

# Social Work

# 2020 Field Education Manual

Wartburg College

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## FIELD EDUCATION FORMS

All forms referenced and described in this Manual may be found and downloaded from the Social Work Department webpage at [www.wartburg.edu/social-work/](http://www.wartburg.edu/social-work/).

## INTRODUCTION

### Social Work Program Mission & Goals

Grounded in the institutional mission of preparing students for lives of service and leadership as a spirited expression of their faith and learning, the Wartburg College Social Work Program develops graduates who are prepared for beginning generalist social work practice or graduate school entry at the advanced level. The program and its curriculum are based on the conviction that every person is worthy of respect and dignity and that these ideals cannot be achieved without a deep and active commitment to social justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the qualities of life for all persons, locally and globally. Ultimately, we strive to develop competent, proficient practitioners who reflect the ideals of a liberal arts education and the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession (rev. 07-2019).

The Social Work Program Goals:

1. Instill in students an appreciation for the community as an essential context for professional practice.
2. Develop graduates with the vision, skills, and appreciation for advocacy to assume positions of professional and community leadership.
3. Equip students with an appreciation for professional ethics and the skills needed to apply ethical principles consistently in everyday practice.
4. Enable students to seek and skillfully use resources and research methods that enhance quality, professional practice and service delivery.
5. Develop students who do not merely tolerate human differences, but view diversity as a strength and vital element of social life.

A complete description of Wartburg's Social Work Program, its policies, and opportunities may be found in the *Social Work Student Handbook*, which is posted on the College's Social Work Department webpage: <https://www.wartburg.edu/social-work/>

## Field Education as Social Work's Signature Pedagogy

Field education has long been recognized as a *signature pedagogy* in social work education, providing students with the opportunity to refine and demonstrate theoretical constructs and skills learned in the classroom through actual, supervised practice experience. As an extension of its mission and goals, the Social Work Program at Wartburg College embraces the concept that guided, structured experience is an essential component of professional training and utilizes field education extensively in helping students to achieve the core competencies necessary for beginning generalist practice.

Field education is designed to teach students how to:

1. Integrate theoretical learning with social work practice in a wide variety of social service settings.
2. Work effectively within a social service agency setting with a variety of human service professionals.
3. Appreciate human diversity in its many forms and to practice in a manner that is sensitive to and effective with clients who vary in terms of culture, race, gender, social class, sexual orientation/identity, age, ability, and spiritual beliefs.
4. Recognize their own abilities and limitations; develop a practice style that is consistent with personal strengths and capacities, and reinforce identification with the profession.
5. Develop an ability to monitor and evaluate their own practice using current, professional literature and generally accepted research methods.
6. Demonstrate effective professional interpersonal oral and written communication skills and professional competence.
7. Recognize the inevitable emergence of professional ethical dilemmas and the importance of confronting them; practice within the framework of social work values and ethics.

## The Structure of Wartburg's Field Education Program

As a condition of its accreditation by the *Council on Social Work Education*, the Social Work Department structures and administers its field education courses according to standards articulated in the *CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)*. The current edition of these guidelines may be found on the CSWE's website: [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org).

Conceptually, it is important to recognize that social work field experiences differ significantly from "internships" and other forms of experiential education and service learning offered by the College. Students have a faculty course instructor who works closely with them and their placement agency field supervisors to help meet very specific learning objectives. Field experiences, unlike most internships, involve regular, structured interaction with the course instructor and other students in placements, plus require supplemental learning in the form of reading, writing, critical thinking, and research assignments.

## Field Education Courses

Field instruction at Wartburg College is delivered through two required experiences and two optional elective courses. All field courses at Wartburg College are “block placements,” meaning that during the time they are in placement, students typically take no other courses for academic credit.

Social work majors at Wartburg College are required to take:

1. ***Beginning Field Experience (SW 181)***. This course, usually taken during the first or second year, provides students with an initial exposure to a social service agency setting, its staff, and clientele. The course is of three and one-half weeks duration (125 hours), and is offered during May Term or on an arranged study basis during the summer months. Beginning Field Experience students are evaluated on a P/D/F basis.
2. A senior practicum experience, consisting of two interrelated parts:

***Supervised Field Experience (SW 401, 402, 403)***. This is an intensive 450-hour placement for senior-level social work majors who have successfully completed all other required coursework in the curriculum. They receive three course credits and are concurrently enrolled in the *Senior Integrative Seminar (SW 400)*, for which they receive an additional course credit. Supervised field instruction is designed as an initial exposure to actual professional practice with incrementally increasing responsibilities. It is provided under the direct supervision of a qualified field instructor selected and approved by the Social Work Department. Students are evaluated using the standard A-F grading scale.

***Senior Integrative Seminar (SW 400)***. This seminar, taken along with the *Supervised Field Experience*, gives students in placement an opportunity to meet together weekly with their faculty liaison to discuss their progress, enhance the integration of previous learning, and reflect on issues of professional significance. This seminar also serves as the “capstone” course of the *Wartburg Plan of Essential Education* for social work majors, provided a synthesis of liberal arts learning and social work coursework taken throughout the students’ academic careers at Wartburg College. Students are evaluated using the standard grading scale.

Elective field experience courses are:

***Diversity Field Experience (SW 281)***. As an optional course open to students who have successfully completed the *Beginning Field Experience*, this 125-hour field placement enables students to broaden their exposure to diverse populations and social work settings, including those outside the U.S. It requires pre-approval by the Department’s Field Education Coordinator and is typically taken in the second or third year of study. Evaluation is on a P/D/F basis.

***Extended Field Instruction (SW 405)***. This elective course enables fourth-year students to remain in their *Supervised Field Instruction* placement through the subsequent May Term in order to complete additional learning assignments or otherwise prepare for professional employment. It requires the consent of the Field Education Coordinator and *Supervised Field Experience* agency staff. Evaluation is on a P/D/F basis.

## **FIELD EDUCATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Wartburg College Social Work Department**

The social work department has a commitment to:

- A. Maintain a social work program with a field education component that meets the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education and abides by the policies of Wartburg College.
- B. Allocate sufficient faculty resources to successfully implement the field education program.
- C. Provide students with the academic base and support necessary for a successful, meaningful field experience.

### **Field Education Coordinator**

The Field Education Coordinator is a full-time member of the Social Work faculty who oversees the development and administration of the field education program and coordinates the work of students, field instructors, and other faculty who are involved as liaisons. The coordinator must hold the MSW degree from a CSWE accredited institution and have at least two years of professional social work experience.

Specific responsibilities are to:

- A. Administer the field education program, in collaboration with other department faculty, according to this *Field Education Manual* and accreditation standards established by the *Council on Social Work Education*.
- B. Coordinate the recruitment and development of field placement sites that meet the criteria specified in this handbook and execute agreements between agencies and the Social Work Department, as needed.
- C. Support successful teaching by agency field instructors through orientation meetings, training workshops, and individualized consultation.
- D. Communicate to students, information about field education policies and potential placement agencies.
- E. Coordinate the process of placing individual students in appropriate practicum settings.
- F. Maintain on-going communication with department faculty and the program's National Advisory Board regarding field education policies, needs, and planning.

- G. Evaluate and assess the field education program and to recommend policy changes to the Social Work Department as a whole; collect and report annual assessment data.

### ***Faculty Liaison***

Once students are placed in an appropriate fieldwork setting, they are assigned to faculty members who serve as liaisons and consultants through the duration of the placement. Faculty liaisons hold the MSW degree from a CSWE accredited institution and have at least two years of professional social work experience.

The specific responsibilities of faculty liaisons are to:

- A. Help students and field instructors in planning individualized learning objectives and experiences based on students' needs, placement agency capacities, and the goals of the field education program.
- B. Meet with assigned students and field instructors in a three-way conference at least twice during the 450-hour supervised field experience to review and evaluate progress in learning.
- C. Contact the student and field instructor at least twice during all beginning, diversity, and extended field placements.
- D. Maintain correspondence, time records, and evaluation forms relative to assigned students.
- E. Be available as a learning resource for the student; consult regularly with the student on field experiences and progress toward achieving learning objectives.
- F. Be available as a teaching consultant to the agency field instructor.
- G. Assist in the planning and conduct of weekly integrative seminar meetings (SW 400) for supervised field experience students.
- H. Assign course grades in consultation with the agency field instructor.
- I. Assess the quality of field instruction provided to each student and make recommendations to the field education coordinator regarding the continued participation of the placement agency and field instructor in the field education program.
- J. Collect and report annual assessment data in a timely manner.

### ***Placement Agency***

In addition to meeting the criteria specified further down in the *Selection of Placement Agencies* section of this handbook, agencies accepting students for placement must:

- A. Provide a designated field instructor meeting the qualifications outlined in this handbook.

- B. Allow sufficient time for the field instructor to adequately supervise the student's field experience.
- C. Allow sufficient time for the field instructor to collaborate with social work faculty and participate in orientation, training, and other relevant meetings.
- D. Provide the student with adequate working space and other necessities (supplies, parking, administrative support, etc.).
- E. Allow the student access to clients, meetings, and records necessary to a meaningful educational experience.
- F. Participate in the selection of students referred by the social work department for field placements via written applications, interviews, and background checks (if required).
- G. Provide students with learning experiences at all system levels: individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

***Agency Field Instructor***

As the student's direct supervisor in the placement agency, the field instructor has the responsibility to:

- A. Become familiar with Wartburg's Social Work curriculum and syllabi for the field courses.
- B. Participate in orientation meetings and training workshops for field instructors offered by Wartburg's Social Work Department.
- C. Develop, with the student and their faculty liaison, a mutually-agreeable learning plan outlining goals and objectives for the placement.
- D. Arrange for the student, an orientation and introduction to the placement agency.
- E. Coordinate the involvement of other agency staff and community resources impacting the student's learning experience.
- F. Provide regular supervisory time, typically at least one hour per week, to the student for consultation and feedback on performance, strengths, and developmental needs.
- G. Give assignments aimed at promoting the student's learning and professional development as a beginning social worker. Assignments should expose the student to a broad range of generalist social work responsibilities, including practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Wartburg's field education coordinator and faculty liaison are available to assist the agency field instructor in developing suitable assignments.
- H. Participate in three-way conferences with the student and faculty liaison during the placement.

- I. Encourage student learning that is congruent with the ethics and values of the social work profession.
- J. Complete and submit timely evaluations of the student's performance on forms provided by the social work department. Link to evaluation form:  
<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/cn1TcE26dcH4A6sYp>
- K. Inform the faculty liaison immediately of any apparent issues with the student that are significantly impacting their learning.

### ***Student***

In order to obtain the maximum benefit from the field experience, the student must:

- A. Follow procedures and policies specified in this handbook.
- B. Develop, in collaboration with field instructor and faculty liaison, a learning plan outlining learning goals for the placement.
- C. Abide by the policies of the placement agency and supervision provided by the field instructor.
- D. Undertake placement assignments in a responsible, professional manner; keeping all commitments made to the agency, field instructor, clients, and faculty liaison.
- E. Notify the field instructor of unavoidable absences and tardiness in advance, as expected in professional employment.
- F. Take responsibility for personal and professional growth by seeking assistance or consultation from the field instructor and faculty liaison.
- G. Learn and apply the NASW Code of Ethics (refer to the NASW website) throughout the placement.
- H. Observe, test, integrate, and apply the theoretical concepts and principles learned in the classroom to experiences in the field placement.
- I. Exercise responsibility in observing the confidentiality of clients and information obtained in the placement.
- J. Bring to the attention of the field instructor and the faculty liaison questionable professional practices encountered within the agency.
- K. Participate with the field instructor in on-going, self-assessment throughout the placement.

- L. Maintain accurate records of time and activities using forms provided by the social work department. Submit forms as required.
- M. Attend and participate meaningfully in all seminars, conferences, and meetings required by the placement agency.
- N. Participate in the on-going evaluation of the field education program by submitting feedback on the placement experience at the conclusion of the course.

### ***SELECTION OF PLACEMENT AGENCIES AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS***

In developing placement sites and making arrangements for individual student practica, the Social Work Program is guided by the following considerations:

- The development of the student's *general social work knowledge and skills* is the paramount goal of the field experience. This is best accomplished by placing students within a relatively close proximity to the campus (150 miles) so that regular visits by department faculty and participation in the weekly senior integrative seminar meetings are possible.
- Meeting the educational preferences and objectives of individual students. If, in the judgment of the student, her/his advisor, and the field education coordinator, these cannot be met locally, the student may be given permission by the Field Education Coordinator to seek a placement in a more distant location. Regardless of location, all placement agencies and field instructors must meet the criteria outlined in this manual.

#### Wartburg West

The Social Work Department offers students the opportunity for a diverse, urban field experience with the Wartburg West program in Denver, Colorado. With careful planning, social work majors may complete their senior supervised field experience in Denver. Students must meet all the requirements for acceptance into senior field experience, apply, and be accepted for the Wartburg West program.

Priority in considering students to participate in Wartburg West is given to students who notify the Field Education Coordinator of their interest by November 1<sup>st</sup> of their third year. Final decisions rest with the Field Education Coordinator and are based on the student's demonstrated capacity for distance learning, the availability of a suitable placement agency, and the administrative capacity of the social work program to support an effective learning experience for students in Waverly and Denver simultaneously.

#### International Field Placements

The Social Work Department recognizes the value of international and multi-cultural experiences for students and facilitates them in two ways:

- 1.) By offering students the course SW 281, *Diversity Field Experience*, a 4-week May Term or summer placement in an agency or setting that provides them with exposure to diverse populations.
- 2.) By arranging required social work courses so students may take advantage of semester and year-long study abroad programs offered through Wartburg's *Study Away* program and still graduate on schedule. Students may study abroad in the fall term of their third year. The college offers a wide variety of international placements, including some that provide students with exposure to international human service experience (*Diers Program*).

As a matter of general policy, the department will not place students abroad for the supervised field experience (SW 401, 402, 403). In certain circumstances, however, students may be granted an exception to this policy if, in the judgment of their academic advisor and the Field Education Coordinator, an international placement is critical to meeting their educational needs/goals: an international student, for example, who plans to return to her/his home country after graduation. In these situations:

- The student must have sufficient language skills and cultural knowledge to work effectively with clients and placement agency staff.
- The placement agency and designated field instructor must meet the criteria delineated elsewhere in this manual.
- Adequate provisions must be made by the student to meet the learning outcomes of the *SW 400: Senior Integrative Seminar* course.

#### Field Placement in Agency of Employment

Generally, a student will not be placed in an agency where they are currently employed, have worked as a paid employee, or if they've done considerable volunteer work. Likewise, students should avoid seeking placements with agencies where they have completed earlier fieldwork. Exceptions may be made where, in the judgment of the student, her/his faculty advisor and the field coordinator, it is clearly in the best interest of the student's professional education.

In these exceptional cases, the student must have:

- Practicum assignments and responsibilities that are consistent with objectives of the social work program.
- Practicum assignments and responsibilities that are significantly different than assigned job functions of past work.
- A designated field instructor who is different from the student's work supervisor.

#### Criteria for Selection of Agencies

The primary consideration in the selection of placement agencies is their capacity for providing students with the experiences they need in preparation for beginning generalist practice.

The following criteria are used in the selection of agencies:

- The agency's approach to student training must be compatible with the educational objectives of the Wartburg College Social Work Program.
- The agency offers a variety of learning experiences appropriate for baccalaureate-level social work students.
- The agency must function in a manner consistent with social work values and ethical principles.
- The agency can give a student the opportunity for beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations.
- The agency must designate a single, professional staff member as the field instructor who meets the criteria identified in this handbook. The staff member must have sufficient practice experience, time, and interest to provide a quality educational experience for the student.

#### Placement Agreement with Field Agencies

The Wartburg College Social Work Department utilizes the *Agreement with Agency Providing Field Instruction* form as a means of formalizing its working relationship with placement agencies. Placement agreements are initiated and maintained by the Field Education Coordinator.

#### Criteria for the Selection of Field Instructors

Field instructors play a critical role in the preparation of social work students for beginning practice. They must possess not only a satisfactory base of professional experience and knowledge of the social work profession, but they must also have the time, ability, and willingness to provide students with the guidance needed as they move toward professional competence.

Field instructors are selected and approved using the following education/experience criteria:

- Master of Social Work degree (MSW degree from a CSWE accredited institution); or
- Bachelor of Social Work Degree (BA in Social Work or BSW) with a minimum of one year's post graduate professional experience; or
- Bachelor's degree in a related field with a minimum of three year's post graduate professional experience. A qualified social worker, usually a faculty member, is assigned to provide consultation bi-weekly to satisfy the need for on-going social work supervision. If the agency is unable to provide for specific social work consultation, it may be provided by a qualified faculty member.

### Field Instructor Information Form

Field instructors selected and approved by the Department, document their qualifications by completing the *Field Instructor Information Form* and submitting it to the field education coordinator.

### Orientation and Training for Field Instructors

Field instructors, for beginning and diversity placements, receive orientation and training each year via email, telephone and in-person or ZOOM meetings. They are given the student's resume, course syllabus, learning outcomes, and expectations for the field experience. Field instructors hosting a Wartburg student for the first time receive a more detailed orientation about helping students write a learning contract, supervisory strategies, and an overview of the College's Title IX policies ([http://info.wartburg.edu/Portals/0/HR/TitleIXPolicies.pdf?\\_ga=2.9818741.1752106767.1568641116-298893172.1496433069](http://info.wartburg.edu/Portals/0/HR/TitleIXPolicies.pdf?_ga=2.9818741.1752106767.1568641116-298893172.1496433069)).

Field instructors for *Senior* Supervised Field Instruction placements meet with the Field Education Coordinator prior to the beginning of each placement. This orientation meeting includes an overview of the Wartburg Social Work Program, placement policies, review of Wartburg's Title IX policies, and discussion of supervisory "best practices."

The Social Work Department keeps field instructors apprised of developments in the program and issues of interest to social work field educators through periodic workshops and training meetings. Field instructors are also invited to attend Department sponsored conferences, workshops, and seminars on topics related to social work education and practice.

## **FIELD EDUCATION ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING**

The Social Work Department continually monitors and evaluates the field education program and the extent to which it prepares students for professional practice. Meaningful evaluation requires obtaining feedback from a broad range of people involved in and/or affected by the program including students, field instructors, faculty, and the Department's National Advisory Board. The Field Education Coordinator manages the collection of assessment data and the processes by which it is obtained and channeled into the social work program's annual planning cycle. Yearly developmental goals set by the Department address needed changes to field education.

### Students

Students' assessment of their placement sites and field instructors is obtained through use of the Student Evaluation of Field Placement form. Information from these evaluations is incorporated into feedback provided to the field agencies and used in determining if/how these sites should be used in the future, the type of training provided to field instructors, and how the overall delivery of field education might be improved.

### Field Instructors

At the end of each academic year, field instructors are invited to provide written feedback to the Field Education Coordinator on the extent to which they believe the program is preparing students for beginning professional practice and recommendations for curriculum development. This feedback plays an important part in the overall assessment of the social work program that occurs each year and the development of its annual goals.

### Faculty

All faculty involved in the planning and delivery of field education are consulted regularly regarding the program's effectiveness. Their thoughts and reflections about the program and placement sites are utilized and incorporated in the annual Department assessment and in the formulation of developmental goals.

### National Advisory Board

The Social Work Department's National Advisory Board, consisting of practitioners, administrators, and other important stakeholders, plays a key role in helping to keep the field education program relevant to the changing needs of the profession. The Advisory Board meets with Department faculty and student representatives twice per academic year.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### Non-discrimination

All facets of the field education program (admission, agency placements, assignments, grading, etc.) are administered without discrimination of age, class, race, color, culture, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, immigration status, disability, political ideology or sexual orientation. Questions or concerns about this policy and its implementation should be directed to the field education coordinator or the College's affirmative action officer. (As described in the Wartburg College Academic Catalog).

### Accommodating Disabilities

It is the policy and practice of Wartburg College and the Social Work Program to provide inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with state and federal law, including social work field placements. Students anticipating or experiencing barriers due to a disability (including physical, mental health, learning, vision or hearing) should discuss with the field education coordinator and may request assistance in arranging accommodations with Wartburg's Pathways Academic Success & Advising Team.

### Commitment to Diversity Education

In accordance with the perspectives on diversity contained in the NASW Code of Ethics and the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, the Wartburg College Social Work Department prepares

students to understand, embrace, and work with a diverse variety of people and groups. The field education program supports this important goal by actively seeking placement sites and instructors in areas and communities where diverse groups represent a significant portion of the population, and by publicizing and encouraging students to consider placements in areas serving diverse populations.

### Transportation

Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from placement sites. In some cases, students may be expected by the placement agency, to have a car available. Specific expectations regarding student travel should be clarified with the field education coordinator and placement agency prior to the beginning of the field experience. Students must have a current, valid driver's license and sufficient insurance if driving is a necessary part of the field experience. Students are discouraged from transporting clients in their personal vehicles.

### Liability Insurance

Although professional liability insurance is not required for field placement students by the social work program, some placement agencies may require this type of coverage. If needed or desired, students may obtain this insurance through the National Association of Social Workers or through other carriers. More specific information about liability and coverage is available from the program's field education coordinator.

### Placement Dates, Hours & Absences

Placement days and hours should be negotiated between the student, field instructor, and faculty liaison prior to the beginning of the field experience. While the number of hours spent in placement each day may vary slightly from week to week, students should not spend more than eight hours per day at the agency. Students should not exceed the 36-40 hour weekly limit or significantly alter their work schedule without first consulting their faculty liaison. Travel to and from the placement agency is **not** considered time at the placement and should not be documented as such. Travel time that is part of a placement assignment or responsibility (home visiting, traveling to meetings, etc.) is considered to be time in placement and should be documented accordingly. Students should consult with their faculty liaison whenever clarification of this policy is needed.

Field placements generally begin on the same date for all students, typically the first day of the academic term. Variations from this policy must be approved by the field education coordinator and faculty liaison ahead of time. Beginning dates and schedules for students completing placements during the summer months, must be negotiated between the student, field instructor, and faculty liaison.

Students are expected to observe the work hours and holiday policies of their placement agency. However, time off from placements (during Wartburg's Winter Break, for example) may be requested and granted at the discretion of the field instructor and the student's faculty liaison. Responsibility for requests of time off rests with the student and must be negotiated well in advance. Students should be mindful that time away from the placement will need to be made up before the end of the term.

Students should abide by the policies of the placement agency regarding illness and weather-related absences. Any absences must be communicated to the field instructor and the faculty liaison immediately and in advance. Prolonged illness or need for medical leave should be discussed with the faculty liaison, so that alternate plans to complete assignments and/or placement hours may be arranged. Students are expected to remain in their placement through the end of the academic term, even if placement hours and assignments are completed early. Any deviations from this policy must be arranged in advance with the field instructor and faculty liaison.

### Changing Agency Placements

Typically, students remain in the same agency for the duration of the placement. However, there may be compelling reasons to make a change at some point during the term if, for example, the structure of the agency suddenly changes, a field instructor leaves the agency or becomes unable to continue work with the student in some way, or if the agency, after discussion with the faculty liaison and student, finds the student is unable to continue in the placement. A request for a change may be initiated by the student, field instructor or faculty liaison. If approved, the faculty liaison will work with the field education coordinator to arrange an alternate placement.

### Removal from Field Placements

Students may be removed from a field placement if their performance is deemed unacceptable by the placement agency or the field education coordinator. Reasons for removal include:

- Violations of the NASW Code of Ethics
- Unsatisfactory behavior or performance (i.e. chronic absences or failure to communicate these, disregard for placement agency regulations or policies, failure to follow through with assignments).
- Violations of laws or policies outlined in the Wartburg College Student Handbook.
- Violations of policies articulated in the Wartburg College Social Work Student Handbook.

Arrangements for an alternate placement may be made at the discretion of the field education coordinator. However, dismissal from a placement could result in a failing grade for the course or suspension/termination from the Social Work Program. (These consequences are described in the Social Work Student Handbook.) Students may appeal termination from the field experience course through the process described in the Social Work Student Handbook. Although circumstances vary, in most cases if a student is removed from a senior field placement, they will also be removed from SW 400, Seminar. Students must pass both seminar and Field placements in the same term, unless very specific accommodations are approved by the field education coordinator.

### Grievances

Students who experience difficulties or dissatisfaction with field placements may address them using the procedures described in the Social Work Student Handbook.

## Policy Exceptions

Exceptions to policies described in the Field Education Manual may be made on a case by case basis but are not done so without careful deliberation of the field education coordinator and department faculty. Exceptions will be granted only if they are clearly in the best interest of the student's professional education and if they do not compromise the integrity of the Social Work Program.

## ***Social Work COURSE-SPECIFIC DESCRIPTIONS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES***

### ***SW 181: BEGINNING FIELD EXPERIENCE***

#### Course Description and Rationale

*Beginning Field Experience* (SW181) is a 3 ½ week (125 hours) participant-observer field experience in a social service agency. Students are provided with a beginning "hands-on" experience to examine the operations of a social service agency, to observe the functions and activities of social workers, and to have beginning-level interactions with clients. This initial field experience helps students determine the compatibility of their own values, personal qualities, and level of commitment with professional social work practice. Passing evaluations that students receive from their supervisors for this class are used as criteria in considering students' applications into the social work major.

The SW181 also provides students with an opportunity to assess their present range of skills so that they can more intelligently discern their future learning needs and plan accordingly. To a certain extent, a student's performance in, and response to, the beginning placement also provides social work faculty with important feedback on the student's aptitude and motivation for *beginning generalist social work practice*.

#### Learning Outcomes

The structure of this course is guided by a curriculum plan that identifies nine core competencies that are essential for beginning social work practice. In SW181, students will:

1. Develop a knowledge and understanding of the meaning and importance of professionalism in the provision of human services: professional conduct, *professional identity* and professional use of supervision.
2. Gain an increased recognition of *social work values*, personal values, agency and consumer value systems; they will be able to describe how these interact and affect the *delivery of service*.
3. Gain a basic exposure to the *structure of a social service agency*: its goals, clientele, funding sources, and services.
4. Recognize how a social service agency interacts with its *social environment*; how it works with other agencies and *community resources*.

5. Interact in a positive way, under supervision, with social service consumers while providing limited services on their behalf.

### Prerequisites

Students enrolling in the Beginning Field Experience must meet the following criteria:

- Satisfactory completion of Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare (SW 101).
- Approval of the student's academic advisor and the Field Education Coordinator based on maturity, sense of responsibility, reliability, and demonstrated commitment to learning how to work effectively with people.

This course is required of all social work majors. Students with interests or majors in other areas who meet the prerequisites identified above may also take the course.

### Placement Length

Students spend a total of 125 hours in the Beginning Field Placement over a 3 1/2 week period. They are typically in placement eight hours during each working day. Occasionally there is a need to deviate from a normal work schedule in order to accommodate students or agency needs; such cases should be discussed with the faculty liaison before the placement begins. Additionally, on-campus meetings with other students and the Faculty Liaison (course instructor) are required.

### Assignment to Placements

The following steps are used in selecting and arranging a suitable placement site:

1. Several weeks prior to the placement, students are provided with an orientation to the course in a group meeting with the Field Education Coordinator. At this time, they are acquainted with the goals and parameters of the course and are asked to complete a form indicating their areas of professional interest.
2. The Field Education Coordinator, in consultation with the student, identifies and contacts a prospective placement agency.
3. When an appropriate site has been selected, the student contacts the agency to indicate her/his desire for a placement, arranges an interview (if requested by the agency), and reports the outcome of the contact to the Field Education Coordinator.
4. Once an agency agrees to host a student, the Field Education Coordinator contacts the designated field instructor to discuss and formalize the details of the placement. A letter of confirmation is sent to the field instructor with a copy to the student.

5. Shortly before the course begins, students are assigned to a faculty liaison (course instructor) who becomes the program's primary contact for consultation and direction. The assigned faculty liaison directs the field placement and assigns a final grade at the end of the course.

### Field Instruction Learning Plan

A *Field Instruction Learning Plan* outlining the parameters and goals of the placement is used in all beginning field practica. It provides the field instructor and the student with an opportunity to discuss their expectations before the placement begins and serves to minimize misunderstandings that might otherwise occur. The agreement is developed jointly by the student and field instructor at the beginning of the placement and a copy is sent to the faculty field liaison for review and signature.

### Reporting Procedures

Students in the Beginning Field Experience complete and submit a log of their time spent in the placement at the end of each day using a designated, online form. The faculty liaison reviews time logs regularly and the field instructor confirms the student's hours through weekly contact with the faculty liaison. At the end of the placement, the student submits a printed copy of the time log that includes the field instructor's signature.

Students maintain a weekly dialogue with the faculty liaison, described in the course syllabus. This dialogue includes reports and reflections on placement activities.

### Evaluation of Student Performance

Evaluation is an essential and meaningful part of effective supervision designed primarily to assist students in assessing their strengths and need for improvement relative to social work practice. The evaluation process is on-going, and should involve frequent communication between the student and the field instructor. Likewise, it is a mutual process; students are expected to develop the ability to assess their own progress and potential for social work practice using feedback from a variety of sources.

The students and field instructors complete and sign the *Student Field Learning Evaluation* form at the end of the term. The student sends a copy to her/ his faculty liaison for review. After a grade is assigned, based on the student's performance in the field and written assignments, the evaluation is routed to the student's advisor for use in future academic planning.

A final grade for the course is assigned by the faculty field liaison on a P/D/F Credit basis.

## ***SW 281: DIVERSITY FIELD EXPERIENCE***

### Course Description and Rationale

While the *Beginning Field Experience* (SW 181) is designed primarily to assist students in gauging their suitability and interest in social work as a profession, the *Diversity Field Experience* (SW281) is offered as

an elective to broaden their exposure to diverse professional practice, settings, and clientele. The course is helpful to students in developing a deeper understanding of how their own identities and expectations are shaped by their cultural upbringing as well as the implications of factors such as race, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation and social class where successful social work practice is concerned.

### Learning Outcomes

Through this placement, students will:

1. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the meaning and importance of professionalism in the provision of human services: professional conduct, professional identity, and professional use of supervision.
2. Demonstrate, through weekly reports and writing assignments, an understanding of human diversity and how it relates to social work practice.
3. Articulate a clear understanding of social work perspectives, personal values, agency boundaries, community mores, and diverse consumer value systems; how these interact with and affect the delivery of service.
4. Describe the structure of diverse social service agencies: their goals, clientele, funding sources, and services.
5. Describe how a social service agency recognizes and responds to its social and cultural environment; how it works with other agencies and community resources.
6. Demonstrate an ability to interact in a purposive way, under supervision, with social service consumers, while providing limited services on their behalf.
7. Articulate an increased awareness of one's culture, values, impact on others, and potential for future professional practice with diverse groups and clients.

### Prerequisites

- Satisfactory completion of Beginning Field Experience (SW 181).
- Approval of the student's academic advisor and the Field Education Coordinator based on the student's maturity, sense of responsibility, reliability, and demonstrated commitment to learning how to work effectively with people.

### Placement Length

Students spend a total of 125 hours in the Intermediate Field Placement over a 3 1/2 week period. They are typically in placement eight hours during each working day. Occasionally there is a need to deviate from a normal work schedule in order to accommodate student or agency needs; such cases should be

discussed with the faculty liaison before the placement begins. Additionally, meetings with other students and the Faculty Liaison (course instructor) may be required.

### Assignment to Placements

The following steps are used in selecting and arranging a suitable placement site:

1. Several weeks prior to the placement, students are provided with an orientation to the course in a group meeting with the Field Education Coordinator. At this time they are acquainted with the goals and parameters of the course and are asked to complete a form indicating their areas of professional interest.
2. The Field Education Coordinator, in consultation with the student, identifies and contacts a prospective placement agency.
3. When an appropriate site has been selected, the student contacts the agency to indicate her/his desire for a placement, arranges an interview (if required by the agency), and reports the outcome of the contact to the Field Education Coordinator.
4. Once an agency agrees to host a student, the Field Education Coordinator contacts the designated field instructor to discuss and formalize the details of the placement. A letter of confirmation is sent to the field instructor with a copy to the student.
5. Shortly before the course begins, students are assigned to a faculty liaison (course instructor) who becomes the program's primary contact for consultation and direction. The assigned faculty liaison directs the field placement and assigns a final grade at the end of the course.

### Field Instruction Learning Plan

A *Field Instruction Learning Plan* outlining the parameters and goals of the placement is used in all intermediate field practica. It provides the field instructor and the student with an opportunity to discuss their expectations before the placement gets underway and serves to minimize misunderstandings that might otherwise occur. The agreement is developed jointly by the student and field instructor at the beginning of the placement and a copy is sent to the faculty field liaison for review and signature.

### Reporting Procedures

Students in the Beginning Field Experience complete and submit a log of their time spent in the placement at the end of each day using a designated online form. The faculty liaison reviews time logs regularly and the field instructor confirms the student's hours through weekly contact with the faculty liaison. At the end of the placement, the student submits a printed copy of the time log that includes the field instructor's signature.

Students maintain a weekly dialogue with the faculty liaison, described in the course syllabus. This dialogue includes reports and reflections on placement activities.

### Evaluation of Student Performance

Evaluation is an essential and meaningful part of effective supervision designed primarily to assist students in assessing their strengths and needs relative to social work practice. The evaluation process is on-going, and should involve frequent communication between the student and the field instructor. Likewise, it is a mutual process; students are expected to develop the ability to assess their own progress and potential for social work practice using feedback from a variety of sources.

The student and field instructor complete and sign the *Student Field Learning Evaluation* form at the end of the term. The student sends a copy to their faculty liaison for review. After a grade is assigned, based on the student's performance in the field and written assignments, the evaluation is routed to the student's advisor for use in future academic planning.

A final grade for the course is assigned by the faculty field liaison on a P/D/F basis, reflecting the recommendations of the field instructor and the quality of the student's written assignments.

## ***SW 401, 402, 403: SUPERVISED FIELD EXPERIENCE***

### Course Description and Rationale

This three-credit course consists of an intensive professionally-supervised practicum in an approved social work setting where students are placed for thirteen weeks. A Supervised Field Instruction provides students with an opportunity to apply the knowledge, values, and skills gained through classroom study and past field experiences. Along with the *Senior Integrative Seminar (SW 400)*, this placement represents the final educational experience before entering beginning professional practice.

The application of values, knowledge, and skills is essential to professional social work practice. The philosophy of Social Work Education places considerable emphasis on experiential learning through which students can gain a deeper understanding of professional issues and practice skills. The *Supervised Field Experience* is the only course in the Wartburg Social Work Program curriculum that translates knowledge and values into actual task performance in all major content areas of the curriculum.

### Learning Outcomes

The structure of this course is guided by a curriculum plan that identifies nine core competencies and a corresponding set of practice behaviors that are essential for beginning social work practice. This practicum provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the practice behaviors listed below:

Students will:

- Set meaningful and realistic career goals.
- Identify the unique roles and contributions of social workers in an interdisciplinary setting.
- Demonstrate consistent adherence to standards of appearance, comportment, and communication.
- Demonstrate proficiency in written communication with client constituencies and colleagues.
- Demonstrate an ability to develop effective rapport with clients.
- Demonstrate an ability to establish clear boundaries, interventions, and outcomes with clients.
- Demonstrate effective problem-solving skills in their work.
- Effectively negotiate, mediate, and advocate on behalf of their clients.
- Consistently and effectively terminate client services and relationships, when needed.

#### Application for the Supervised Field Instruction and Prerequisites

During the Winter Term of their third-year, students apply for admission to the *Supervised Field Experience*, using an application form that is completed and returned to the Field Education Coordinator. Applications are then reviewed and approved by the social work faculty committee.

To be considered for this field experience, students must have satisfactorily completed the following courses by the time the placement begins:

- SW 101: Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare
- SW 181: Beginning Field Experience
- SW 201: Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- SW 202: Group & Organizational Behavior
- SW 300: Social Policy
- SW 301: Social Work Practice I
- SW 302: Social Work Practice II
- SW 303: Social Work Practice III
- SW 321: Social Work Research Methods

Students must also:

- Have a minimum overall grade point average of 2.00 at the time of admission.
- Have a minimum grade point average of 2.00 in all courses required for the social work major at the time of admission.
- Have the approval of the student's academic advisor and the Field Education Coordinator based on the student's maturity, sense of responsibility, and demonstrated commitment to learning how to work effectively with people.

### Participation in the Senior Integrative Seminar (SW 400)

Students in *Supervised Field Experience* must also register for and participate in the *Senior Integrative Seminar* (SW 400). These weekly seminar meetings afford students the chance to meet with each other and social work faculty to discuss placement experiences, ethical and professional decision making and other issues of professional significance.

### Assignment to Placement Sites

The responsibility for placing students in agencies and with field instructors who meet the criteria identified elsewhere in this manual, rests with the Field Education Coordinator. Student input, provided through the narrative that accompanies the supervised field experience application form and subsequent interviews, is a strong consideration in the assignment of placements. However, the final decision is made by the Field Education Coordinator, based on her/his professional judgment as to the site that would best meet the students learning needs and provide the greatest opportunity for the student to learn and demonstrate the nine core competencies in the program's curriculum plan. A strong preference is given to those agency sites that have successfully hosted student placements in the past.

Following department approval of the application to enter the senior practicum, the Field Education Coordinator discusses possible host agencies with the student and initiates an initial contact with prospective field instructors. If the agency is interested in hosting a placement, the student is directed to arrange an interview. Following the interview, the Field Education Coordinator contacts the student and the prospective field instructor and, if all are in agreement, approves the placement. Field placements are typically secured during the spring/summer prior to the student's fourth year. The placement is formalized in the fall, and students begin their practica in January.

### Placement Length

Students spend a total of 450 hours in the *Supervised Field Instruction* placement over a fourteen-week period. They are typically at the placement 32-36 hours per week. Specific work hours and schedules are negotiated with the field instructor. The field education coordinator and social work faculty may, under unusual and extreme circumstances, approve using the CSWE minimum hours requirement for Wartburg students.

### Field Instruction Learning Plan

The learning plan is a written document developed by the student, faculty liaison, and field instructor outlining specific learning objectives that the student hopes to achieve in the course of the field experience and assignments/activities that will enable them to meet these identified objectives.

The student is responsible for initiating the plan, which should be written during the second or third week of the placement. This is accomplished by:

- Arranging a meeting with the field instructor and faculty liaison to discuss goals and assignments.

- Writing a document summarizing the goals and assignments discussed in the meeting.
- Obtaining the signature of the field instructor and forwarding a copy of the plan to the faculty liaison.

The plan may be revised as needed throughout the field experience.

### Reporting Procedures

Students in the Supervised Field Experience complete and submit a log of their time spent in placement at the end of each day using a designated online form. The faculty liaison reviews time logs regularly and the field instructor confirms the student's hours through weekly contact with the faculty liaison. At the end of the placement, the student submits a printed copy of the time log that includes the field instructor's signature.

Students maintain a weekly dialogue with the faculty liaison, described in the course syllabus, which includes reports of and reflections on placement activities.

### Evaluation of Student Performance

Evaluation is an essential and meaningful part of effective supervision designed primarily to assist students in assessing their strengths and needs relative to generalist social work practice. The evaluation process is on-going, and should involve frequent communication between the student, field instructor, and the faculty liaison. Likewise, it is a mutual process: students are expected to develop the ability to assess their own progress, using feedback from a variety of sources.

The student and field instructor should meet approximately halfway through the placement to informally evaluate the student's progress and plan for the remainder of the field experience. The learning agreement and the form used for the student's final evaluation can serve as helpful guides in this discussion. The faculty liaison may also be involved in the evaluation.

During the next-to-last week of the placement, the student and field instructor complete and sign the *Student Field Learning Evaluation*. The student submits a copy to the faculty liaison for review. The evaluation form is then placed in the student's advising file.

Three grades are given for the field placement based on the following:

SW 401: The recommendation of the field instructor at the time of the final evaluation.

SW 402: The quality and timeliness of written work submitted throughout the Senior Integrative Seminar, with stronger weight given to the research assignment and final paper. (Professional self-assessment).

SW 403: The faculty liaison's evaluation of the student's professional development through the field placement (responsibility, initiative, seriousness of purpose, critical thinking, regard for issues of socio-economic justice, and suitability for the profession of social work).

Students must complete the Senior Integrative Seminar (SW 400) concurrently with the Supervised Field Experience. All four courses (SW 400, 401, 402, 403) must be completed successfully, with a C- or higher. Failure to attain a grade of C- or higher in any one of these courses, will result in the student needing to repeat all four courses in order to graduate with a BA degree in social work. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Field Education Coordinator and the Social Work Department faculty.

## ***SW 405: EXTENDED FIELD EXPERIENCE***

### Course Description and Rationale

This course is offered to students who have completed the *Supervised Field Experience* (SW 401, 402, 403) and *Senior Integrative Seminar* (SW 400). It is an opportunity for them to extend their *Supervised Field Experience* placement by an additional 3 1/2 weeks in order to finish projects initiated earlier in the placement or to ready themselves for professional employment. The course is typically offered during the May Term.

### Learning Outcomes

Students in this course will:

- Build upon the knowledge and skills gained in the *Supervised Field Instruction* placement.
- Gain a deeper understanding of the placement agency's structure, services, clientele, and interface with the larger community.
- Develop and articulate a plan for future career development and/or graduate study.

### Prerequisites

- Satisfactory completion of the *Supervised Field Experience* (SW 401,402,403) and the *Senior Integrative Seminar* (SW 400).
- Approval of the Field Education Coordinator, the student's academic advisor, and the agency-based field instructor for the *Supervised Field Experience* placement.

### Assignment to Placements

Students typically complete this course at the same agency or placement used for the *Supervised Field Experience*. The need for an extended field placement should be discussed with the field education coordinator and agency field instructor at the beginning of the *Supervised Field Instruction* placement to facilitate proper planning.

### Field Instruction Learning Plan

Since the focus of the extended field placement is somewhat different than the *Supervised Field Instruction* placement, the student, field instructor, and faculty liaison should meet together to revise the learning plan so that it accurately addresses the student's needs and projected learning activities.

### Placement Length

Students spend a total of 125 hours in the *Extended Field Placement*. The date of completion for an Extended Field Experience is established between the student, agency and field education coordinator at the beginning of the Extended Field Placement.

### Reporting Procedures

Students in Extended Field Instruction complete and submit a log of their time spent in the placement at the end of each day, using a designated online form. The faculty liaison reviews time logs regularly and the field instructor confirms the student's hours through weekly contact with the faculty liaison. At the end of the placement, the student submits a printed copy of the time log that includes the field instructor's signature.

Students maintain a weekly dialogue with the faculty liaison, described in the course syllabus, which includes reports of and reflections on placement activities.

### Evaluation of Student Performance

The student and field instructor complete and sign the *Student Field Learning Evaluation* and *Student Evaluation* at the end of the term. The student submits a copy to the faculty liaison for review. After a grade is assigned, the evaluation form is routed to the student's academic advisor for placement in her/his permanent, advising file.

A final grade is assigned by the faculty field liaison on a P/D/F basis, based on the recommendation of the field instructor and the quality of the student's written work.