELD EDUCATION COURSE**

The student receives a grade of “credit” or “no credit” for the Field Education course. The Field Instructor will recommend credit or no credit in the IPT database at the end of semester evaluation. The Faculty Liaison will consider the Field Instructor’s recommendation, determine the student’s participation/performance in Seminar, and will electronically submit the grade in My Coyote. The Faculty Liaison/seminar leader makes the determination of the grade for field education course based on these criteria:

1. Student’s performance and participation in practicum.
2. Student’s completion of required assignments in seminar.
3. Student receives a grade of 83% or better in the field education course.
4. Student’s performance in practicum as reflected in the written evaluation by the Field Instructor and any meetings with the Field Instructor, student, and Faculty Liaison/Seminar Leader.
5. Student’s attendance at all required field education events.

Please note: Students will not be assigned a field education grade until all assignments and/or forms are reviewed, completed, signed, and manually and/or electronically submitted. To receive credit for the field education course, students need to achieve at least an 83% in the field education course AND successfully complete practicum hours.

Failure to perform satisfactorily in **any** of these areas may result in a grade of **NO CREDIT**.

An occasional grade of “Incomplete” may be approved by the Seminar Instructor due to the student’s or Faculty Liaison member’s unexpected circumstances. The need for the “Incomplete” is discussed between the student, their Field Instructor, and Faculty Liaison. A student cannot receive an “Incomplete” if terminated from an agency. Students must be aware that an “incomplete” grade will most likely affect disbursement of financial aid for the following semester.

### **9.0 PRACTICUM: PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS**

#### *Selecting Practicum Settings*

Practicums are selected from social service agencies throughout the region, state, and nationally and are approved based on the quality of their professional practice and acceptance of collaborative participation in professional social work education and ability to provide the experiences that are specified in the LPA. This basic requirement involves the acceptance of the NASW Code of Ethics and the program’s mission, objective, and curriculum, as well as a readiness to invest in the social work education process and meet the minimum qualifications.

The criteria for selecting agencies centers on the agency's ability to provide students the opportunity to acquire practical professional experience through instruction and supervised activities reflective of the School's overall curriculum goal. The following are used to assess the agency's capacity to provide appropriate practicums:

The following process is used to assess the agency's capacity to provide appropriate practicums:

### 1. First Level Assessment

If a potential practicum site contacts any CSUSB Faculty or staff and if the field education program staff is interested in partnering with a specific site, initial contact is made via email or telephone. Once interest is established the following forms will be provided to begin the review process:

- Agency Application Form (must be completed and submitted)
- Field Instructor (FI) Information Form (Form must be completed & submitted by each potential FI)
- Field Education Contract Initiation Form (for review)

Interested agency representative is informed that once the FI Form and Agency Application Form have been completed and submitted via email, agency information will be reviewed by Field Coordinator, Designee, and/or Field Director and an onsite/virtual visit will be set up.

Minimum requirements for practicum site include:

- The Field Instructor holds an MSW from an accredited school of social work and has at least two years of post-MSW practice experience and at least six months' experience at the current practicum site.
- Agency Field Instructors should assess their workload to ensure adequate time to meet a student's learning needs. Thus, agencies considering becoming a practicum site should assess their ability to assume the obligations involved and advantages derived from the venture very carefully.

Once these forms are received, the review process continues with the Field Director/Field Coordinator and/or Designee:

- Field Director/Field Coordinator and/or Designee will review the submitted forms for appropriateness of agency.
- Field Director/Field Coordinator and/or Designee will review the submitted forms for appropriateness of Field Instructor(s), including FI Training criteria.
- Once reviewed and found to be suitable, Field Director/Field Coordinator and/or Designee will set an appointment with the agency for a face-to-face or virtual site visit.

### 2. On- Site/Virtual Visit

An on-site or virtual visit will be completed by the Director of Field Education or Designee. The Director of Field Education or Designee will visit the agency or discuss and assess in a virtual meeting the agency's potential for MSW student placements, which will be performed through a discussion with agency staff and review of agency documents about the services it provides.

Factors considered in the assessment include whether the agency has the capacity and potential for providing adequate setting experience, resources and learning opportunities appropriate to the MSW Program, supervision, and instruction to ensure a quality practicum experience, Field Instructors that meet the CSUSB School of Social Work criteria, and whether the school can respond to agency interests and needs in a reciprocal fashion.

Other expectations of practicum agencies include:

- A commitment to high educational standards as identified by the Council on Social Work Education.
- The overall responsibility for the development of the agency's participation in this social work educational joint venture should rest with the agency's Executive Director or senior staff member.
- Learning experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (as indicated by the Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation) must be made available by the agency to the student.
- The agency will be expected to ensure the availability of records prepared by the student for learning and evaluation at/by the School, subject to professional safeguards.
- Physical facilities necessary to accommodate students will be provided by the agency. When possible, these will include desk space, a meeting room for seminar instruction where indicated, facilities for private interviewing, tutorial instruction, resources necessary for home visits, provisions for essential clerical services, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Field Instructors provide one hour of individual supervision weekly.

### 3. Approval

Upon completion of the practicum site visit, the Director of Field Education and/or Designee will discuss the outcome of the visit with the Field Education team. If the agency, Field Director, and Field Education Team agree that the agency is a strong fit for the MSW program, Field Director will initiate the Affiliation Agreement/Contract with CSUSB Contracts Office who will in turn initiate an Agreement/Contract with the agency. Once the Affiliation Agreement/Contract has been signed by all required parties, Field Director or Designee will add the Agency information to IPT (Intern Placement Tracking data system) and to the appropriate spreadsheet to indicate an active and approved practicum site. The agency will be notified in writing of this approval by receipt of the University/Agency Agreement form signed by the University Contract Officer and by the Agency Director or Designated Agency Representative.

### 4. Field Instructor Training Compliance Prior to Student Placement

Each Field Instructor must complete the required Field Instructor Certification Training as part of final approval of the agency in question (unless they have already been certified by an accredited Department or School of Social Work at another university within California). Field Instructors – and field Preceptors – are however encouraged to occasionally attend Field Instructor trainings after being certified to receive updates about any policy and procedure changes that might have occurred within the School of Social Work and its Field Education Program, to meet new Field Faculty Members, etc.

## **10.0 FIELD INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION TRAINING PROGRAM AND COMMUNICATION**

The certification training program is an eight-hour course designed to establish a uniform set of expectations for Field Instructors in the roles and responsibilities of the practicum site. The requirements are:

1. All agency social workers who serve as Field Instructors must be certified within one year of supervising any CSUSB social work student (BASW orMSW).
2. Certification is awarded upon the completion of the core training program (either with this School or another accredited graduate department/school of social work within California).
3. CSUSB will award Field Instructors with an identification card. This card grants them library and other University privileges.
4. Field Instructors who have not taken the Field Instructor training within the past 5 years or have not worked with a CSUSB student within the past 5 year will be required to complete the Field Instructor Training again to ensure they are trained in the school's current curriculum, changes in the field education program, and overall trends in practicum instruction.
5. Training and certification by other social work programs at other universities meet this requirement (e.g., reciprocity is granted by most who are a member of the Southern California Field Director's Consortium so long as the curriculum is not materially different from that of CSUSB's).
6. Preceptors that play a major role in the training of graduate social work students should also complete Field Instructor training. Other agency officials with interests in graduate social work education are also welcomed to attend the core training.
7. Continuing education units (CEU's) will be awarded to those individuals who complete the entire Field Instructor Training. CEU's will not be awarded for partial completion, however the individual may complete the remainder of the training at another School or School of Social Work the same year, or the following year at CSUSB or another CSWE-accredited social work programs provided that the make-up training does not overlap the already completed training session(s).

### **10.1 Orientation Checklist for Social Work Interns and Field Instructors**

The Orientation Checklist is a very useful tool to help both the Field Instructor and intern to learn about the agency, its mission statement, policies and procedures, expectations, as well as those of the Field Instructor. It also helps to add clarity and avoid misunderstandings between the interns, agency, Field Instructor, and Field Liaison. A conversation about this checklist during supervision and during the first few weeks of practicum can also reduce anxiety in the student intern. We ask that this checklist be reviewed by both student and Field Instructor in the Intern Placement Tracking system (IPT) during their first agency meeting with the student and Field Instructor and be electronically signed no later than the fifth week of practicum.

### **10.2 Special Note to Agency Executives and Field Instructors**

The Faculty and administration of the School of Social Work and of the University are most appreciative of the invaluable contribution provided by our affiliated community organizations, agencies, and Field Instructors. Without the cooperation and collaboration of all concerned, a quality program of graduate Social Work Education would be impossible. Faculty Liaisons will visit each placement site on a regular basis to assist agencies and Field Instructors in any way needed via virtual meetings, written communication such as emails and the social work program

manuals, and in-person when needed. The Director of Field Education is available to answer questions, participate in problem solving, and provide a range of administrative consultations to agency staff and Field Instructors.

Field Instructors are authorized to use the University's Pfau Library and can often obtain parking permits for attending campus-based activities by communicating with the School of Social Work's main office.

If the School of Social Work can be of any assistance to agencies or Field Instructors, not only in the education and training of Social Workers, but in reaching agency goals or better serving clients, your calls and emails are welcomed.