

Descriptions of Field Placements

Field I placements are entry-level social work practicum experiences at the micro-, mezzo-, and macro-level. Such learning activities include: providing screening, assessment, and intervention through direct contact with clients, developing an intervention plan based on information from the assessment, providing case management services, client-centered advocacy, education, crisis intervention, and generalist social work activities providing coordination of care for social services. Students may also provide administrative, policy and/or research oriented services. Students must be supervised by an individual with a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree with at least 2000 hours of post MSW practice experience. Ideally the field instructor should also be licensed as a social worker.

Field II placements are advanced clinical practicum experiences. This includes: applying professional social work knowledge, skills, and values in completing diagnostic assessments and providing treatment based on a differential diagnosis. Treatment may address psychosocial function, disability, or impairment, including addictions and emotional, mental, and behavioral disorders. Treatment may include, but is not limited to the application of social work theory and methods to the provision of therapy to individuals, couples, families, and groups. Students may also be engaged in generalist social work practice; however the majority of their placement experience will involve clinical social work practice.

Students must be supervised by an individual with an MSW degree with at least 2000 hours of post MSW practice experience and should be licensed and preferably as a LICSW. Other mental health professionals can provide partial supervision.

Time Expectations for Field Practicum

During the spring semesters when students will be completing their field experience, they will need to have at least 20 hours per week available to complete their field education hours. Students are encouraged to not work more than 0.6 (approximately 25 hours per week) during these semesters (January through May).

Field I Practicum

Regular track (Two Year Program) students will be completing 450 hours in a Field I placement during the spring semester (January through May) of the first year. In order to complete the full 450 hours within the spring semester, students will be required to be placed in their field an average of 30 hours per week. In some instances, students may begin their field placement early in order to lessen the amount of field hours per week over a longer period of time (based on agency need). This requires advanced planning and approval by the field placement and Field Director. If the 450 hours are not complete by the end of spring semester, students will be required to enroll in a field placement course for the subsequent summer semester to complete their remaining field placement hours. The number of credits for the course will depend on the number of hours the student has left to complete. Seventy-five field placement hours equals 1 course credit.

The 3-year (Part Time) program allows regular track students to complete their Field I placement during fall semester of their second year in the program.

Field II Practicum

Advanced standing and regular track students will complete 450 hours in their Field II placement beginning mid fall semester (November) through the spring semester. This is the second year for regular track students and the first and only year for advanced standing students. This placement requires an average of 20 hours per week. If the 450 hours are not complete by the end of spring semester, students will be required to enroll in a field placement course for the subsequent summer semester to complete their remaining field placement hours. The number of credits for the course will depend on the number of hours the student has left to complete. Seventy-five field placement hours equals 1 course credit.

For Field I and Field II, students will need to be available during normal business hours. Social work activities are mostly occurring in agencies from 8am to 5pm. In addition, students may be required to attend mandatory meetings on designated days depending on the needs of their field placement.

Field Placement Sites

Below is a list of categories for the various field practicum site opportunities. The MSW Program community webpage in Blackboard (online learning system for St. Scholastica) will offer a profile of local agencies and a description of the field placement experience. This webpage is available to students once they are accepted into the program.

Administration

Aging/Gerontological Social Work

Alcohol, Drug, or Substance Abuse

Child Welfare

Community Planning

Corrections/Criminal Justice

Developmental Disabilities

Domestic Violence or Crisis Intervention

Family Services

Group Services

Health

Housing

International

Mental Health or Community Mental Health

Program Evaluation

Public Assistance/Public Welfare (not child welfare)

Rehabilitation

School Social Work

Social Policy

Please note: Field placements with the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, including agencies administratively associated with the VA (ie. The Duluth Vet Center), will not allow internships for our program until 2017.

Placement Process

Students work collaboratively with the Field Director to identify the field placement sites that will best be suited for their learning needs, long-term career plans and overall interests and circumstances.

Regular track students meet with the Field Director during the beginning of fall semester of their first year to identify potential placement site interests. The Field I placement must be finalized by the end of fall semester.

Advanced standing and regular track students will meet with the Field Director and typically finalize their Field II placement during the summer semester before their Field II placement in the fall.

Employment-Based Field Placements

If a student is considering using their place of employment for Field I or Field II, they will need to arrange to have at least 20 hours per week of relief from their current employment position. Their field experience will require them to be engaged in activities that are different than their current position and have a different supervisory structure. In addition, the activities must meet the criteria for the appropriate field experience. A proposal for an Employment-based Field Placement must be approved by the Field Director to ensure the placement meets all requirements. This is in the best interest of the student as field relates to the licensing process after graduation. Regular track standing students are only allowed to use their place of employment for either Field I or Field II, not both.

